



**WRITING ASSESSMENT LITERACY OF
TURKISH EFL TEACHERS AT TERTIARY LEVEL**

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

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**WRITING ASSESSMENT LITERACY OF TURKISH EFL TEACHERS AT
TERTIARY LEVEL**

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**Department of Foreign Language Education
MA in English Language Teaching Programme
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ABSTRACT
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MA Programme in English Language Teaching
Anadolu University, Graduate School, June 2024

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Assessing writing has always been a major component of assessment in teachers' professional lives and takes up a major time on their workload. However, the number of studies which attempt to uncover the writing assessment literacy of Turkish EFL teachers is scarce. For this reason, the current study aimed to investigate the writing assessment beliefs, strategies, practices, and knowledge of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level as well as their writing challenges and future training needs. For this purpose, 94 participants completed the Writing Assessment Literacy Questionnaire, adapted from Crusan et al. (2016), answering forty-three multiple-choice questions and 5-item Likert-scale items. Also, fourteen teachers agreed to participate in the semi-structured interviews. Employing a convergent parallel design method (Creswell, 2015), the study revealed mixed results in terms of Turkish EFL teachers WAL beliefs, practices, strategies, and knowledge. On the other side, the qualitative analysis indicated that Turkish EFL teachers have differing beliefs in terms of writing assessment and that they employ a variety of writing practices and strategies. The study has also revealed what kind of future assessment training needs Turkish EFL teachers have. Finally, the study has laid out the pedagogical implications, the limitations, and suggestions for future studies.

Keywords: Assessment knowledge, Assessment literacy, Teacher beliefs, Writing assessment, Writing assessment literacy

ÖZET
HAZIRLIK OKULU İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN YAZMA
DEĞERLENDİRME OKURYAZARLIĞI

Doğukan Hazar ÖZÇUBUK

Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı
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Yazma değerlendirmesi, öğretmenlerin mesleki yaşamlarında her zaman ölçmenin ve değerlendirmenin önemli bir bileşeni olmuştur ve iş yüklerinde önemli bir zaman alır. Ancak, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten Türk öğretim elemanlarının yazma değerlendirme okuryazarlığını araştıran çalışmaların sayısı azdır. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma, katılımcıların yazma değerlendirme inançlarını, stratejilerini, uygulamalarını ve bilgilerini, ayrıca yazma zorluklarını ve gelecekteki eğitim ihtiyaçlarını araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Bu amaçla, 94 katılımcı Crusan ve diğerlerinden (2016) uyarlanan Yazma Değerlendirmesi Okuryazarlık Anketini kırk üç çoktan seçmeli soruyu ve 5’li Likert ölçeği maddelerini yanıtlayarak doldurmuştur. Ayrıca, on dört öğretim elemanı yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelere katılmıştır. Yakınsayan paralel tasarımı (Creswell, 2015) kullanan çalışma, katılımcıların WAL seviyelerine, uygulamalarına, stratejilerine ve bilgilerine yönelik karışık sonuçlar ortaya koymuştur. Nitel analiz ise, katılımcıların yazma değerlendirmesi konusunda farklı görüşlere sahip olduklarını ve farklı yazma uygulamalarına ve stratejilerine sahip olduklarını göstermiştir. Çalışma, katılımcıların gelecekte ne tür değerlendirme eğitimine ihtiyaçları olduğunu da ortaya koymuştur. Son olarak, çalışma pedagojik çıkarımlara, sınırlılıklara ve geleceğe yönelik önerilere yer vermiştir.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Değerlendirme bilgisi, Değerlendirme okuryazarlığı, Öğretmen inançları, Yazma değerlendirmesi, Yazma değerlendirme okuryazarlığı

25/06/2024

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL PRINCIPLES AND RULES

I hereby truthfully declare that this thesis is an original work prepared by me; that I have behaved in accordance with the scientific ethical principles and rules throughout the stages of preparation, data collection, analysis and presentation of my work; that I have cited the sources of all the data and information that could be obtained within the scope of this study, and included these sources in the references section; and that this study has been scanned for plagiarism with “scientific plagiarism detection programme” used by Anadolu University, and that “it does not have any plagiarism” whatsoever. I also declare that, if a case contrary to my declaration is detected in my work at any time, I hereby express my consent to all the ethical and legal consequences that are involved.

Doğukan Hazar ÖZÇUBUK

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Eskişehir 2024

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AL	: Assessment Literacy
AfL	: Assessment for Learning
AoL	: Assessment of Learning
LAK	: Language Assessment Knowledge
LAL	: Language Assessment Literacy
LTA	: Language Testing and Assessment
TAL	: Teacher Assessment Literacy
TWAL	: Teacher Writing Assessment Literacy
WAL	: Writing Assessment Literacy



CHAPTER 1

1.INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the background of the study is briefly discussed, along with its purpose and significance. Finally, the research questions are presented, and key terms that will be used throughout the study are briefly defined.

1.1.Background of the Study

Second language assessment has garnered so much attention in the last two decades of the twenty-first century and has firmly established its position in language testing and assessment (LTA) research. The recent focus on LTA is not surprising, given its notable prominence in the realm of research and considering its potential impact both within and beyond the educational setting. This is because effective classroom assessment necessitates a substantial commitment of time and energy, with teachers devoting as much as 40% of their time directly dedicated to assessment-related tasks and activities (Coombe et al., 2012; Stiggins, 1988). While the teacher primarily exerts a significant impact on the learning that takes place in the classroom (Darling-Hammond, 2000), an essential element of this dynamic is the practice of evaluating students' progress within the classroom. It could be argued that this is indeed accurate, given that effective instruction and proper assessment must be closely intertwined (Eckhout et al., 2005). Particularly crucial, given that teachers must possess competence to proficiently evaluate students' assessments, as underscored by Stiggins (1999), is the imperative requirement to provide training to educators in LTA, whether they are pre-service teachers who are still receiving education to become full-time practitioners or are in-service teachers who are in pursuit of professional and personal growth in their professions (Brown, 2008; DeLuca & Lam, 2015). Furthermore, language assessment carries significant implications for various parties engaged in the assessment process, encompassing learners, teachers, parents, and policymakers, in terms of societal, individual, personal, and economic aspects (Schissel, 2019; Shohamy, 2001).

Introduced to the literature through the impactful study by Stiggins (1991), the notion of assessment literacy (AL) has undergone a process of development and expansion in its overall scope since its inception. According to this work, there is a specific distinction between assessment-literate and assessment-illiterate teachers. On one hand, assessment-illiterate teachers struggle to produce high-quality assessments and

fail to interpret what the data from their tests mean, which makes them unable to “be critical consumers of assessment data” (Stiggins, 1991, p. 535). On the other hand, those who are assessment-literate have a better understanding of what quality assessment means and the necessary tools to apply this knowledge to enhance various student achievements. As a result, individuals who are expected to actively participate in assessment procedures must be subjected to specialised training in assessment to be deemed proficient in assessment, another concept advocated by Stiggins (1991) as the incorporation of assessment into the educational curriculum.

It is important to note that a year before AL was brought into the LTA world, the American Federation of Teachers, the National Council on Measurement in Education, and the National Education Association (1990) proposed a set of standards for teachers to possess with regards to students’ assessment in general education, titled *Standards for Teacher Competence in Educational Assessment of Students*. It was suggested that these principles in the *Standards* were essential to fostering teachers’ consciousness of assessment practices within and beyond classroom settings. These principles can be classified into two overarching categories. The initial one pertains to instruction: teachers should possess the capacity to choose, develop, and evaluate dependable evaluations that bolster the enhancement of learning, teaching, and educational institution objectives. Second, the other category revolves around the use of tests and the consequences derived from them: teachers ought to be cognisant of the appropriate and inappropriate applications of assessments, as well as possess the ability to effectively communicate the results to diverse audiences (Giraldo, 2018). While this set of guidelines does not explicitly establish AL as a research domain or present a precise definition, it undeniably facilitated the exploration of LTA for researchers and scholars. Nevertheless, the earlier endeavours to delineate AL were primarily centred on measurement theory and practical application (Pastore & Andrade, 2019). At the same time, although Brindley (2001) criticised this set of standards for their ambiguity, he also acknowledged its comprehensiveness, proposing that these standards could lay the groundwork for experts in professional development to come up with instruments, programmes, and tools to equip teachers with the requisite aspects described within the standards. Moreover, global efforts to establish similar principles and standards in the field are evident in other forms. For example, the International Language Testing Association (2000, 2007) published guidelines pertaining to both practical applications and ethical considerations. Twenty

years later after the term was coined, Brookhart (2011) asserted that the standards should be updated and that AL should be re-defined, which suggests that AL has always been an overly complex concept.

Language assessment literacy (LAL), an integral component of AL and frequently employed interchangeably in various contexts, pertains to the acquisition of literacy in the realm of language acquisition and pedagogy. Although LAL has been accepted as a prominent field in recent years and a plethora of research studies have been published, Lee and Butler (2020) state that LAL research is still in its infancy but has still managed to yield “valuable information regarding the nature of LAL” (p. 1099). Similarly, an abundance of research investigations has made noteworthy contributions to the distinctive requirements that are demanded in the realm of LAL. The absence of a universally accepted definition for LAL might arise from the inherent nature and extensive coverage of this conceptual framework (Kremmel & Harding, 2019). Notwithstanding the lack of a unanimous consensus on its definition, in the early years of its rise, LAL has also received recognition from other fields, especially applied linguistics. To give an example, in her influential work, Clapham (2000) proposed that the skills required in LTA are not exquisitely confined to the professionals in that domain but also pertinent for those engaged in other fields, such as applied linguistics, who use tests or other elicitation techniques to collect and use data within their respective fields. This suggestion is also true in the relationship between assessment and language teaching. In the past, while many researchers tried to find a connection between LTA and teaching (e.g., Bachman & Palmer, 1996), other researchers suggested that applied linguistics, among other fields, could feed language testing as a discipline (e.g., Alderson & Clapham, 1992). Correspondingly, it is evidenced that methods of assessment and language teaching in the classroom have a mutual relationship (Wall, 1997) and that new methods in language teaching have the potential to change how we are teaching in the classroom (Spolsky, 1995). Given the importance of assessment in language teaching and as a research area, it should not come as a surprise that AL has risen to prominence as a prevailing discipline within the area of assessment (Popham, 2008).

It was near the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century when the literature witnessed the turning point for AL as a dominant research field. To begin with, Davies (2008) examined the trends in language testing textbooks in the last fifty years, noting that there was an increasing expansion in the resources regarding assessment training.

Further, he suggested that the expansion of the knowledge and skills needed in the field coincided with growing professionalism. Different from the previous trends, the language testing books now feature more than technical expertise and knowledge about language and measurement; understanding key principles, such as ethics, is also required to achieve proficiency in AL. After this seminal work, there were many more research studies that focused on different aspects of assessment training and courses, such as the quality of assessment courses (e.g., Greenberg & Walsh, 2012), course content (e.g., Popham, 2011), and language assessment courses in general (e.g., Bailey & Brown, 2008).

As a contribution to the discussion of constructing a language assessment knowledge base, Inbar-Lourie (2008) discussed how important it was to establish a framework for LAL. In her article, she discussed that it is important to create a culture in which assessment can survive and, more importantly, thrive. Her proposal posits that language assessment is not solely connected to instructional methods in education but rather finds advantages in the cultural and societal contexts in which it operates. Therefore, building on Falsgraf (2005), who proposed that AL is closely knitted to the capacity to comprehend, analyse, and apply information on student performance to improve instruction, she expressed that LAL entails the ability to pose and address critical questions about the purpose of assessment, about the suitability of the test tool that is being used, about the testing environment, and about what the language tester can do with the results gathered from the test (Inbar-Lourie, 2008). As a result, she conceptualised LAL as having three essential components: the *what*, the *how*, and the *why*, with a stronger emphasis on the latter. Although her definition focused on classroom-based assessment, she highlighted the teachers' agency in designing, conducting, and interpreting the outcomes of these assessments. Her definition laid out the foundation of the core competencies, which required teachers to be considered assessment-literate. Thus, language teachers are mandated to integrate and apply their disciplinary pedagogical knowledge in tandem with their assessment knowledge in their language teaching practices (Zolfaghari & Ahmadi, 2016).

Following the expanded definition of LAL, Taylor (2009) joined the call that language teachers and educators need more instructions and resources to be considered assessment-literate. As an attempt to increase our understanding of what is meant by LAL, she broadened the concept to describe "the level of knowledge, skills, and understanding of assessment principles and practice that is increasingly required by other test

stakeholder groups” (p. 24). At the culmination of her review, she put forth the suggestion that to be proficient in LAL, one must possess a distinct set of skills and knowledge, along with principles. To achieve such proficiency, she advocated for the incorporation of eight dimensions that pertain to the development of language assessment literacy: (1) knowledge of theory, (2) technical skills, (3) principles and concepts, (4) language pedagogy, (5) sociocultural values, (6) local practices, (7) personal beliefs and attitudes, and (8) scores and decision-making (Taylor, 2009).

Moreover, Davies (2008) reported that language testing course books follow a “*skills + knowledge* approach to the current attempt to take account also of *principles*” (p. 328). Building on this proposal, Fulcher (2012) provided an expanded definition, though he also taught that the discussion on knowledge, skills, and principles was still in progress. He proposed that AL is having “the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to design, develop, maintain, or evaluate large-scale standardised and/or classroom-based tests, familiarity with test processes, and awareness of principles and concepts that guide and underpin practice, including ethics and codes of practice” (p. 125).

Similarly, other researchers (e.g., Hamp-Lyons, 2008) proposed that increasing the levels of AL is not only limited to offering more opportunities to professionals but also paving the way forward for more personal and professional development. As a result of such calls for more conceptualisation, Taylor (2013) proposed that a category of stakeholders in relation to their AL/LAL profiles is necessary to differentiate between different stakeholders (i.e., test writers, teachers, administrators, and professional language testers). In this proposed spider web, different stakeholder groups are described as experiencing differing degrees of interest in relation to their involvement in LTA. Consequently, this conceptualisation and representation of different AL/LAL profiles for four constituencies marked another crucial turning point for the field.

Examining the research investigations from a wider vantage point, a variety of different research studies in the field of LAL have been primarily concerned with the endeavour of determining the precise definition of this construct and identifying the essential characteristics and features that must be possessed to be recognised as assessment-literate. As a result, authors in the LTA field have taken the initiative to provide a more thorough and encompassing explanation of the concept. They have aimed to elucidate what it means to be assessment-literate in language learning and teaching. For instance, Popham (2011), in his reflection, described LAL as an “individual’s

understanding of the fundamental assessment concepts and procedures deemed likely to influence educational decisions” (p. 265), whereas Webb (2002) reported that LAL is characterised by the understanding of evaluating students’ knowledge and skills, interpreting the results of these evaluations, and using these findings to improve both student learning and programme effectiveness. To put it briefly, prior studies have also highlighted a growing acknowledgement that effective assessment can foster student learning (Hamp-Lyons, 2017), as teachers can adapt their teaching to suit students’ needs and areas for improvement if they are assessment-literate enough to know how they can interpret the data they get from their students’ performances (Xu & Brown, 2017).

Given the importance placed on teachers because of this relationship between them and their students, it is not unexpected that stakeholders in this domain tend to expect assessment to fulfil a few responsibilities, such as diagnosing learning needs and verifying the achievement of standards in educational settings (Purpura, 2011). Moreover, language assessment is necessary for a systematic approach to elicit test results and make inferences about these results to make decisions about the performances of individuals. Owing to the pivotal role of language assessment, the term ‘assessment literacy’ has gained prominence to signify the knowledge and skills which various stakeholders must possess to participate in the tasks associated with assessment (Boyles, 2005; Stoyhoff & Chapelle, 2005).

Despite the high number of attempts to provide clarity on the definition of AL/LAL, there has not been a recognised consensus in the literature. However, according to Giraldo (2020), this characteristic of LAL is not acting as a deterrent factor; rather, it beckons the need for more research in this area. In the same manner, Stable-Havener (2018) proposed that a group of academics and scholars should generate ways to find out exactly what LAL means and how it is used, especially for language teachers. Both prior to and following these calls and requests, additional research studies and conceptualisations have contributed to our comprehension of the components within LAL. To name a few examples, the special edition of *Language Testing* (2013) journal with several publications solely dedicated to LAL, the research studies that were published in *Papers in Language Testing and Assessment* (2017), and the 39th Language Testing Research Colloquium in Colombia (2017) have made noteworthy contributions to making LAL one of the most researched areas in the twenty-first century (Farhady & Tavassoli, 2021). Because of these contributions and investigations, the field of LAL began to gain

recognition as a dominant domain of academic inquiry in which additional empirical studies are necessary and further conceptualisations and frameworks are proposed so that they can enhance our comprehension of the LAL construct in a more comprehensive manner (e.g., O’Laughlin, 2013; Vogt & Tsagari, 2014). Moreover, there has also been an escalating acknowledgement and an elevation of consciousness regarding the methods by which stakeholders, especially teachers, can increase their comprehensive linguistic and literacy capabilities. For instance, to be able to construct a deeper understanding of assessment strategies and methodologies, Davidson and Coombe (2019) have put forward several ways teachers can employ so that they could become more assessment-literate, such as studying language testing at the undergraduate and post-graduate level, reading journals that specialise in language testing, and participating in conferences, seminars, and other professional development programmes. Overall, these studies are frequently cited in the literature, serving as foundational sources for the LAL studies globally.

On the other side of the coin, instead of only focusing on the skills, knowledge, and principles associated with LAL, in a more recent research study, Crusan et al. (2016) asserted that LAL encompasses more than the methods and contents of testing; AL is also closely related to teachers’ beliefs, knowledge, and behaviours. In their study, the authors directed their attention towards the cognitive understanding and proficiencies associated with the evaluation of written work that educators are required to possess, taking a different approach compared to previous LAL research. Additionally, they highlighted the noteworthy influence that teachers’ own viewpoints and encounters can exert in shaping their identities as assessors. As a result, it can be argued that, as a tool to foster learners’ self-awareness, pinpoint writing strengths and weaknesses, and outline future writing instruction (Plakans & Gebril, 2015), writing assessment transcends the simple evaluation of a text’s quality at the end of an assignment or a course; it is an ongoing and dynamic process (Crusan & Matsuda, 2018). In this process, teachers’ beliefs can play a key role, as each teacher has their own evaluation and judgement about the nature of writing, and their own perception of how it is learnt and how it should be assessed (Karaca & Uysal, 2021).

One of the most seminal studies on this topic is a research study by Crusan et al. (2016). In their groundbreaking study, wherein the authors explicitly talked about teacher writing assessment literacy (TWAL), they underscored that teachers’ prior language teaching and learning experiences are not only as impactful as their language testing

knowledge and skills, but they are among the most crucial deciding factors relating to what they are going to do and how they are likely to implement them in their classes. Because teachers' assessment literacy (TAL) is the link between sound assessment and student achievement (Mertler, 2009), it is necessary that teachers are equipped with more than just language testing knowledge base. Moreover, according to Campbell and Collins (2007), efficient assessment implementation will increase students' overall language achievement. On another note, Yan et al. (2018) found out that experiential factors and contextual facets are also important contributors to teachers' assessment knowledge. Therefore, it can be suggested that the influence of perspectives, perceptions, behaviours, and other factors, such as context and experience, can affect and contribute to the LAL levels of the teachers.

AL is of paramount significance (Scarino, 2013) and key for teachers to have an "understanding and appropriate use of assessment practices along with the knowledge of the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings in the measurement of students' learning" (DeLuca & Klingen, 2010, pp. 419-420). Otherwise, the link between student achievement and quality assessment might be severed because it is often the case that teachers lack the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out assessment-related tasks effectively (Crusan et al., 2016; Jin, 2010; Pastore & Andrade, 2019; Stiggins, 2002; Tsagari & Vogt, 2017). Overall, although there is not an agreed-upon term concerning the definition of LAL as a construct, there is a consensus supporting the notion that teachers should be well-versed in AL.

While most research studies concentrate on AL in the context of assessing language skills in general, studies addressing other language skills, such as reading and writing, are scarce and need more attention because these skills require a more analytical view (Kim & Kim, 2021). In this respect, Lam (2019) focused on the knowledge, conceptions, and practices of classroom-based writing assessment in Hong Kong to investigate English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' writing proficiency and their assessment abilities. Similarly, to explore the teachers' beliefs about different writing assessment methods, general assessment issues in writing classes, and scoring accuracy in writing assessment, Valizadeh (2019) found out that more than 90% of the participant teachers stated that they still needed more instruction about writing abilities. Overall, the number of research studies that focused on TWAL, the beliefs, strategies, and practices of teachers at tertiary level, is limited and irregular because of their nature (Karaca & Uysal, 2021). As a result,

the present study aimed to portray WAL, teachers' beliefs, strategies, practices, and knowledge of EFL teachers at a preparatory school in the Turkish context, keeping in mind that LAL includes not only teachers' skills and knowledge but also considers their past educational experiences, including both their roles as students and teachers (Crusan et al., 2016).

1.2.Statement of the Problem

In terms of classroom assessment, EFL teachers are found to spare up to 40% of their classroom time to assess their students (Cheng et al., 2004), whereas that number is 25% for English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers (Bachman, 2014). Considering how much time is devoted to assessing and evaluating students, it is highly significant for teachers to be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills, especially when assessment has the power to have a significant positive washback effect on student success when used effectively (Hughes, 2003). As a result of such effective assessment, teachers can improve their teaching, their students' learning, and the overall quality of the classroom assessment (Malone, 2011). The powerful effect assessment can have on what students can do in the classroom and how they do it has been discussed (Boud & Falchikov, 2007). Simply put, students may manage to overcome the negative effects of poor teaching, while the adverse effects of poor assessment might be more serious for them (Boud, 1995). As Giraldo (2021) put it, "language assessment is inevitable. The opposite, lack of education in language assessment, may have the potential to lead to malpractice and language learners becoming the victims of poor assessment" (p. 79).

In terms of the benefits of an effective and influential writing assessment, previous studies have evidenced that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages (e.g., Crusan, 2021; Lam, 2015; Lee, 2011). Giving students feedback in relation to formative assessment, creating assessment rubrics and explaining the scoring criteria to the students, and planning future instruction depending on students' performances provide the necessary transparency in assessing writing, which are all necessary if teachers want to implement sound and solid writing assessment practices (Lee, 2017; Weigle, 2007). The power of writing assessment, especially when it has formative qualities, cannot be overlooked.

Since the phenomenal work of Black and William (1998), who portrayed that formative assessment needed to play a more pivotal role in classroom assessment, there

has been an upward trend among researchers and theorists who have pointed to the benefits of having assessment-literate teachers. Nonetheless, multiple research studies have attempted to unveil the subject matter and have evidenced that a substantial number of teachers and educators lack the necessary skills to be deemed proficient in language assessment. Additionally, they continue to experience a lack of confidence in themselves when it comes to assessing their students within and beyond the classroom. Many research studies have attempted to fill this gap in the literature (e.g., Fulcher, 2012; Lam, 2018; Mertler, 2009; Pill & Harding, 2013; Vogt et al., 2020) to find out what constitutes the competencies required for LAL, what the aspects of teachers' AL are, and what can be done to promote more training, workshops, and programmes to foster AL among language teachers as well as other stakeholder groups, such as administrators, students, and even parents (e.g., DiBiase-Lubiano, 2018; Jeong, 2013; Malone, 2013).

Overall, offering a variety of recommendations as to how professional development programmes can better enhance AL, Popham (2009) claimed that it is the key to effective teaching. As a result, AL is acknowledged as a prerequisite for effective instruction of the language, regardless of how the assessment is executed in the classroom, assuming that it is sound and robust. Newer perspectives in terms of assessing students have emerged with the beginning of the twenty-first century, and researchers have tried to change the way we view assessment and generate different forms of assessment, such as Assessment for Learning (Brown, 2005), Assessment as Learning (Earl, 2003), and Dynamic Assessment (Lantolf, 2009). No matter what the medium is, assessment as a construct is two-fold: generic and specific (Inbar-Lourie, 2013). The generic aspect implies that teachers should possess the knowledge base in assessment that is common across various educational domains in language testing. On the other side, the specific aspect encompasses the essential writing assessment knowledge that EFL teachers need to possess and use in their language testing. In contrast to the importance given to LAL and writing assessment, little has been done to investigate the beliefs, strategies, practices, and knowledge of teachers at tertiary level in Türkiye in these two areas.

Specifically, English is taught as a foreign language in Türkiye, which puts EFL within the educational curriculum, starting from primary education and extending through tertiary level (Ölmezer-Öztürk & Aydın, 2019). To explain further, English is taught in a systematic and intensive way at schools of foreign languages at universities (Aydın et al., 2017); however, how teachers employ their assessment skills and knowledge to instruct

their students has not been explored to its potential. Additionally, Türkiye is an exam-focused country, and students are required to pass various tests to be considered successful. Past research has highlighted that despite the emphasis placed on this assessment process, students often struggle to improve their English language proficiency, which can be attributed to the changing educational policies in the country. Similarly, among Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development countries, (Savaşkan, 2016), Türkiye is one of the countries where learners and test takers get the lowest language proficiency scores. Such a limited success of students in terms of their assessment practices can be attributed to the insufficient assessment knowledge and skills among the teachers (Mellati & Khademi, 2018). Therefore, further research is imperative to analyse the situation, especially within the Turkish educational context.

1.3.Purpose of the Study

White (2009) asserted that a “teacher’s level of assessment literacy directly affects student learning and course achievement” (p. 4). Assessment plays a crucial role in shaping the educational process and outcomes by identifying what is considered valued or important for students to learn (Looney et al., 2017); therefore, teachers’ assessment knowledge, skills, and principles determine the quality of assessment practices (Engelsen & Smith, 2014). Hence, it is crucial to explore the present status of EFL instructors at tertiary level in terms of their assessment competencies, especially their beliefs, strategies, practices, and knowledge concerning writing assessment. As a response to the evidence that “a research-practice gap exists” (Crusan, 2021, p. 431), the present study aims to explore two crucial points concerning TWAL.

The primary objective is to explore teachers’ WAL, beliefs, strategies, practices, and knowledge at tertiary level in the Turkish context because it is suggested that being assessment-literate plays a key role in the teaching and learning process (Kremmel & Harding, 2019). Another purpose of the study is to uncover Turkish EFL teachers’ beliefs, strategies, practices, and knowledge regarding writing assessment, and how they affect each other because it is proposed that teachers’ beliefs and perceptions regarding writing assessment might influence their assessment practices (Atak, 2019). Additionally, this study aims to uncover these teachers’ challenges which they encounter in the assessment of writing as well as their future assessment training needs.

To comprehensively address the dearth of information in the current body of literature, to respond to the need for additional research studies within the LAL domain, and to augment our comprehension of teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and perceptions pertaining to TWAL, the present study endeavours to examine teachers' competencies, methodologies, and viewpoints in connection with their proficiency in assessing and evaluating writing work. The study also aims to explore the teachers' current WAL levels, their knowledge of writing assessment, and their overall perception of writing assessment in relation to their instructional practices and performances as EFL teachers in Türkiye. Additionally, this study hopes to uncover how these teachers are adjusting to the modifications that the process of assessment demands from them (Inbar-Lourie, 2008; Taylor, 2013).

1.4. Significance of the Study

The significance of the current study lies in its contribution to the understanding of the WAL of the EFL teachers at tertiary level as well as in its implications regarding in what ways the assessment practices of writing teachers can be enhanced. As a result, the findings of the current study can contribute to the body of AL, both on a national and international level. The number of empirical research studies in this area is sporadic on a national level, and there is a higher calling to conduct more empirical research on an international level. Moreover, the findings of the current investigation can assist in identifying diverse strategies through which processes in assessment can contribute towards attaining student success while also guaranteeing that students benefit from assessments of high quality that will be closely aligned with high-quality instruction. Furthermore, the findings of the present study can help discover innovative ways assessment can be used to help achieve student success, in addition to making sure that students benefit from assessment of quality that will go hand in hand with teaching of quality. Hence, the findings of the study will be significant, as LAL will aid in augmenting students' language proficiency because, with higher LAL levels, language teachers can help students attain higher levels of academic achievement (Coombe et al., 2012).

Considering the influential role of assessment in language learning, this study can also deliver a more comprehensive and clearer analysis of WAL within and beyond the language classroom. Overall, WAL, what kind of strategies and practices teachers implement in writing assessment, their beliefs and perceptions concerning writing

assessment, their knowledge, and how they practice writing assessment in the classroom are all areas of concern because teachers' understandings of writing instruction can help them improve their own writing assessment practices (Lee, 2010), and, as a result, students can develop their own evaluative and productive knowledge in their writings (Hawe & Dixon, 2014). By drawing attention towards the strategies, beliefs, and practices of EFL instructors at tertiary level, the findings of the current research might also benefit the researchers and language educators in the Turkish context and help pave the way for future research studies, enhance language education programmes, and even help create useful materials that will increase the quality of writing practices throughout the country as well as international organisations and institutions.

1.5. Research Questions

To date, there has been a paucity of research regarding the WAL of EFL teachers at tertiary level in Türkiye. Additional research is warranted to provide further insights into this issue and address Valizadeh's (2019) call for more investigation to discover how to elevate the quality of writing instruction in the EFL context in Türkiye. As a result, the current study focused on the following research questions:

1. What are the writing assessment beliefs and perceptions of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level?
2. What are their self-reported writing assessment strategies and practices at tertiary level?
3. What is their writing assessment knowledge at tertiary level?
4. What kind of challenges do they face in assessing writing, and how do these challenges impact their assessment practices?
5. What are their assessment training needs teachers at tertiary level?

1.6. Definition of Key Terms

The current section lays out the definitions of key terms that will be used throughout the study. These definitions are provided below:

Assessment

Assessment "indicates the collection of information about student learning that might include not only tests but also a variety of techniques such as performance tasks,

portfolios, and observation” (Rogier, 2014, p. 2). Therefore, assessment is viewed as a continuous and ongoing process that entails monitoring, interpreting, recording, and using information about learners’ progress on educational tasks (Lambert & Lines, 2013; Lan & Fan, 2019) so that teachers can use this information to make decisions on learners’ language abilities (Bachman & Palmer, 2010). In the context of writing, assessment plays an integral role in needs analysis, material design and development, lesson planning, feedback, and evaluation. Overall, it can foster students’ self-awareness, enabling them to recognise their writing proficiency, shortcomings, and successes, thereby contributing to their overall writing development.

Assessment Literacy (AL)

“Assessment literacy” (Boyles, 2005; Inbar-Lourie, 2008; Malone, 2008; Stiggins, 1991) “refers to the ability to understand, analyse, and apply information on student performance to improve instruction” (Falsgraf, 2005, p. 6). Simply put, it is “a teacher’s familiarity with those measurement basics related directly to what goes on in the classroom” (Popham, 2009, p. 4), as the concept of AL can be used to describe the knowledge, skills, and understanding of assessment principles (Davies, 2008; Taylor, 2009).

Language Assessment Literacy (LAL)

Language assessment literacy refers to “stakeholders’ (often with a focus on instructors’) familiarity with measurement practices and the application of this knowledge to classroom practices in general and specifically to issues of assessing language” (Malone, 2013; Stiggins, 2001; Taylor, 2009). Overall, it is the accumulation of a set of skills regarding test construction, test interpretation and use, test evaluation, and classroom-based assessment, in addition to having a critical stance towards the functions of assessment in the educational context (Lam, 2015; O’Laughlin, 2013). Although LAL encompasses the knowledge, skills, and principles that the stakeholders should possess to manage different assessment activities related to language (Gan & Lam, 2022), it can also be a competence (Baker & Riches, 2018), a knowledge base (Inbar-Lourie, 2008), or even an ability (Deygers & Malone, 2019).

Writing Assessment Literacy (WAL)

Weigle (2007) proposed that “writing teachers must be adequately prepared to construct, administer, score, and communicate the results of valid and reliable classroom tests” (p. 195). Building upon this concept, Crusan (2010) mentioned that second language (L2) writing teachers must be informed assessors of writing (i.e., know the difference between formative and summative assessment). Also, Crusan et al. (2016) stated that WAL is not only related to content or delivery but deeply rooted in teachers’ knowledge, beliefs, and practices. Overall, WAL can be defined as

the ability of teachers to create effective assignments and their accompanying scoring tools, to understand the reasons for assessing their students’ writing, to recognise the value of student self-assessment, to identify why, how, and when to use data gathered from assessments, and to carry on their assessment duties ethically and conscientiously (Crusan, 2021, p. 431).

CHAPTER 2

2.LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, fundamental concepts in language testing and assessment are discussed. Additionally, types of assessment are briefly explained. The chapter ends with research studies in relation to LAL and WAL, conducted both on an international level and in the context of Türkiye.

2.1.Assessment

Teaching and assessment are two interconnected aspects that cannot be thought of separately. For assessment to take place, teaching must be prioritised; however, as previously examined, teachers are involved in assessment-related procedures both within and beyond the educational settings; therefore, it can be argued that teaching and assessment are the two sides of the same coin (DiRanna et al., 2008). An inherent component of the teaching process in an educational setting, assessment may cause perplexity among individuals due to its tendency to be employed interchangeably with similar terms, such as testing, measurement, and evaluation. Consequently, it becomes crucial to establish clear distinctions among these terminologies.

First, according to Clarke (1998), assessment “is not one thing; it manifests itself as a wealth of different strategies and products” (p. 5). Therefore, assessment is “a term often used interchangeably with testing but also used more broadly to encompass the gathering of language data” (Davies et al., 1999, p. 11). In this sense, assessment includes any systematic approach to collecting information about students, and teachers use this gathered information to interpret the results and make decisions and judgements about the teaching and learning processes (López Mendoza & Bernal Arandia, 2009). According to Purpura (2016), assessment is “a systematic procedure for eliciting test and non-test data for the purpose of making inferences or claims about certain language-related characteristics of an individual” (p. 191). Similarly, according to Brown (2003), the collection of data regarding performance, whether through deliberate or unintentional means, is an ongoing procedure. As a result, teachers and educators can get beneficial results about students’ performance so that they can make necessary modifications concerning their instructional objectives and procedures. Further, Coombe (2018) identified assessment as “the systematic process of evaluating and measuring collected data and information on students’ language knowledge, understanding, and ability in

order to improve their language learning and development” (p. 10). In an analogous way, Bachman (2005) suggests that there are various methods for assessment to be employed, such as tasks, observation, essays, portfolios, checklists, and even standardised tests with multiple-choice items.

In conclusion, assessment might function as a broad term that encompasses the processes of examination, which include the designing and implementing of the assessment. It also includes a wide variety of techniques, approaches, or instruments, such as examinations, oral tasks, portfolios, and projects. The primary objective of these instruments is to gather data regarding a learner’s ability, performance, understanding, and capability to use the language studied and learnt.

Second, a test is a subset of assessment in an environment where there are various instructional activities. Assessment is a broader term, while tests are prepared tasks for the purposes of assessment. For the distinction between the two terminologies, Katz (2012) stated that “assessment refers to a broad array of methods and approaches to collect information so as to make decisions about learning, in contrast to term testing, which is used to refer to one form of assessment” (p. 66). Indeed, testing is commonly known as a means of assessing individuals’ knowledge or skills in a particular field (Brown, 2003). According to Green (2014), a test is “an event that is especially set up to elicit a performance (usually within a predetermined time frame) for the purpose of making judgements about a person’s knowledge, skills, or abilities.” As the definition shows, these tasks are used to uncover students’ language performances and abilities, which pertains to a quantitative measurement of language skills with an emphasis on objectivity as well as reliability (Lynch, 2003). Overall, testing can be characterised as a modality, or an approach used to quantify an individual’s level of understanding, ability, skill, or performance by means of tests and examinations.

Third, the concept of measurement is the link between testing and assessment, as it is referred to as “the process of quantifying the characteristics of an object of interest according to explicit rules and procedures” (Bachman, 2005, p. 8). It can be suggested that measurement is a kind of assessment that takes quantity or numeric scales into consideration and then classifies knowledge into scores. As Coombe et al. (2012) suggested, “assigning test scores to someone’s vocabulary knowledge or reading proficiency are both examples of measuring an attribute” (p. 29). Measurement, as a result, is achieved with reliable and valid tests, clearly defined assessment specifications

and criteria, and through the implementation of administrative procedures. These measures establish a connection between unobservable attributes being measured and observable performance being evaluated (Bachman, 2005).

Another term that is associated with assessment is evaluation, which “involves making value judgements and decisions” (Bachman, 2005, p. 9), based on the information gathered from the assessment process. As measurement relates to a number or a score that a student gets from a test, evaluation pertains to the “systematic gathering of information in order to make a decision” (Davies et al., 1999, p. 56) about the data collected on students’ language knowledge and ability. Overall, using the information gathered from the test is the primary objective of the evaluation process (Bachman & Palmer, 2010). To briefly explain the difference between measurement and evaluation, let us imagine that a student takes a test. If the student is given an 80 out of 100, that is measurement (an objective measurement). However, if the student is thought to be successful, that is evaluation (a subjective or evaluative decision). See Figure 2.1 for the relationship between test, measurement, assessment, and evaluation, which are all critical aspects of language testing and instruction.

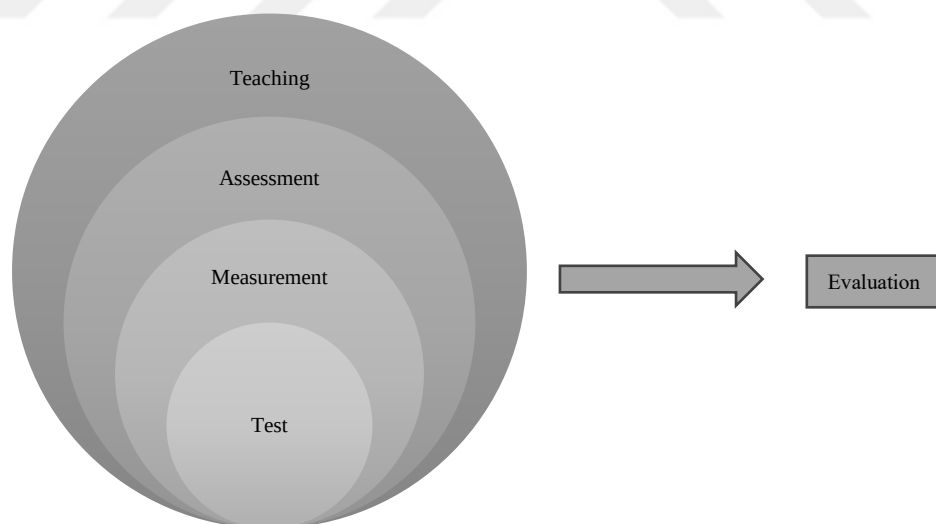


Figure 2.1. *Relationship between terms associated with assessment (adapted from Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019, p. 7)*

In summary, assessment stands out as a crucial yet intricate responsibility, demanding proficiency from teachers and educators in both instructional and evaluative aspects (Jannati, 2015). Described as a “power tool” (Stiggins, 2005, p. 324), assessment is pivotal in instructional settings because it helps improve learning in general, influences

student motivation, and enhances students' self-concept (Gebril, 2017). Additionally, assessment plays a key role in shaping students' academic achievements. That is, when teachers possess the ability to understand and use suitable and efficient assessment instruments and tools, they are closer to enhancing their students' academic achievements (Marzano, 2000). Overall, assessment, in conjunction with objectives, materials, activities, and methodology, constitutes one of the fundamental cornerstones of the instructional process in language teaching (Önalan & Karagül, 2018).

Given the pivotal function of assessment in educational objectives, it is not unexpected to concede that it has diversified throughout time, and presently, there exist multiple types of assessment. Formative assessment (FA), summative assessment (SA), assessment for learning (AfL), assessment of learning (AoL), traditional assessment, alternative assessment (AA), and dynamic assessment (DA) are discussed in the following sections.

2.1.1. Formative Assessment (FA)

In its basic form, formative assessment (FA) signifies the assessment of the advancement in language learning during the term, curriculum, or programme on multiple occasions (Brown, 2003; Coombe, 2018). It can be suggested that the process of language learning and the performance during that process are crucial elements in FA. As a result, FA encompasses all the endeavours undertaken by teachers and their students that yield data intended to be used as feedback so that the instructional and educational activities in which they are engaged can be enhanced (Black & William, 1998). Concerned with helping language learners better their language abilities (Büyükkarcı, 2010), FA seeks to assess the process of acquiring language to provide constructive criticism, enhance the quality of instruction in learning, and, most significantly, enable language learners to realise their areas of strength and weakness for the sole purpose of improvement in their academic journeys (Popham, 2009; William, 2011). FA is most effective when it is used regularly and throughout a term, curriculum, or programme because it “refers to the frequent, interactive assessments of students' process and understanding to identify learning needs and adjust teaching appropriately” (Looney, 2005, p. 21). Overall, FA possesses the capability to assist teachers and educators in not only acknowledging tests and examinations but also in considering the entirety of the educational experiences within and beyond the classroom (Öz & Atay, 2017). FA benefits from ongoing

assessment procedures such as feedback, observation, portfolios, projects, and students' own progress folders (Brown, 2003; Coombe, 2018). In summary, FA functions as a foundation for illustrating to both students and teachers the content they are learning and the extent to which they are learning it. In accordance with the instructional and learning objectives, specific modifications can be implemented to enhance the educational process.

2.1.2. Summative Assessment (SA)

Summative assessment (SA) is done at the end of a course, as opposed to the continuous nature of FA. Primarily, SA aims to “elicit evidence regarding the amount or level of knowledge, expertise, or ability” (William, 2001, p. 169). As a result, in contrast to the importance given to the process in FA, the product is more significant in SA because the aim is to find out how much students have learnt the target language at the end of a term (Coombe, 2018). For instance, SA is more suitable for administrative purposes, such as assigning grades to students, placing them in their language levels or classes, and deciding on promoting them to higher levels or classes (Genesee & Upshur, 1996). Taras (2005) posited that SA serves as a judgement that encapsulates all the evidence accumulated up to a particular point in time. Although this kind of assessment is “more retrospective than prospective, holds little value for teaching and learning” (Lee, 2011, p. 99), summative assessments are always graded, are often less frequent, and come at the end of training segments (Dixson & Worrell, 2016). Hence, the employment of SA proves beneficial in situations where it is essential to assess instructional events that have already been concluded, such as assessing the effectiveness of a language course spanning an entire semester (Popham, 2009). Consequently, SA pertains to the purpose of assisting teachers in making decisions, whether to proceed or not, by gauging the success of a final rendition of an instructional programme. SA includes common testing techniques, such as course tests, achievement tests, final exams, and proficiency exams (Coombe, 2018). To conclude, SA contains more formal practices to make judgmental and evaluative decisions about how much the students have accomplished at the end of their academic endeavours.

2.1.3. Assessment for Learning (AfL)

In basic terms, assessment for learning (AfL) is another name for formative assessment, and it refers to the evaluation of the learning process to give feedback and enhance language learning and performance in general (Coombe, 2018). The Assessment Reform Group recognised the potency assessment possessed in shaping learning and put forward seven fundamental principles that encapsulated the attributes of assessment that foster learning (William, 2011). In their description, Broadfoot et al. (1999) preferred to use the term ‘assessment for learning’ instead of formative assessment because they thought that the term formative assessment did not cover the new characteristics they proposed. Later, they defined AfL as “the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where the learners are in their learning, where they need to go, and how best to get there” (Broadfoot et al., 2002, pp. 2-3). In the current research field, the two terms are still used interchangeably; however, as Klenowski (2009) stated, AfL “is part of everyday practice by students, teachers, and peers that seeks, reflects upon, and responds to information from dialogue, demonstration, and observation in ways that enhance ongoing learning” (p. 264). In summary, although the definitions of FA and AfL differ in nature, they are both implemented to improve student learning (William, 2001).

Overall, although FA and AfL tend to be used interchangeably, William (2011) cautions against equating the terms with each other. Additionally, Davison and Leung (2009) claim that such terms underscore different aspects of the processes in assessment, but they are all used to point to a “teacher-mediated, context-based, classroom-embedded assessment practice, explicitly or implicitly defined in opposition to traditional externally set and assessed large scale formal examinations used primarily for selection and/or accountability purposes” (p. 395).

2.1.4. Assessment of Learning (AoL)

Assessment of learning (AoL) is another name for summative assessment, and it refers to judging performance and measuring outcomes after a formal learning activity (Crooks, 2011). In AoL, students’ performances and progress are assessed according to the predefined learning goals and objectives, occasionally serving the purpose of generating reports as a basis for administrative decisions (Earl, 2003). According to Coombe (2018), AoL refers to “a measurement or set of strategies that provides evidence

of whether the learner has successfully achieved the learning objective of a particular programme” (p. 11), the result of which is not used formatively to provide feedback and help enhance learning. Therefore, one could assert that assessments, the outcomes of which are conventionally employed to establish and communicate student accomplishments upon the culmination of a period of education, are denoted as AoL (Lan & Fan, 2019). These types of assessments tend to have significant societal implications for high-stakes decision-making processes; therefore, they are included within the evaluative and administrative determinations, such as the advancement of grades, admission to educational programmes, and qualification for scholarship (DeLuca & Klinger, 2010).

Like the distinction between FA and AfL, the difference between SA and AoL is minimal, only existing in their functions. Overall, “assessment for summative purposes involves collecting, interpreting, and reporting evidence of learning” (Dolin et al., 2018, p. 62). In close association with the concepts of validity and reliability, SA and AoL direct their attention towards instructional and educational goals that are attained through the entirety of a student’s academic term.

2.1.5. Traditional Assessment and Alternative Assessment (AA)

Traditional assessment is characterised as being standardised, one-time, summative, and product-oriented and is all about non-interactive performance (Brown, 2004). A traditional assessment task is thus defined as any examination that requires learners to select a single option from a specified array of responses, often including multiple-choice, true-false, and/or matching questions (Rovai, 2000). On the other side, alternative assessment (AA) differs from traditional assessment in that it requires students to demonstrate their abilities (Huerta-Macías, 2002) through such methods as writing samples, journals, portfolios, classroom projects, and interviews (Brown & Hudson, 1998). The main difference between traditional assessment and alternative assessment is that AA is not based on normed instruments, but rather on students’ performance in real-life tasks. Consequently, one can assert that AA is characterised as any method of assessment that deviates from traditional pen-and-paper examinations, necessitating students to exhibit their skills and knowledge that are not observable through multiple-choice or true-false questions (McNamara, 1997). Although AA is thought to be related to FA, it is associated with informal assessment procedures that are implemented in the

classroom (Clapham, 2000). In summary, AA focuses on the holistic performance of the students by highlighting their abilities in a way that is not graded in the same way as in traditional testing, where there are only right or wrong answers (Coombe, 2018). There are distinct types of AA in the domain of LTA, but the more popular ones are self-assessment, peer assessment, and other assessment types, such as portfolio and performance-based assessment.

2.1.6. Dynamic Assessment (DA)

One of the more recent approaches to assessment is dynamic assessment (DA), which Lantolf and Poehner (2004) tightly integrate with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of the Zone of Proximal Development. DA is based on the view that teaching is "an inherent part of all assessment, regardless of purpose or context" (Poehner et al., 2017, p. 243). This method of assessment integrates the existing understanding of overall learning and language acquisition, thus making it the most dependable approach to assessing students in educational language settings (Bachman, 2013). The purpose of implementing this kind of assessment is to fuse mediation and assessment together so that teachers can diagnose learning potential and promote development in accordance with this potential (Lantolf, 2009). As a result, there is an opportunity to observe what students can do when their teachers and peers play the mediator role to support them, as well as what they can do on their own, because teachers will "have a more valid understanding of students' performances compared to single-shot assessments" (Uyaniker, 2017, p. 13).

Based on this information, it is apparent that equipping teachers with such knowledge and skills is key to being proficient in their profession, especially in assessment. Consequently, a set of assessment competencies has been identified and endorsed within the field (Huang & He, 2016), and there has been a myriad of calls for teachers to reach a level of proficiency in assessment before they start teaching (Cui, 2008). Despite similar calls for action in the past, the emergence of AL as a concept is the starting point for the subsequent research studies.

2.2. Assessment Literacy (AL)

Stiggins (1991) initially proposed the idea of assessment literacy (AL) and suggested that it is essential to high-quality instruction and learning. He described AL as the ability to differentiate between low-quality and high-quality assessments and to use

this capability to draw conclusions about students' academic performances for future references. To achieve AL, teachers must have the necessary knowledge and skills related to instructional strategies (Stiggins, 1995). Furthermore, teachers need to be competent in interpreting and applying the gathered data to inform instruction, offer helpful feedback, direct students' learning, and report and document student achievements (Stiggins & Duke, 2008; Webb, 2002).

Due in large part to the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which raised national awareness of assessment and accountability across the country in the USA, AL mandates that teachers be initiated in their assessment training starting in their undergraduate studies (Mertler, 2009). Expanding Stiggins' (1991) definition of AL, Fullan and Watson (2000) defined it as the "capacity of teachers – alone and together – (a) to examine and accurately understand student work and performance data, and correspondingly, (b) to develop classroom and school plans to alter conditions necessary to achieve better results" (p. 475). In addition to a theoretical understanding, a teacher should be able to guarantee the validity and reliability of the assessment tool they employ and be knowledgeable about the approaches, methodologies, and ideas that directly impact the assessment process (Popham, 2009). Therefore, for assessments to have an impact on students' academic performance, teachers must be proficient in the theory and practice of the assessment knowledge; in other words, they must accurately determine what the learners need with a clear comprehension of both the content and the assessment methodology (Stanford & Reeves, 2005).

Moreover, various research studies, both empirical and theoretical, have been conducted to shed more light on this concept as a construct. For instance, Fulcher (2012) worked on an expanded definition of AL after working with a group of teachers in relation to their assessment practices. The study findings suggested that AL as a construct can be explained by three categories: (1) knowledge, skills, and abilities; (2) processes, principles, and concepts; and (3) historical, social, political, and philosophical frameworks. Building on Davies (2008), the study's findings led to the proposal of the following definition:

The knowledge, skills and abilities required to design, develop, maintain, or evaluate large-scale standardized and/or classroom-based tests, familiarity with test processes, and awareness of principles and concepts that guide and underpin practice, including ethics and codes of practice. The ability to place knowledge, skills, processes, principles, and concepts within wider historical, social, political, and philosophical frameworks in order to understand

why practices have arisen as they have and to evaluate the role and impact of testing on society, institutions, and individuals (Fulcher, 2012, p. 125).

The ability of teachers to create and carry out high-quality assessment tasks, to analyse data and findings pertinent to the objective and format of the assessment, and to involve students as active participants in the evaluation of their own learning has been widely discussed in the literature in the past (Looney et al., 2017). As a result, Coombe (2018) describes AL as “the knowledge about, and a comprehensive understanding of, students’ skills and abilities, interpreting the collected data from the assessments, and using these interpretations to improve students’ learning and development by making appropriate decisions” (p. 10). Notwithstanding the fact that several definitions have been proposed in the past, some of them mentioned above, the research accepts that AL is necessary for every stakeholder, independent of their roles in the assessment processes (Pill & Harding, 2013). As a result, it is suggested that all teachers should be proficient in recognising various effective tools in assessment and using them effectively according to their purposes (Volante & Fazio, 2007). Overall, having assessment-literate teachers might enable students to be assessors of their own work and build on this ability for their future academic achievements (Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick, 2006).

Overall, it is important to note that AL refers to having substantial assessment knowledge in terms of general education. However, subsequent discussions have advocated for the inclusion of language teachers, given their prominent roles as assessors and teachers, regardless of the type of assessment (Zimina, 2018). Hence, another concept in the LTA field has emerged, highlighting the role of language in shaping one’s assessment literacy (Levi & Inbar-Lourie, 2019).

2.3. Language Assessment Literacy (LAL)

The definition of language assessment literacy (LAL) is deeply rooted in the definition of AL. Since the seminal work of Stiggins (1991) describing the characteristics of an assessment-literate teacher, the research community has suggested that LAL should be considered in a separate format than AL because of its “unique complexities that are entailed in the testing and assessment of linguistic skills, knowledge, and communicative competence” (Harding & Kremmel, 2016, p. 414). Additionally, Pill and Harding (2013) described LAL as “a repertoire of competencies that enable an individual to understand, evaluate, and, in some cases, create language tests and analyse test data” (p. 382).

Similarly, Malone (2013) described LAL in relation to classroom-based tasks: “language instructors’ familiarity with testing definitions and the application of this knowledge to classroom practices in general and specifically to issues related to assessing language” (p. 329).

According to Newsfield (2006), in addition to assisting language teachers in meeting students’ needs throughout their language learning process, understanding assessment ideas, adhering to various strategies and practices, and assessing the results will all boost students’ achievement and motivation towards learning the language, thereby enhancing their overall academic success. To be able to cater to the needs of the students above and beyond the classroom setting, teachers must possess and use their proficiency in assessment-related responsibilities, which is not only integral to aiding students in advancing their learning but also contributing to their ongoing professional and personal development roles as instructors and testers (Büyükkarcı, 2016). Teachers can increase their efficacy in all aspects of assessment to be considered assessment-literate; therefore, they need to be provided with the necessary training, workshops, and courses to enable them in this regard (Fulcher, 2012; Vogt & Tsagari, 2014; Volante & Fazio, 2007). Overall, facilitating learning and fostering teachers’ professional and personal development, as well as keeping pace with the new developments in the field, while also providing positive washback on instructional and educational practices, can be achieved through an elevated level of LAL.

Davies (2008), after examining the current trends in language testing textbooks in the last five decades, proposed that LAL is composed of three distinct components. The first component, ‘skills,’ refers to expertise in item-writing and test analysis, while the second term, ‘knowledge,’ pertains to theories of language and measurement. The last component in the construct is related to ‘principles,’ a term that seemed to surface in the recent years of language testing textbooks, and it refers to the concepts about LTA, such as validity, ethics, and fairness. As for Inbar-Lourie (2008), LAL competencies are composed of three distinct dimensions: “the reasoning or rationale for assessment (the ‘why’), the description of the trait to be assessed (the ‘what’), and the assessment process (the ‘how’)” (p. 390). As these items deal with language specifically, it is necessary to understand the goal and the characteristics of the assessment in the context of current ideas related to language.

Further, according to Inbar-Lourie (2008b), LAL is the ability of a teacher to understand, analyse, evaluate, and use students' assessment data to inform and enhance teaching and learning. To put it briefly, it is the ability to carefully craft, analyse, and evaluate tests and other assessment components, as well as to consider the grading process using theoretical knowledge (Vogt & Tsagari, 2014). Although there are numerous definitions of LAL in the research field and it is suggested that defining the construct might prove challenging (Coombe et al., 2020), having the necessary abilities, know-how, and principles for language testing and assessment is essential to improving students' learning and raising their academic achievements (Malone, 2011).

In a more comprehensive study, Taylor (2013) classified the LAL construct in eight dimensions: (1) knowledge of theory, (2) technical skills, (3) principles and concepts, (4) language pedagogy, (5) sociocultural values, (6) local practices, (7) personal beliefs, and (8) scores and decision making (p. 410). According to her, not every stakeholder experiences all these dimensions. For instance, while a language tester might be expected to be experienced in all eight dimensions, a classroom teacher might be needed to be proficient in certain dimensions in this framework. As a result, there is a close relationship between language testing and teaching practices.

Notwithstanding, even though the inclusion of 'language' in the conceptualisation and operationalisation of LAL distinctly makes it different from AL, a high number of assessment researchers do not include the language as a component in their definition of LAL (Stabler-Havener, 2018). For example, O'Laughlin (2013) described LAL as the "acquisition of a range of skills related to test production, test-score interpretation and use, and test evaluation in conjunction with the development of a critical understanding about the roles and functions of assessment within society" (p. 363). Regardless of how comprehensive their definitions were or how well-supported their research was, other researchers have also failed to include a language component in their LAL definition.

Despite the unclarity of the definition and the high number of definitions in the research field, LAL is defined as having a solid understanding of assessment, including concepts, guidelines, and applications of numerous assessment techniques and tools; it also entails precisely assessing the outcomes of these procedures and drawing exact conclusions about the learners they represent (Lam, 2014). As a result, a language teacher who is proficient in LAL has a solid grasp of the various assessment principles, which gives them the ability to successfully understand, plan, assess, and interpret assessment

processes in language classrooms (Malone, 2013; Scarino, 2013). According to Green (2014), having a prominent level of LAL is essential since it can affect the quality of assessments and, consequently, the efficacy of learning.

Overall, past studies have consistently shown that LTA courses in university teacher education programmes are the only options where language teachers can learn about assessment and increase their assessment capabilities (Popham, 2009; Taylor, 2009). Similarly, there is a growing body of research showing that LAL levels of teachers and testers are not high, that they do not feel confident in their assessment skills and practices, that they mostly learn about assessment on the job, and that training in LTA is limited (e.g., Kim et al., 2019; Lam, 2014; Vogt & Tsagari, 2014; Volante & Fazio, 2007). Furthermore, a respectable number of research studies have also indicated that pre-service teachers receive little or no formal training in LTA, which is the main reason for their lack of confidence in assessment practices (e.g., Büyükkarcı, 2016; Hildén & Fröjdendahl, 2018; Mertler, 2009; Rogers et al., 2020). As a result, it has been evidenced that assessment courses and related training are paramount for LAL levels of language educators. Considering that assessment is an indispensable part of teachers' classroom activities, there should be more focus on in-service training programmes, workshops, and seminars (Volante & Fazio, 2007; Yastıbaş, 2018).

2.4. Writing Assessment Literacy (WAL)

In relation to being competent and capable in language assessment in general, recent years have seen an increase in the call to include more specific skills in the field instead of focusing on possessing general competence and capability in LAL. As a result, while there have been a lot of empirical and theoretical studies conducted solely on language assessment in general, reading and writing have not gotten the same level of attention as LAL over the past twenty years because assessing other language skills calls for a more analytical perspective (Kim & Kim, 2021). Nevertheless, there has been a call in the research field that teachers need to acquire writing assessment skills in relation to crafting, implementing, and grading writing assessment tasks (Weigle, 2007). She also contended that all parties involved in the assessment process must possess a thorough and detailed awareness of the applications and tools implemented in language testing. Further, Weigle (2007) stated that teachers must recognise quality assessment and know how to use it in the classroom, comprehend formative and summative assessment, identify the elements

of a quality student paper, and increase their overall LAL levels in the use of data from tests, including externally mandated tests. It is evident that there is a rising awareness among writing researchers that proficiency in writing assessment is a valuable skill, even though the research study does not specifically mention writing assessment literacy (WAL).

Similarly, Crusan (2010) urges L2 teachers of writing to be knowledgeable assessors of writing. She argues that understanding the distinction between formative and summative assessment, developing writing prompts that elicit data required for diverse purposes, identifying the importance of scoring criteria, and recognising the uses and misuses of writing assessment are among the skills teachers of writing must possess to reach a level of proficiency in their writing assessments. Further, Plakans and Gebril (2015) emphasise the formative nature of the assessment of writing by regarding it as a tool for helping students become self-aware, identify their areas of strength and weakness, and plan future writing instruction. Consequently, scholars, researchers, and practitioners in the field of L2 writing maintain that proficiency is indispensable for mastering writing skills, given the intertwined nature of quality assessment and quality writing instruction (Beck et al., 2018; Dappen et al., 2008).

In addition to being good at writing assessments, Crusan et al. (2016) say that LAL is more than just knowing how to teach it, how to implement it, and how to understand the results. They also mention how teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and practices affect their overall LAL competence. They continue to claim that teaching content, past experiences in relation to learning the language, and their learning both as students and practitioners are among the factors that affect teachers' philosophies and, as a result, their overall LAL. Building on Borg's (2003) definition of teacher cognition, "the unobservable cognitive dimension of teaching – what teachers know, believe, and think" (p. 81), Crusan et al. (2016) claimed that teachers' beliefs and perceptions play a key role in shaping their assessment practices.

Overall, assessing writing is a continuous process that is integrated into both teaching and learning, not just giving grades to a written paper at the end of a course (Soltanpour & Valizadeh, 2019). According to Crusan and Matsuda (2018), teachers must possess the required skills and expertise to create assessment instruments that genuinely measure the desired learning objective, to interpret the assessment outcomes for instructional purposes, and to effectively communicate these results to each party

involved in the process. Finally, Crusan (2021) stated that WAL can be described as “the ability of teachers to create effective assignments and their accompanying scoring tools, to understand the reasons for assessing their students’ writing, to recognise the value of student self-assessment, to identify why, how, and when to use data gathered from assessments, and to carry on their assessment duties ethically and conscientiously” (p. 431). To sum up, teachers need to possess a wider range of skills, knowledge, and strategies to be considered assessment-literate, while at the same time being heavily influenced by their experiences, beliefs, and perceptions.

Overall, although skills, knowledge, and principles are the core of what makes a language teacher assessment-literate, recent research has put forward that teachers’ beliefs and the context they work in also influence their identities as both teachers and as assessors of writing (Crusan et al., 2016). Additionally, Ruecker et al. (2014) suggest that teachers’ work context might play a key role in shaping their practices, which has a direct effect on their beliefs and practices. In this sense, teachers’ beliefs and perceptions are as important as their skill and knowledge levels, especially in terms of their writing assessment capabilities. In the end, teachers’ beliefs can cause conflicting issues in their practices, although they have prominent levels of literacy in terms of their knowledge, skills, and principles. It is also crucial to note that little has been done in the past concerning these matters in tandem with each other.

2.5. Writing Beliefs

Previous research in the LTA field has revealed that teachers’ beliefs can play a critical role in determining how assessment-literate teachers are when it comes to writing assessments. Although a sizeable number of definitions have been put forward by various scholars in the past, there is no consensus on what teacher beliefs are. However, one way to define teacher belief is as the “proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual, and is therefore imbued with emotive commitment; further, it serves as a guide to thought and behaviour” (Borg, 2001, p. 186). In relation to writing, teacher beliefs are so crucial for teaching and learning because they have a direct impact on learners’ success in second or foreign language writing instruction and assessment, as well as teachers’ own efficacy (Burns, 1992). Consequently, these beliefs hold superior significance as they form the core of teaching and learning writing.

Considering the role of teacher beliefs and practices and their impact on the processes of teaching and learning (Griffiths, 2007), it is mandatory to investigate the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their practices and how these two interact with each other, especially regarding writing instruction. Previous research has revealed valuable insight into teachers' beliefs, perceptions, and practices in teaching and assessment of writing. For instance, Lee (2009) reported a mismatch between teachers' beliefs and their practices, hinting that the mismatch might stem from a lack of writing instruction and training. Similarly, Kim (2015) investigated ESL writing teachers' thinking, decision making, and classroom practices and whether there is a relationship between their beliefs and contextual factors, prior learning experiences, teaching experiences, and teacher education. Unlike Lee (2009), Kim (2015) found out that there is a strong relationship between what teachers' beliefs show and what teachers decide to do in relation to their writing practices and strategies. Consequently, teacher beliefs and practices are as important as their LAL, as teachers have different beliefs, views, and perceptions on writing instruction, how to teach writing, and how to assess writing, all of which are reflected in their writing practices and strategies (e.g., Crusan et al., 2016; Lee, 2009; Zacharias, 2007).

Overall, it is claimed that teacher beliefs have a dominant impact on writing pedagogy, the quality of instructional writing practices, and the professional and personal development of the writing instructors (White & Bruning, 2005). In short, writing beliefs can be defined as "personal and psychological theories, evaluations, and judgements about the nature of writing, how it is learnt, how it should be taught, how it should be assessed, the learners and writers, learning to teach, self and the teaching role held by writing teachers to be true" (Karaca & Uysal, 2021, p. 2). While L2 writing has gained impetus in recent years as a research study on its own, writing instruction is still executed by teachers who have received little or no formal writing instruction, especially in the US context (Hall & Grisham-Brown, 2011). Further, it was suggested that a high proportion of the literature on L2 writing published so far has not been particularly concerned with writing teachers' development or training (Hirvela & Belcher, 2007). Consequently, how L2 teachers acquire the skills necessary to teach writing, why they teach the way they do, how they deal with obstacles, or how they become skilled and proficient instructors of writing have been pushed to the background (Lee, 2012). Given the situation on the relation between writing beliefs and writing instruction, additional empirical research can

improve our understanding of the relationship between the two as an answer to the call in the L2 writing research literature (Yang & Gao, 2013).

2.6.Previous Research

In the literature, there is a myriad of research studies that investigate the levels of teachers' LAL and their assessment knowledge. However, the number of empirical studies that exclusively focus on teachers' assessment knowledge in relation to their beliefs, strategies, and practices is limited. This section portrays the picture in terms of research studies conducted on LAL both abroad and in Türkiye. LAL research focuses on LAL frameworks, course and programme requirements, workshops and training, teachers' LAL levels, teachers' LAL practices and beliefs, the design and validation of LAL scales and questionnaires, pre-service and in-service teachers, and studies related to assessment beliefs and perceptions. Additionally, this section exclusively focuses on studies that were conducted to investigate beliefs, practices, and strategies in terms of teachers' WAL.

2.6.1. Research Conducted Abroad

This section provides an overview of previous research in the field of LAL, categorising studies into broader thematic areas. These categories include the main topics mentioned above, and they are discussed below in detail.

2.6.1.1. *Assessment research and instrument development*

In this section, LAL frameworks and the design and validation of LAL scales and questionnaires are discussed.

First, concerning LAL frameworks, researchers in the field did not immediately adopt AL or follow up on the call after Stiggins (1991) coined the term. Although there were a high number of attempts to call for action, one of the most notable contributions to the LAL framework was the contribution of Brindley (2001). In his work, Brindley (2001) emphasised the increasing necessity for language teachers to possess the necessary knowledge and skills in terms of testing and assessment practices and principles. This enables them to administer their own assessments and engage in discussions regarding external tests and examinations. Further, he focused on the professional aspect of attaining proficiency in AL so that it could contribute to the personal and professional growth of teachers. For this purpose, he focused on four key aspects: "1) teachers' assessment

practices; 2) teachers' knowledge and skills in assessment; 3) teachers' professional development needs; 4) the content of professional development programmes on assessment" (p. 126). In summary, the proposed framework calls for a versatile programme that aims to meet various testing requirements. It underscores the significance of acknowledging that professional development in assessment should go beyond the creation of tests and tasks because it includes a deeper understanding of the broader social, political, and institutional aspects of assessment, all of which should be a part of the LTA programme (Brindley, 2001).

Second, in the special edition of *Language Testing*, Taylor (2013) highlighted the fact that various stakeholder groups might require varying AL/LAL levels, based on their distinct roles and responsibilities in the assessment process. According to Taylor (2013), one set of stakeholders might require extensive training in measurement theory, technical expertise, and ethical principles, while another group may only be interested in a specific aspect of assessment use, such as its implementation in classroom-based learning and university admission. The spider web Taylor (2013) proposes includes "differential AL/LAL profiles for four constituencies" (p. 410) and attempts to demonstrate potential characteristics of LAL for test writers, classroom teachers, university administrators, and professional language testers. Overall, this framework endeavoured to propose practical approaches for conceptualising the extent and comprehensiveness of material, as well as for distinguishing profiles based on the requirements and skill levels of different stakeholder groups.

Third and last in the LAL framework category, the framework proposed by Xu and Brown (2016) attempts to build on the previous frameworks and conceptualisations that were already proposed in the literature at the time. Xu and Brown (2016) emphasised the necessity for a fresh conceptual framework in AL, drawing upon the research studies conducted by Willis et al. (2013) on the social aspect of AL and by DeLuca (2012) on the assessment procedures related to classroom practices. This new framework would address the specific concerns of teacher education and educational assessment, incorporate both pre-service and in-service teacher education, and outline the essential elements and factors involved in preparing teachers to be assessment-literate (Xu & Brown, 2016). The framework has six components: "the knowledge base, teacher conceptions of assessment, institutional and socio-cultural contexts, the core concept of the framework, teacher learning, and teacher identity (re)construction as assessors" (p. 155). The framework,

called *Teacher Assessment Literacy in Practice*, aims to mitigate teacher worry and bolster their resilience against challenges. Additionally, it is hoped to assist teachers in evaluating their current position, identifying their desired objectives, and determining the most efficient strategy to further their professional growth (Xu & Brown, 2016). To conclude, on top of these research studies, which aim to formulate new frameworks and conceptualisations regarding LAL, there are other notable mentions, such as Hill (2017) and Pastore and Andrade (2019).

The second category to be broached in this section is related to the design and validation of LAL scales and questionnaires. Amidst the research studies that aimed to investigate the LAL levels, beliefs, practices, strategies, and perceptions of teachers and other stakeholders, there are multiple research studies whose purpose was to design and validate scales, surveys, and questionnaires. First, to measure teachers' language assessment knowledge (LAK) in an EFL context, Farhady and Tavassoli (2018) aimed to design a data-driven and scenario-based LAK test. Working with 246 EFL teachers and creating their item pool from language assessment textbooks, the researchers created the LAK test in six parts, each focusing on a specific area in LTA terms. The parts of the questionnaire were: (a) test types and functions; (b) stage of language test design; (c) test characteristics; (d) key terms and concepts; (e) alternative assessment techniques; and (f) assessing language components and skills (Farhady & Tavassoli, 2018). The last version of the test was administered to 164 EFL teachers along with a teachers' need test. Although the teachers reported having basic knowledge and skills on issues concerning language assessment, the results from the test showed a mismatch between their reported needs and their LAL levels. Overall, it can be suggested that the LAK test can be a useful tool to measure EFL teachers' LAL levels, and it can help teachers recognise their areas of strengths and weaknesses.

Second, in a more recent study in the Iranian context, Tajeddin et al. (2022) aimed to design and validate a scale on critical language assessment, as the researchers reported that previous research studies had overlooked the need for a more practical framework to consider a different dimension of teachers' LAL. For this purpose, the researchers worked with 255 participants from different language institutes and universities located in Iran. Following item pool creation and consulting with the field experts, the final form of the scale comprised forty-six items in a 5-item Likert-scale format. According to the main findings, the scale consisted of five factors: "(a) teachers' knowledge of assessment

objectives, scopes, and types; (b) assessment use consequences; (c) fairness; (d) assessment policies; and (e) national policy and ideology” (p. 666). The researchers call for a detailed needs analysis and further research studies that take teachers’ experience, certification, and assessment beliefs into consideration in relation to their critical language assessment literacy. In summary, there are other research studies in the LTA literature that aim to construct, design, and validate similar questionnaires and scales that measure teachers’ LAL levels, beliefs, practices, and perceptions (e.g., Yan & Pastore, 2022).

2.6.1.2.Educational context and teacher preparation

In the second category, studies related to educational contexts and teacher preparation are discussed. These include course and programme requirements, workshops and training, and pre-service and in-service teachers, and these are described below in detail.

First, in terms of laying out the course and programme requirements, there are various research studies in the LAL literature. To begin with, Lam (2014) conducted a study on the LAL training environment in teacher education institutions in Hong Kong and investigated how language assessment courses contribute to the assessment skills and knowledge development of both pre-service and in-service teachers. After a series of semi-structured interviews with forty participants, Lam (2014) found out that language assessment training provided by the university is not seen as effectively assisting pre-service teachers in developing their LAL skills, that the inclusion of LAL in language assessment courses is necessary, and that different stakeholders should work together for this purpose. The findings of this study are consistent with Taylor (2009), who suggested that seminars, conferences, and in-service training workshops should be provided to increase teachers’ LAL.

Second, Gan and Lam (2020) sought to investigate the assessment training that university English instructors had received, their desired assessment training for professional development, and the factors that impact their assessment training needs. In this mixed-methods design study, quantitative data came from an online questionnaire, which was adapted from Vogt and Tsagari (2014), while qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews along with documents concerning assessment policies. The results indicated that a substantial number of teachers had minimal training

in assessment content and ideas, and over 33% of the participants expressed a need for more advanced training in LTA. Conversely, some of the participating teachers reported preferring to receive foundational and basic LAL training focused on classroom-based methodologies rather than aiming for higher LTA training, whereas most participants had minimal or no training in classroom-based assessment.

Third and last in this category, Juanjuan and Mohd Yusoff (2022) examined the characteristics of successful professional development courses that increase teachers' AL. After examining seventeen empirical studies on teachers' AL and effective improvement programmes, the researchers suggested that the characteristics of effectiveness can be classified into three overarching themes. First, to suit the specific training needs of the teachers, there should be a couple of changes made to the programme content. Second, the chosen delivery medium should facilitate the establishment of a cooperative learning community as well as foster continuous professional development. Finally, it is proposed that the programme should aim to develop teachers who should be reflective assessors and practitioners. Although the seventeen empirical studies in this study were conducted across different contexts, the findings of the study highlight the effective features of AL improvement programmes. On top of these three research studies mentioned here, there are multiple other studies that investigated the efficiency of course requirements, programme requirements, and training needs, such as Montee et al. (2013).

The second category in the section is related to the call to implement courses and programmes to improve the LAL levels of the stakeholders. To remedy the LAL levels of teachers and as a response to including LAL instruction in courses and programmes, there have been various research studies wherein workshops and training sessions have been implemented. First, Malone (2013) conducted a study to help language instructors deal with their limited understanding of assessment. In the study, an online tutorial for foreign language instructors was developed for forty-four US language instructors and thirty language testers. Group interviews and surveys were used as the data collection tools to examine the different approaches and relationships between the two groups. The study findings revealed that language testers prioritise the adherence of test use to its intended goal, whereas language instructors are primarily concerned with the selection and use of specific assessment tools in terms of classroom-based assessment. It was suggested that these two groups of participants view assessment through different lenses.

Secondly, DiBiase-Lubrano (2018) aimed to investigate the effectiveness of the education given at a language faculty to see its effects on the cultivation of AL. The objective of this project was to assess the efficacy of the workshops and individual departmental discussions about issues related to testing and to explore alternative approaches over a period of six semesters. The study was conducted at the Centre for Language Study to analyse the extent to which the events and education provided there have helped to increase AL awareness (DiBiase-Lubrano, 2018). Attempting to get answers from fifty-three lecturers, the research used a questionnaire to assess the effectiveness of the workshops and training provided. The study findings indicated that the workshops have effectively caused an increase in awareness of testing principles. Conversely, a high number of the lecturers notably pointed out the lack of ability to create parallel test versions, ensure inter-rater reliability, and make sure that a test has construct and content validity (DiBiase-Lubrano, 2018). Overall, thanks to the long-term study conducted within the scope of this research, the overall LAL level of the lecturers has increased. Overall, the inclusion of trainings and workshops has been evidenced to increase the LAL levels of participants (e.g., Mertler, 2009; Fulcher, 2012).

The last category in this section is related to the studies which were conducted with pre-service and in-service teachers. Even though the primary focus of a sizeable number of the research studies in LAL research concentrates on teachers and instructors, an array of studies put pre-service and student-teachers at the forefront of their investigations. First, Volante and Fazio (2007) investigated AL development in terms of assessment methods, AL levels, training needs, and methods for increasing AL in the language programmes, working with sixty-nine teacher candidates throughout their four-year programme. The study instrument was a survey consisting of both open- and close-ended questions, asking for teacher candidates' opinions and thoughts in terms of their language assessment training. The study results revealed that teacher candidates voiced a need for the development of a specific course focusing on classroom assessment, although the results from the survey point to a low level of teacher self-efficacy and a lack of help from mentor teachers. In conclusion, the researchers urge the government and school authorities to take the necessary measures to promote higher AL levels among teacher candidates (Volante & Fazio, 2007).

Second, DeLuca and Klinger (2010) administered a questionnaire to 288 participants to investigate the confidence levels in assessment practice, theory, and

philosophy of teacher candidates in Canada. The participants of the study were intermediate/senior and primary/junior teacher candidates who were taking assessment courses. The data collection was stratified into four groups to make comparisons between the subgroups. The questionnaire included items concerning AfL and AoL in three categories: practice, theory, and philosophy. The study findings revealed that teacher candidates improved their LAL through their practicum experiences, especially because they did not have assessment courses that would help them gain the necessary skills and knowledge in terms of LAL. Instead, teacher candidates learn about assessment from their mentors, but this is also an implication that the LAL levels of their teachers are limiting their learning. Consequently, it is recommended that to enhance the assessment knowledge of teacher candidates, it is necessary to introduce compulsory assessment courses that align with their practicum experience (DeLuca & Klinger, 2010).

In the last example in this category, Hildén and Fröjdendahl (2018) conducted a study in Finland to examine the conceptions of assessment among Finnish student-teachers and investigate the influence of a brief academic study unit on their professional growth. As part of a larger project, this research was a case study whose data were derived from a series of eight lectures, ninety minutes each. The course student-teachers attended focused on the core principles and concepts of assessment, national evaluation, assessment of different language skills, and learning objectives and outcomes. Two data sets were gathered at separate times from the student-teachers using an online questionnaire in the students' native language. The study results indicate that students' conceptions can be altered by instructional interventions focused on assessment and through specialised courses on assessment. Similarly, the study unit in question had a significant influence on attitudes and practices related to assessment of work skills and professional growth (Hildén & Fröjdendahl, 2018). Regarding research in LAL that centre on pre-service and student-teachers, additional studies have demonstrated that individuals within this stakeholder group tend to have heightened levels of LAL if they are given assessment courses before they start their teaching experiences (e.g., Prasetyo, 2018; Rogers et al., 2020).

2.6.1.3. Teacher knowledge and practice

The last section in this brief literature review focuses on teachers' knowledge, skills, and practices in terms of their LAL. Teachers' LAL levels, teachers' LAL practices and

beliefs, and their beliefs and perceptions in terms of their LAL are analysed below in detail.

The first category in this section is related to teachers' LAL levels. First, it is important to note that LAL research has consistently called for studies wherein the LAL levels of in-service teachers are considered. A European survey, which Hasselgreen et al. (2004) conducted to investigate the LTA needs of language teachers, is one of the earliest studies in the field. The research study paved the way for future studies that focused on the LAL levels of language instructors. In this respect, Vogt and Tsagari (2014) conducted a mixed-methods design research study, which was part of a larger European project, with participants from seven European countries. In the study, 853 participants took part in the questionnaire, and the qualitative data were collected from sixty-three participants in semi-structured interviews. The results indicate how underdeveloped teachers' LTA was, and the most crucial elements of LTA were learnt either from colleagues or on the job. The results also showed that there was an immediate need for advanced training in terms of LTA, as most participants reported that they had not received any kind of LTA training in their pre- or in-service training. Overall, it is reported in the study that pre-service teacher education has failed to prepare language instructors for their LTA practices.

Second, Xu and Brown (2017) aimed to investigate the current AL levels of university teachers in China and whether their demographic characteristics influence their AL performance. In the study, an adapted version of the *Teacher Assessment Literacy Questionnaire*, which was initially developed by Plake et al. (1993), was used, and 891 university English teachers working in China responded to the questionnaire. The main discovery was that the participants in the study exhibited a rudimentary level of AL in specific aspects, with little to no impact from demographic features, as aimed at by the research questions in the study. Additionally, the psychometric data obtained from the adapted survey suggests that it may not be feasible to measure LAL as the principles of assessment need to be implemented in classroom settings (Xu & Brown, 2017). In this respect, it is recommended that AL constructs be clearly identified and defined before they can be developed in the future.

The third and last study in this category, Kim et al. (2019) aimed to examine the necessary AL required for K-12 educators to analyse the exam results and score reports in the USA context. In this two-phase mixed-methods explanatory design, Kim et al. (2019) quantitatively gathered data from 1437 educators from thirty-five US states and

territories via an online questionnaire. In the second phase of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with eighteen educators, and student score reports were implemented for the triangulation of the data. The study results portray a general picture of K-12 English language educators in the US context, and the findings indicate that K-12 educators lack the necessary AL to make interpretations on the score reports and exam results. Additionally, it is reported that K-12 educators struggle and have trouble understanding certain terms in score reports. Finally, it is suggested that large-scale and classroom-based assessments should be considered in future contexts in relation to both K-12 and AL contexts. In summary, investigations into teachers' and other stakeholders' LAL levels are a widely researched topic in the field, most of whose results indicate similar findings: how underdeveloped teachers' LAL is and how much training they need to be more assessment-literate (e.g., Farhady & Tavassoli, 2021; Kremmel & Harding; Vogt et al., 2020).

In the second category in this section and in relation to teachers' LAL levels and their training needs, there have been a substantial number of research studies that investigate teachers' LAL beliefs and practices. First, Muñoz et al. (2012) aimed to investigate the teachers' perspectives on assessment, specifically their attitudes and practices concerning speaking and writing assessment implemented at a private language centre at a university in Colombia. To collect data from sixty-two teachers, surveys, interviews, and a collection of written reports of experiences were adopted. The findings of the study indicate that language teachers see assessment as a necessary tool to enhance learning and teaching, as it has the potential to facilitate improvement in both areas. Interestingly, the teachers involved in the study mostly viewed assessment as a means of evaluating student performance in terms of summative assessment, while still acknowledging the fact that it is effective in enhancing students' academic achievements (Muñoz et al., 2012). There is also evidence from other research studies in the field that regulations that require teachers to change their practises to increase the impact of their instruction on students' success have an impact on their practises. However, another finding of the study revealed that there might be a discrepancy between teachers' beliefs and their reported practices, which might be related to the finding that teachers value what the institution they are working at values.

Second, Gebril (2017) examined the assessment methods and conceptions of assessment among pre-service and in-service teachers in Egypt, along with the

effectiveness of assessment-related teacher training provided by the Egyptian instructors. Adopting a mixed-methods study design through the *Abridged Teacher Assessment Conceptions* questionnaire, the research collected data from a hundred pre-service and seventy in-service teachers. The study findings indicate that pre-service teachers frequently exhibit a preference for conventional assessment methods over formative assessment tools. In contrast, the findings from the in-service sample indicate a tendency to use formative assessment tools. Given this, the findings also show a high degree of similarity in the assessment conceptions held by both groups of teachers. It is suggested that further investigations into teachers' conceptions of formative and summative assessment will be necessary in the future.

Third and last in this category, in the Asian context, Yan et al. (2018) aimed to examine how important a role contextual and experiential factors play in shaping teachers' LAL development. For this reason, the study aimed to investigate the LAL development of three EFL teachers in China in a qualitative-design study. Adopting a grounded theory and inductive approach, the study collected data from the participants via semi-structured retrospective interviews. According to the results of the study, four themes emerged: "assessment context, assessment training experience, assessment practice, and assessment knowledge and training needs" (p. 161). The study findings also reveal that there is a distinct LAL profile for the participants and that although they lack the necessary skills and knowledge in LAL, they tend to develop their LAL on the job and through their experiences and colleagues. The distinct profile that these participants possess supports the LAL constituencies suggested by Taylor (2013). As a result, it can be argued that contextual and experiential factors play a key role in shaping teachers' LAL and training needs (Yan et al., 2018). In summary, there are other research studies that have evidenced that teachers' beliefs, practices, and contextual and experiential factors have a key role in giving teachers' LAL its final form (e.g., Ataie-Tabar et al., 2019; Giraldo, 2019; Lan & Fan, 2019).

The final topic in this category is related to the beliefs and perceptions of teachers in terms of language assessment knowledge. In terms of teachers' beliefs and perceptions of formative assessment, Burner (2015) conducted a mixed-methods study with four teachers and their hundred students to see how they regard the original approaches that integrate formative assessment in their writing classes. Following a case study, the researcher conducted one-to-one interviews with teachers and focus-group interviews

with three students from each class. At the end of the data analysis, four themes emerged: “current assessment practices, assessment beliefs, and subject related challenges” (p. 5) were common themes for both teachers and students, whereas ‘response to assessment’ was a category for students and ‘change of assessment practice’ was a category for teachers. While the overall findings of the study indicate that students find the main parts of formative assessment writing classes unclear, it is evident that there is potential for improvement thanks to the feedback they received in their writing classes. Also, students believe that they reflect on their writing, but they still need more guidance and mentoring from their teachers. As for teachers, they expressed a need for a more methodological approach to their assessment procedures. The study findings indicate that they tend to be more cautious in allowing students to assess themselves, revise their texts, and actively participate in the learning and assessing processes. Conversely, the teachers acknowledge the importance of self-assessment in their classes, highlighting a discrepancy between their beliefs and practices, according to the results of the study.

Second, Wicking (2017) conducted a study to examine the assessment beliefs of EFL instructors teaching at Japanese institutions. The study data were gathered using a questionnaire that asked about participants’ practices and views about assessment and evaluation. The questionnaire consisted of questions about participants’ assessment practices, with thirty-two questions specifically focusing on their beliefs and perceptions. The study findings suggest that teachers prioritise assessment procedures to promote student learning and facilitate their academic progress. On the contrary, teachers approached assessment with less emphasis on professional development and lesson preparation, which might indicate a potential weakness in their beliefs regarding assessment as a tool for enhancing instruction. Overall, it is suggested that teachers use assessment to give feedback to students rather than receive feedback about their own teaching.

Finally, Farhady and Tavassoli (2021) aimed to investigate EFL teachers’ perceptions and practices of their language assessment knowledge (LAK) in relation to their test development processes and the relationship between their LAK and their students’ achievement. Dividing the sample pool of twenty-one participants into two groups, high-level LAK and low-level LAK, the study used semi-structured interviews to elicit information regarding the participants’ beliefs and perceptions. To triangulate the data, sample tests developed by the participants and the students’ final scores were

implemented in the data analysis. The study findings reveal that EFL teachers, especially those with lower LAK levels, struggle to effectively implement appropriate assessment methods in their classes. Additionally, there exists a significant misalignment between the methods used for teaching and the methods used to assess and evaluate students' performance in the classroom. Finally, teachers lack familiarity with the more recent developments in the LTA field, such as learning-oriented assessment, which involves the integration of instruction, learning, and assessment, because it is crucial for teachers to take a pivotal role in classroom assessment procedures.

2.6.2. Research Conducted in Türkiye

In this section, research studies that were conducted in Türkiye are analysed, and details are provided concerning their findings and implications. To begin with, Karaman and Şahin (2014) aimed to investigate the assessment conceptions, attitudes, and literacy levels of pre-service teachers at a state university in Türkiye. For this purpose, three different data collection tools were implemented in the study, including the *Classroom Assessment Literacy Inventory* (Mertler & Campbell, 2005). The participants were senior pre-service EFL teachers, while other pre-service teachers from various departments also participated in the study. The study results show that the mean scores of the participants in this study were lower than the other research studies that implemented the same questionnaire in the literature. According to the findings of the study, the self-efficacy of the teacher candidates, who were thought to face medium level difficulties, was found to be at an elevated level. As a result, it is suggested that, in addition to the development of pre-service teachers' LAL, it has been evidenced that more attention should be given to the development of their thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions regarding LAL.

Second, Büyükkarcı (2016) aimed to investigate English teachers' AL in a foreign language context. For this purpose, thirty-two non-native EFL teachers participated in the study, completing the *Classroom Assessment Literacy Inventory* (Mertler & Campbell, 2005). The study findings revealed that recent graduate teachers, who are typically anticipated to possess more current information compared to more experienced teachers, lack adequate skills and knowledge in assessing their students. Interestingly, the lowest mean scores from the inventory came from the most experienced teacher group in the study. In this case, the data analysis showed that there is not a statistically significant difference between the teacher groups in terms of experience and level of education.

Overall, the participants in the study demonstrated exceptionally low levels of AL, and hence, these teachers might require more advanced AL training. Previous studies demonstrate that the year of experience might play a key role in teachers' AL, but the findings in this study yielded results in the opposite direction. In summary, these findings indicate that EFL teachers require comprehensive in-service training that includes not only knowledge and abilities but also principles and practice.

Third, Mede and Atay (2017) conducted a study to examine the LTA abilities of Turkish ELT teachers at the tertiary level. In this mixed-methods study, the questionnaire adapted from Vogt and Tsagari (2014) and focus-group interviews were implemented to gather data about the training practices and training needs of ELT teachers. A total of 350 completed the questionnaire from both state and private universities in Türkiye, and qualitative data came from three focus groups, with ten to twelve teachers in each group. The findings suggest that Turkish ELT teachers had significantly restricted LTA training, which indicates low levels of LAL. The participating teachers required training in classroom-based assessment as well as in content and concepts related to assessment in general. Additionally, they were deficient in training concerning assessment tasks, such as creating classroom assessments and delivering constructive feedback. Further, teachers demonstrated a lack of proficiency in assessing both productive and receptive skills, as well as integrated skills, which also indicates a need for additional in-service training in these areas.

In terms of studies that investigate teachers' beliefs and perceptions concerning assessment in the Turkish context, Önalın and Karagöl (2018) aimed to investigate EFL teachers' beliefs about the uses of assessment in teaching English and whether there is a relationship between their reported beliefs and their graduate departments and teaching experience. For this reason, seventy EFL teachers from a preparatory school at a state university took part in the study and answered a twenty-item questionnaire that the researchers designed. The questionnaire included items related to "formative assessment, summative assessment, self-assessment, and assessment to improve teachers' instruction" (p. 194). The findings of the study revealed that the participants held strong attitudes towards the use of assessment for formative purposes and that the next highest priority was given to self-assessment methods. Also, using assessment to increase the quality of instruction was seen as important as self-assessment. The participants had a greater tendency to use assessment to gather data on the students' performance and proficiency

for their in-class performances. Interestingly, the study has found that the assessment choices of teachers are not influenced either by their undergraduate departments or years of experience.

Finally, there are other research studies which aim to design and validate scales and questionnaires to define the LAL levels of language teachers in the Turkish context. For instance, Ölmezer-Öztürk and Aydın (2018) developed an instrument, the *Language Assessment Knowledge Scale (LAKS)*, after working with 542 EFL teachers working at various preparatory programmes at universities in Türkiye. Starting with 237 items at the beginning of the study, the scale took its final form with sixty items, with fifteen items for each of the constructs (i.e., reading, listening, writing, and speaking). The psychometric results indicated that LAKS has a statistically elevated level of reliability and could be used as a reliable measurement tool. Despite the low factor loadings of writing and speaking constructs, they were included in the final edition of the scale because of their contributions to content validity. The study finally urged future studies in different countries and contexts so that our understanding of LAL among diverse teacher and instructor groups will increase.

2.6.3. Studies on Writing Assessment Literacy

In the last section of this chapter, research studies conducted on WAL are analysed and discussed both abroad and in the Turkish context. To begin with, Soltanpour and Valizadeh (2019) aimed to investigate the WAL levels of Iranian EFL teachers and their training needs in writing assessment. For this purpose, two types of questionnaires were used: one for LAL levels adapted from Vogt and Tsagari (2014) and another for writing beliefs, strategies, and practices adapted from Crusan et al. (2016). Gathering data from 146 Iranian EFL teachers, the study revealed a notable correlation between the teachers' graduate departments and their likelihood of having received training or a course dedicated to writing assessment. Within the study, 48.8% of the non-native teacher group identified themselves as proficient writing instructors, whereas for native EFL teachers, this number was 33.8%. As for improving WAL levels, there was a notable disparity between the two groups. Within the EFL groups, while 72.2% of the participants reported that they received writing assessment training as part of their LTA courses, the number significantly dropped to 16.3% for the other group. Overall, it is suggested that there is a significant need to provide training to increase EFL teachers' WAL levels.

Second, Tayyebi and Abbasabadi (2020) conducted a study to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the current proficiency of Iranian EFL teachers in WAL and identify their specific requirements for training in this field. The study was a mixed-methods study, with the first part including a questionnaire consisting of thirty-two items developed by the researchers, asking about assessment experiences and training needs. While the quantitative data came from two hundred Iranian EFL teachers, the qualitative data came from ten participating teachers. The results gathered from the study suggest that most topics in writing assessment were considered by the participating teachers to be either vital or necessary to be included in a language assessment course. Additionally, the findings indicate that Iranian EFL teachers must acquire a strong and precise conceptual comprehension of WAL, together with the capacity to use this knowledge effectively during their classroom-based writing assessments. As a result, the study findings suggest English teacher training programmes should include instructions and training for teachers to increase their overall WAL.

Third, Tayyebi et al. (2022) wanted to find out what Iranian EFL teachers knew about writing assessments, as well as their beliefs, perceptions, and practices. The questionnaire designed by Crusan et al. (2016) was used to find out what their current situation was and then suggested ways for them to improve Iranian EFL teachers' WAL. For this purpose, 120 in-service EFL teachers were chosen via convenience sampling. Additionally, the researchers developed another questionnaire to triangulate the data, consisting of twenty-five questions on writing assessment knowledge and thirty-nine questions on their conceptions and practices. The results of the descriptive and inferential statistics indicate that the participating in-service teachers did not have an adequate level of writing assessment knowledge. Analysing the results according to Taylor's (2013) spider web categorisation, the researchers suggested that the participants lack "technical skills, pedagogical skills, principles and concepts, and scores and decision making" (p. 15). As a result, the study findings imply that Iranian EFL teachers need more instruction during their pre-service education to be equipped with more writing assessment knowledge, which is consistent with the results from previous research studies.

Additionally, Sohrabi et al. (2022) conducted a research study to investigate the Iranian teachers' writing beliefs, knowledge, and practices, implementing the questionnaire developed by Crusan et al. (2016). The sample of this study consisted of 118 EFL writing teachers who were randomly picked from state universities in Iran. As a

quantitative study design, the questionnaire was the only data collection tool, which included 5-point Likert-scale items and open-ended questions. The study findings revealed that most participating teachers, who had different educational backgrounds and were writing instructors in different educational settings, received training in writing assessment. Although they considered themselves proficient in writing assessments, their actual performance in the process varied based on their answers to the questionnaire. The misalignment between their professed competence and their actual performance underscores the necessity for the Iranian EFL writing instructors to receive additional training in writing assessment theory, knowledge, and practice. These findings and implications are consistent with those derived from previous research studies in previous years.

One of the most noteworthy studies regarding WAL and teachers' writing beliefs and perceptions is a research study conducted by Lam (2019), who aimed to investigate how Hong Kong EFL secondary school writing teachers view classroom-based writing assessment. For this purpose, sixty-six teachers participated in the study; they completed a questionnaire and agreed to take part in telephone interviews and classroom observations. The questionnaire included eighteen items related to the knowledge base, conceptions, and practices of the teachers, while semi-structured interviews comprised questions relating to in-class writing assessment. Out of twelve voluntary participants, three of them also agreed to participate in the classroom observations. The study findings revealed that the teacher participants believed that they possessed a solid understanding of classroom-based writing assessment, especially in relation to reliability and validity concepts. While they acknowledged their familiarity with AoL and AfL, they were unaware of the concepts related to AaL. The overall findings of the study revealed a mismatch between teachers' perceived level of assessment knowledge and their instructional practices. Overall, the teachers had a limited degree of WAL in terms of their knowledge base, concepts, and practices, despite their extensive work experience and academic backgrounds.

To explore WAL by investigating teachers' knowledge of writing assessment, their beliefs, and their writing practices, Crusan et al. (2016) developed a survey that examines these issues through multiple choice, Likert-scale, and open-ended items. The researchers designed a writing assessment literacy questionnaire with fifty-four items, and Cronbach's alpha was 0.75. The answers for the questionnaire were analysed through

descriptive statistics, and thematic analysis was used for the open-ended items. Unlike previous research studies in the field, the results of the current study yielded positive views regarding teachers' writing assessment knowledge, their beliefs, and their practices. While 63% of the participating teachers stated that they acquired writing knowledge in a general sense, 57% reported receiving their assessment knowledge as part of a course. Still, the participant teachers considered their writing assessment insufficient, especially in creating scoring criteria. Next, it was discovered that the linguistic background of the teachers played a key role in teachers' understanding of writing assessment. Finally, significant differences in ideas about writing assessment were observed between less experienced and more experienced teachers, the latter of whom demonstrated a lower level of LAL.

The final category in this literature review focuses on research studies that were conducted in Türkiye and focused on teachers' WAL, beliefs, perceptions, practices, and strategies. However, it must be acknowledged that the number of research studies conducted in Türkiye on WAL is sporadic.

Initially, Valizadeh (2019) conducted a research study to identify the WAL levels of Turkish EFL teachers and their training needs concerning writing assessment. Also, data were collected to gain insights into teachers' beliefs about different assessment methods and general issues in writing assessment. 152 EFL teachers in Türkiye participated in the study, answering two sets of questionnaires: one adapted from Crusan et al. (2016) and another adapted from Vogt and Tsagari (2014). The study findings reveal that more than 80% of the participating teachers had already received training in WAL, with 'giving feedback to students' getting positive results from the participants. While less than 50% of the participants thought that they were not proficient writing instructors, rather training and creating rubrics were two of the topics that the teachers reported having problems with. Strikingly, in their answers, they stated that using scoring criteria is necessary when grading students' papers. The lowest mean scores for the questionnaire items came from the self-assessment category, where less than half of the participants were either unsure of or disagreed with the effectiveness of self-assessment in writing assessments. In summary, the study findings reveal that Turkish EFL writing instructors would benefit highly from additional training to increase their overall WAL levels. To achieve this, it is suggested to give priority to writing instruction and assessment in pre-service teacher training courses and programmes.

Second, in her master's thesis, Yıldız Açıkyol (2022) aimed to investigate the WAL level, beliefs, strategies, and practices of Turkish EFL teachers who worked at primary, secondary, and high school levels. In this mixed-methods study, 153 teachers from different cities in Türkiye answered an online survey adapted from Crusan et al. (2016), followed by semi-structured interviews with ten of the participating teachers. The study results revealed that 50% of the participants had received prior writing assessment training as part of a course or a programme in the past, while the percentage of teachers who did not receive instruction on the topic dropped to 20%. The thematic analysis indicated that teachers are aware of their lack of training in WAL and require further training to be assessment-literate teachers. Overall, the study findings revealed that in-service teachers of the study had a clear understanding of writing assessment and that they were keen on creating and using their own scoring criteria to assess students' written compositions. Further, they believed that providing feedback is useful for writing improvement, that a portfolio is a valuable tool to assess students' performance, and that self-assessment can be useful in certain situations. In summary, the participants voiced their need for further in-service education to increase their literacy levels in terms of writing assessment.

Finally, Jalilzadeh (2021) did a sequential explanatory mixed-methods-design study to inquire about the WAL, beliefs, strategies, and practices of Turkish EFL teachers at the tertiary level. For this reason, 315 EFL teachers employed at Turkish preparatory schools responded to the quantitative component by completing an adapted version of the Crusan et al. (2016) questionnaire. For the qualitative part of the study, ten EFL instructors took part in focus-group interviews relating to their writing challenges and needs in the assessment of writing. Additionally, ten students were interviewed about their teachers' writing practices in the classroom. The study results indicate that the Turkish EFL instructors had moderate WAL levels, and the participating teachers reported employing the necessary tools in writing assessment. However, there has been a mismatch between teachers' professed practices and students' reports, suggesting that teachers' WAL might be insufficient: teachers might be knowledgeable in terms of writing assessment, whereas they may be unable to reflect their knowledge on their practices effectively. Overall, the study results suggest that in-service and continuous training and workshops should be provided to the teachers to increase their efficiency in writing assessment.

In conclusion, both in Türkiye and abroad, there have been a considerable number of research studies conducted to investigate the literacy levels of teachers and their knowledge, skills, practices, and beliefs concerning writing assessment. These studies concentrated on frameworks, course and programme requirements, workshops to promote LAL, teachers' levels in terms of their LAL levels, practices, and strategies, LAL scales and questionnaires, pre-service teachers, and their assessment beliefs and perceptions. However, these research studies have suggested that there should be more empirical research studies which aim to investigate LAL in other contexts (e.g., Crusan et al., 2016; Ölmezer-Öztürk, 2018; Scarino, 2013). Moreover, the bulk of LAL/WAL studies are conducted outside Turkish context, and all studies call for more empirical research in different contexts to improve our understanding of assessment. As for the Turkish context, the number of studies in Türkiye is sporadic and sparse, and the studies have evidenced that the LAL levels of Turkish EFL teachers are low and that they need more instruction during both pre-service and in-service education. More importantly, the participants in the studies, which are mentioned in the previous sections, are pre-service teachers and teachers at primary and secondary schools. As a result, the current study will attempt to build on the previous studies by investigating the WAL levels, practices, and beliefs of Turkish EFL teachers at the tertiary level.

CHAPTER 3

3.METHODOLOGY

The chapter addresses the methodological framework of the study. First, it starts off by outlining the research design, then moves on to the research setting and the participants. Next, it gives key information related to the data collection tools employed in this study: the questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews. Finally, the chapter addresses how the collected data is analysed in relation to the purpose of the study.

3.1.Research Design

The aim of the study was to investigate the beliefs, perceptions, skills, knowledge, and practices of Turkish EFL teachers in relation to their writing assessments. Therefore, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used in the methodological structure of the study. For this purpose, a mixed-methods design was used, as quantitative data were collected in the first part of the study, whereas qualitative data were gathered in the second part of the study to collect more comprehensive data regarding the research questions (Creswell, 2009). Further, by allowing researchers to collect data in two separate phases, this type of research design can help conduct each phase of the study in a more meticulous and detailed manner (Creswell, 2015).

The rationale behind this design is that the quantitative findings could offer a broader understanding of the research problem through qualitative data analysis (Creswell, 2015). Through this method, quantitative and qualitative research are combined, and the gathered data allows researchers to find answers to several questions that either of these methods might fail to answer alone; therefore, it enables the researcher to use the strengths of each method while trying to eliminate their weaknesses (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Using two different data collection methods and combining them in this study provided us with a more comprehensive understanding of the various dimensions of teachers' WAL, beliefs, knowledge, practices, and strategies in terms of their writing assessments.

According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), there are four types of mixed-methods design: the convergent parallel design, the explanatory sequential design, the exploratory sequential design, and the embedded design. To fit the research purpose and the research context, the convergent parallel design is chosen for the current study. The research design of the study is described in Figure 3.1.

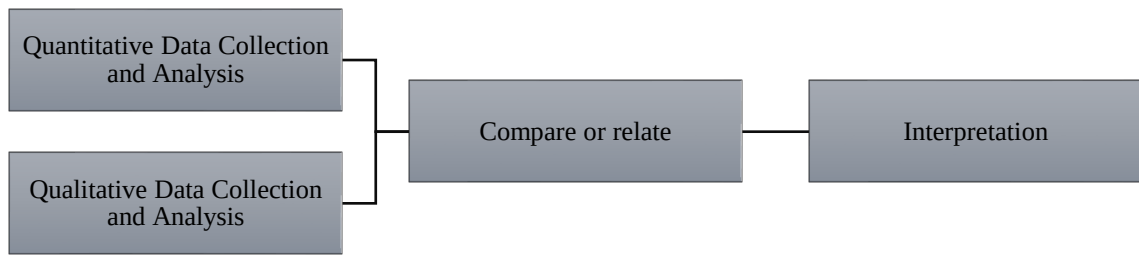


Figure 3.1. Convergent parallel design (adapted from Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, p. 69)

As Figure 3.1 illustrates, the current study employed a convergent parallel design, which entails implementing both quantitative and qualitative methods at the same time. In this type of design, both methods are prioritised equally but implemented apart from each other. For the analysis, both processes are combined for the overall interpretation. In the current study, data obtained from the questionnaire were analysed quantitatively, while data gathered via semi-structured interviews were analysed qualitatively.

3.2. Research Context

The current study was conducted at a preparatory school of a state university in the Central Anatolian region. The data for the study was collected from one major group: Turkish EFL teachers at a preparatory school who dedicated a sizeable portion of their in-class teaching time to writing instruction while also spending a similar amount of time outside of class grading and giving feedback to students' writing assessments.

The preparatory school where the current study took place is responsible for delivering intensive language instruction to students from various academic departments, and it involves students with different profiles from various backgrounds. At the beginning of the academic year, all students in all programmes at the university are required to take the proficiency exam, and if they receive 60 from this exam, they can start their education at their departments. Students who do not receive a passing grade must take the placement exam, after which they are placed in their respective language levels to start their one-year education at the preparatory school. At the end of this year-long programme, these students take the Test of English, and if they can get 60 on this test, they are considered proficient and can start their education in their academic departments. The programme at the preparatory school includes two student profiles: those enrolled in departments with English as the medium of instruction and those who

optionally choose to study at the preparatory school to improve their English language proficiency.

Regardless of their profiles, all students are required to receive writing instruction as part of their regular education at the preparatory school. In the programme, students are required to take two midterm exams and one final exam. First, students are required to take a writing exam, which contributes to 30% of their first midterm scores. Additionally, they have four in-class writing tasks, at the end of which they receive written feedback from their teachers, including error codes. These task grades contribute to 45% of students' second midterm grades, quizzes and in-class participation grades making up the rest of the total grade. Similarly, the final exam also has a writing component, contributing to 30% of the total score. Finally, the Test of English at the end of their prep year has a writing component, contributing to 30% of the total passing grade. It should also be mentioned that these students are tasked with more writing assignments, which are included in the syllabus but are not included in students' end-of-year passing grades. Teachers encourage students to do these extracurricular writing assignments to receive written and oral feedback on their writing skills, although participation in these assignments is entirely voluntary. Overall, teachers are responsible for in-class writing instruction, giving written and/or oral feedback on students' writing assessments, and grading students' papers throughout the academic year. As a result, the research setting was purposefully selected for the present study both because of the importance given to the writing skill at the school and because the researcher wanted to examine the situation within the current context.

3.3.Participants

The current study aimed to investigate the WAL, beliefs, practices, strategies, and knowledge of Turkish EFL teachers at a preparatory school of a state university. For this purpose, the convenience sampling method, a type of non-probability sampling, was used for the selection of the participants. Convenience sampling is one of the most used sampling techniques in research studies (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2009), and it includes selecting individuals for the study based on their accessibility and suitability according to the specific criteria the investigator seeks (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015). After choosing participants who are readily available and accessible for the study as part of convenience

sampling (Mackey & Gass, 2022), 94 EFL teachers took part in the quantitative part of the study and completed the questionnaires.

More information concerning the questionnaire participants can be found in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1. *Demographic information on the questionnaire participants*

Demographic Information	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	71	75.5%
	Male	23	24.5%
Age	30-39	36	38.3%
	40-49	52	55.3%
	50+	6	6.4%
Teaching Experience	6-10	6	6.4%
	11-15	29	30.9%
	16-20	27	28.7%
	20+	32	34.0%
Programme of Graduation (BA)	English Language Teaching	73	77.7%
	English Language and Literature	7	7.4%
	Translation and Interpretation Studies	5	5.3%
	American Culture and Literature	5	5.3%
	English Linguistics	4	4.3%
Education level	BA	39	41.5%
	MA	49	48.9%
	PhD	9	9.6%

Table 3.1 shows the demographic information regarding the number of participants who completed the questionnaire. Out of 94 participants, 71 were female (75.5%), while 23 were male (24.5%). Regarding the ages of the participants, 36 were aged between 30-39 (38.3%), 52 were aged between 40-49 (55.3%), and those who were above 50 were six (6.4%). As for the teaching experiences of the participants, six participants had between 6-10 years of experience (6.4%). While the number of participants who had 11-15 years of experience was 29 (30.9%), that of participants with 16-20 years of experience

was 27 (28.7%). The number of participants with more than 20 years of experience was 32, making up 34.0% of the total participants.

Additionally, a high number of the participants were graduates from the English Language Teaching Department ($n = 73$, 77.5%). The number of graduates from the English Language and Literature department was seven (7.4%). The graduates from the Translation and Interpretation Studies and the American Culture and Literature departments were the same, with five participants each (5.3%). Only four participants were graduates of the English Linguistics department (4.3%). Furthermore, the number of participants with BA as their highest degree was 39 (41.5%), while 49 participants held their MA degrees (48.9%). However, only nine participants had their PhD completed, making up the 9.6% of the total participants.

Table 3.2. *Professional development certificates and writing courses taught*

	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Professional Development Certificates	CELTA	51	54.2%
	DELTA	14	14.8%
	TESOL	5	5.3%
	TKT	2	2.1%
	None	38	40.2%
Previously Taught Writing Courses	Beginning Writing	75	90.4%
	Intermediate Writing	80	96.4%
	Advanced Writing	50	60.2%
	Writing Skills	22	26.5%
	Academic Writing	16	19.3%

Table 3.2. shows the detailed information regarding participants' professional development certificates and previously taught writing courses. First, concerning the professional development certificates of the participants, 92.7% of the participants completed their CELTA training ($n = 51$), whereas 14.8% completed their DELTA ($n = 14$). Additionally, other participants participated in similar professional development courses, with 5.3% of them completing TESOL ($n = 5$) and only 2.1% doing their TKT ($n = 2$). Strikingly, 40.2% of the participants received no professional development course in the past ($n = 38$). Finally, the participants were asked about the writing courses they

had previously taught in their teaching careers. 90.4% of the participants taught Beginning Writing ($n = 75$), 96.4% taught Intermediate Writing ($n = 80$), and 60.2% taught Advanced Writing ($n = 50$) in the past. As for writing class which were taught at other faculties, 26.5% of the participants taught Writing Skills course ($n = 22$), whereas only 19.3% of the participating teachers taught Academic Writing ($n = 16$).

Additionally, through the questionnaire, the participants were asked about their training in teaching writing, assessment in general, and assessment of writing. The information related to the participants' assessment training can be found in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3. *Information on participants' training in teaching writing*

	Frequency	Percentage
Graduate course(s) in teaching writing	53	56.4%
Undergraduate course(s) in teaching writing	59	62.8%
Practicum or internship course(s) in teaching writing	22	23.4%
In-service workshops or training on teaching writing	50	53.2%
Professional conference presentations or workshops on writing	30	31.9%

Table 3.3 shows the frequency and percentage of participants who received some kind of training in teaching writing in an EFL class. According to the responses, 56.4% of the participants received formal training in teaching writing through their graduate courses ($n = 53$), and 62.8% through undergraduate courses ($n = 59$). Additionally, 53.2% of the participants received their instructions through in-service workshops or training ($n = 50$). Conversely, the percentage of the participants who took practicum or internship course(s) in teaching writing was 23.4% ($n = 22$) and the percentage of those who attended professional conferences or workshops was 31.9% ($n = 30$).

Table 3.4. *Information on participants' training in assessment in general*

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, as part of a course (graduate, undergraduate, practicum, internship)	65	69.1%
Yes, as part of pre-service or in-service training for a current or former job	47	50.0%
Yes, at a professional conference	19	20.2%
No, I have never received any formal training about assessment	15	16.0%

Similarly, the questionnaire also asked about participants' training in assessment in general (Table 3.4). As opposed to the information gathered from their responses to the

training in teaching, the number of participants who were instructed in assessment training is lower. 69.1% of the participants responded that they learnt about assessment through courses they received during their graduate, undergraduate, practicum, and internship years ($n = 65$). Furthermore, 50.0% of the participants stated that their pre-service or in-service training ($n = 47$) helped them learn more about assessment in general. The percentage of the participants who learnt about assessment in general was 20.2% ($n = 19$). Interestingly, the percentage of participants who reported receiving no formal instruction or training was 16.0% ($n = 15$).

Table 3.5. *Information on participants' training in assessment of writing*

	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, as part of a course (graduate, undergraduate, practicum, internship)	55	59.1%
Yes, as part of pre-service or in-service training for a current or former job	42	45.2%
Yes, at a professional conference	16	17.2%
No, I have never received any formal training about writing assessment	22	23.7%

Additionally, the participants were specifically asked if they received training in assessment of writing (Table 3.5). 59.1% of the participants stated that they received training in assessment of writing through a course in their graduate, undergraduate, practicum, or internship years ($n = 55$). Similarly, 45.2% of the participants reported receiving this kind of assessment as part of pre-service or in-service training in the past ($n = 42$). Although the percentage of participants who learnt about assessment of writing at a professional conference was 17.2% ($n = 16$), the percentage of the participants who never received any formal training about assessment of writing was 23.7 ($n = 22$).

In the second part of the study, for the semi-structured interviews, the voluntary sampling method (Murairwa, 2015) was used. At the end of the questionnaire, the participants were asked if they would like to volunteer in a series of semi-structured interviews. Additionally, teachers whom the researcher thought would provide more and richer data were approached and extended invitations to participate in the semi-structured interviews. Purposive sampling is thought to help build on the data gathered in the first part of the study and to gather more comprehensive data from the selected participants (Bernard, 2018). Participants were also given the consent form in accordance with ethical requirements (Appendix-1). Information regarding the interview participants can be found in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6. *Information on the interview participants*

#	Gender	Interview duration	Programme of Graduation	Education level	Years of Experience	Certificate
1	Male	53'' 55'	ELT	BA	11	CELTA
2	Female	29'' 36'	ELT	MA	13	CELTA
3	Female	34'' 01'	ELT	BA	15	CELTA
4	Male	28'' 42'	ELT	PhD	20	CELTA
5	Female	31'' 55'	ELT	BA	10	CELTA
6	Female	25'' 25'	ELT	MA	13	CELTA
7	Female	35'' 36'	ELT	BA	19	CELTA
8	Male	31'' 41'	ELT	PhD	20	DELTA
9	Female	21'' 40'	ELT	MA	10	CELTA
10	Female	34'' 17'	ELL	MA	11	CELTA
11	Female	19'' 55'	ELT	MA	18	CELTA
12	Female	18'' 02'	ELL	BA	12	DELTA
13	Female	21'' 04'	ELT	PhD	20	DELTA
14	Female	23'' 24'	ELT	BA	11	CELTA

Table 3.6 shows the details of the participants who voluntarily participated in the semi-structured interviews. While the longest interview lasted fifty-three minutes and fifty-five seconds, the shortest interview lasted eighteen minutes and two seconds. All the interviews were conducted in English. While three of the interviewees were male, eleven were female. Twelve of the participants who participated in the semi-structured interviews graduated from the English Language Teaching department. The last two participants were graduates of English Language and Literature. Correspondingly, out of the fourteen participants, six of them held BA degrees, five of them held MA degrees, and three of them have completed their PhDs. As for the years of experience of the interviewees, the range was between ten and twenty years. Finally, while eleven of the interviewees have completed their CELTA training, only three of the participants hold a DELTA certificate.

3.4.Data Collection Tools

The current study has a mixed-methods design; therefore, both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools were implemented. For the quantitative part of the study, a questionnaire adopted from Crusan et al. (2016) was used. Additionally, to supplement the data gathered from the questionnaire, semi-structured interviews formed the

qualitative part of the study. The details regarding the two instruments can be found below.

3.4.1. Writing Assessment Literacy Questionnaire

The first data collection tool in the study involved administering a questionnaire, as it allowed the researcher to reach the participants individually and gather the required data in a short amount of time. For this purpose, the Writing Assessment Literacy Questionnaire was adapted from Crusan et al. (2016) and used in the initial data gathering process. After getting the required permissions from the designers of the questionnaire, the researcher of the current study examined the questionnaire item by item and decided to make certain adaptations in the questionnaire so that the items could fit the research context of the study. Items related to the demographic information of the participants were modified so that the participants of the study could choose the corresponding answers. Moreover, at the preparatory school in which the research is conducted, all the participants share a similar profile, and they follow the same course syllabus throughout the term. As a result, the changes were made so that the items could fit the research context, and each item would be clearer for the participants of the study.

After the initial examination, the questionnaire was sent to three experts in the field, who were testing unit members and held master's degrees in language testing and assessment, and they provided detailed feedback on each item. To ensure validity, detailed feedback from the experts was gathered so that the comprehensibility and clarity of each item could be increased, and each item could fit the research context and purpose. Following the feedback from the field experts, the questionnaire was put into its final form. In the questionnaire, there are items that the participants needed to check all that apply to them. Additionally, the participants were asked to choose items from a 5-point Likert-scale, with 1 denoting "strongly disagree" and 5 denoting "strongly agree."

The questionnaire that was used in the current study has six parts (Appendix-2). The first part asks about participants' demographic information in seven questions. The second part has five questions that ask about participants' personal training in assessment, related to both general and writing assessment. The third part of the questionnaire includes five questions that ask about participants' assessment strategies. The fourth part asks sixteen questions that focus on teachers' beliefs about writing assessment. The last two parts ask about teachers' writing assessment practices and their assessment

knowledge, which has four and six items, respectively. In total, the questionnaire has forty-three items, and it takes eight to ten minutes to complete the questionnaire.

The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the questionnaire was calculated as .657, which is a commendable value, with more than .60 being the acknowledged standard of acceptability (Dörnyei & Dewaele, 2022).

3.4.2. Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews served as the second data collection method to support and strengthen the data obtained in the initial part of the study as well as to get a more comprehensive understanding of teachers' WAL, beliefs, strategies, practices, and knowledge concerning writing assessment. The reason semi-structured interviews were chosen as the qualitative data collection tool in the study was that they enable researchers to gather data more effectively, especially on participants' beliefs, experiences, and classroom practices (Talmy & Richards, 2010). Similarly, the researcher aimed to gather data that might not be possible to gather through questionnaires because it would leave room for more discussion on participants' beliefs, opinions, and experiences (Mackey & Gass, 2022). Overall, interviews capitalise on the potential of dialogues by allowing interviewers to guide the ongoing discussion towards more significant areas, which also allows flexibility in questioning and enhances the interview process (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005).

Additionally, according to Dörnyei (2007), the results from the questionnaire may not be enough to explain the results gathered from the quantitative instruments; therefore, qualitative data collection methods are used to provide a more detailed perspective regarding the research questions (Johnson & Christensen, 2004). As a result, for the second part of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted. During these interviews, the researcher functioned as the interviewer and tried to employ methods to minimise the biases and potential limitations that could influence the interview process as well as to ensure the credibility of the interviews (Dörnyei, 2007). Thus, the researcher tried to maintain a stance of impartiality and accepted all responses and viewpoints given by the participants, who were encouraged to express themselves freely throughout the interviews (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In summary, these semi-structured interviews aimed to prompt more insight into teachers' WAL with a set of questions that were

preplanned and to help them portray their practices in a more detailed manner that might be left unanswered through answering the questionnaire.

The questions for the semi-structured interviews were prepared in relation to the research questions of the study. Each interview question was designed to answer the research questions and enable the participants to voice their opinions during the interviews. After the set of questions to be used in the interviews was prepared, they were sent to two experts who held degrees in language testing and assessment to ensure the reliability of the semi-structured questions. After the feedback, the questions were finalised to be used in the current study.

In the semi-structured interviews, there were two warm-up questions at the beginning of the conversations, which aimed to establish rapport between the researcher and the interviewees. After the warm-up questions, there were thirteen questions. These questions asked about: participants' background and training; their perceptions and beliefs of writing assessment; their assessment knowledge, practices, and strategies; assessment knowledge; challenges in writing assessment; and professional and personal development in terms of written assessment. It took around twenty to fifty minutes for each interview. The semi-structured interview questions can be found in Appendix-3.

In summary, the current study adopted a mixed-methods study design, with questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, to gather data regarding the research questions.

3.5.Data Collection Procedure

Before the data collection procedure started, ethics committee approval was obtained from Anadolu University Social Sciences and Humanities Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Committee. The application included documents explaining the scope, methodology, contribution, and the significance of the study, as well as other documents including a brief literature review. The ethics board approval can be found in Appendix-4. Later, the documents were also submitted to Anadolu University School of Foreign Languages with ethics committee approval to obtain the research permit. Finally, the research permit was granted by the school board, and the data collection procedure started. The research permit for the current study can be found in Appendix-5.

After getting the necessary permissions for the study, the questionnaires were handed out to the voluntary participants. The quantitative data collection lasted for a

month, between February 2024 and March 2024. The participants were invited to participate in the study; the voluntary teachers were then explained the purpose of the questionnaire regarding the objectives of the study as well. They were also informed that the data gathered from the questionnaire would be anonymous, that their answers would be kept confidential, and that they would only be used for research purposes. In the end, ninety-four participants completed the questionnaire, all of which were included in the data analysis of the study.

The participants were also asked at the end of the questionnaire if they would like to participate in follow-up, semi-structured interviews. For the qualitative data collection, fourteen teachers volunteered to take part in the semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews were conducted at a time convenient for each participant. Before the interviews, the purpose of the study was explained to the participants, and permission to audio record the interviews was obtained from each participant. Because of the nature of the semi-structured interviews, the participants were not interrupted during the interviews but encouraged to elaborate on their responses to the interview questions. All the interviews were conducted in English. After the interviews, all video recordings were transcribed verbatim and shared with the participants, who were given ample time to go over the transcriptions and asked to add any other ideas they did not have during the interviews. After this process, the data collection process was finalised.

3.6.Data Analysis

The current research study aimed to investigate the WAL, beliefs, practices, strategies, and knowledge of EFL teachers regarding writing assessment through a mixed-methods study design. For this purpose, both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used in the study. As a result, different methods have been implemented to analyse the data gathered in both parts of the study.

First, the questionnaire findings have been entered into SPSS version 26 to analyse the quantitative data. Therefore, descriptive statistics have been used to determine the mean scores, percentages, and frequencies of the answers that the participants gave in the questionnaire. First three parts of the questionnaire asked about demographic and personal information. There were sixteen questions about participants' writing assessment beliefs, four questions about their writing assessment practices, and six questions about their writing assessment knowledge. Overall, the last three parts of the questionnaire with

these twenty-six Likert-scale items were included in the Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis of the study.

The data gathered from the semi-structured interviews were analysed through a qualitative data analysis process (Figure 3.2) as suggested by Creswell (2015). As Figure 3.2. suggests, the first step in the analysis included transcribing the interviews recorded with the permission of each participant. While working on the transcriptions, the researcher scanned the data and familiarised himself with the dataset. Second, the researcher read the data multiple times to get a general sense of what the participants expressed during the interviews. Third, the researcher started the coding process to organise the collected data by labelling each term separately. The fourth step included putting these terms and labels into broader categories, while the fifth step entailed deciding on the final themes of the study. Finally, in the last step, the researcher attempted to interpret these themes and discuss the findings of the study. All the analysis and the categorisation have been done to accommodate the research questions of the study.

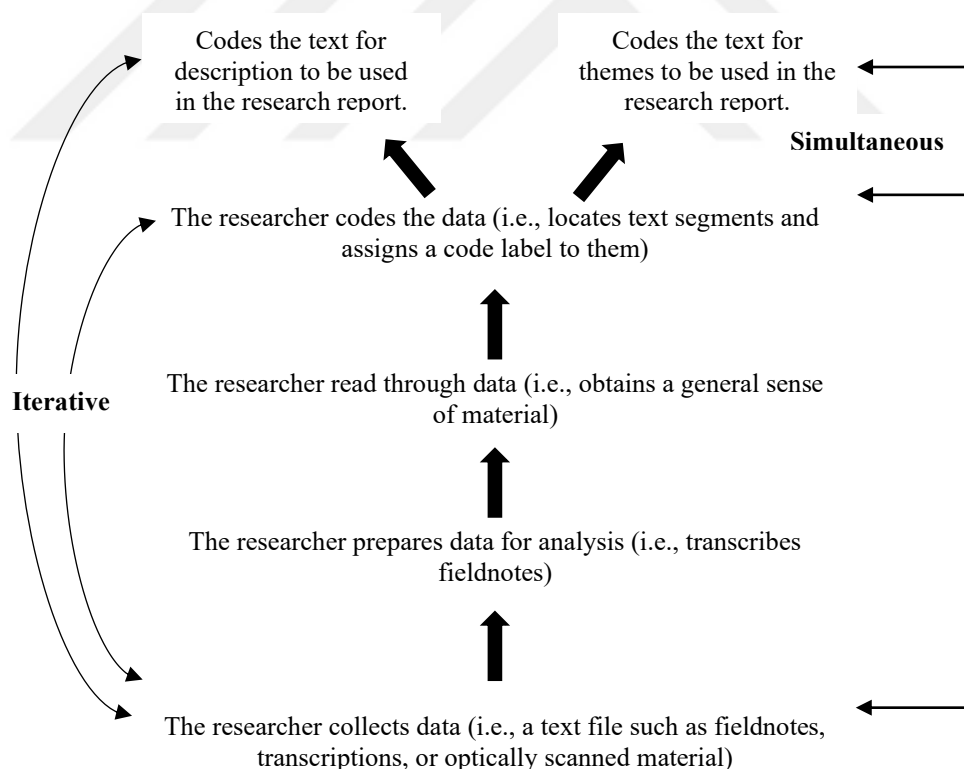


Figure 3.2. *Qualitative data analysis process (Creswell, 2015, p. 236)*

After this step, necessary steps have been taken to ensure the credibility of the analysis and the emergent themes. For this purpose, a fellow colleague has been asked to

go over the dataset. Engaging a colleague to review the codes and the emergent themes at this stage, and subsequently reaching a consensus on the findings, serves as a method of increasing intercoder reliability, which enhances the trustworthiness and credibility of the data analysis (Nowell et al., 2017).



4.FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The first section addresses the quantitative findings, while the second part deals with the qualitative findings.

4.1.Quantitative Findings

This section deals with the quantitative findings of the questionnaire. The Writing Assessment Literacy Questionnaire, adapted from Crusan et al. (2016), asked participants about their beliefs, perceptions, strategies, practices, and knowledge in terms of writing assessment. For this purpose, the questionnaire asked sixteen questions about participants' writing assessment beliefs, four questions about their writing assessment practices, and six questions about their writing assessment knowledge. Therefore, there were twenty-six Likert-scale questions in the questionnaire, and the Cronbach's alpha reliability of these parts is calculated to be .657. Furthermore, at the beginning of the questionnaire, there were two questions which asked about their overall opinions in terms of writing assessment. In the following sections, the findings from the quantitative part of the study will be analysed in detail.

To begin with, Question 11 in the questionnaire asked participants about the activities they considered to be writing assessment. Table 4.1 presents the findings in more detail.

Table 4.1. *Activities that teachers consider to be writing assessment*

	Frequency	Percentage
Quizzes	47	50.0%
In-class writing tasks	94	100.0%
Out-of-class writing tasks	75	79.8%
Midterm/Final exams	87	92.6%
Revisions	41	43.6%
Peer review	49	52.1%

As can be seen in Table 4.1, 100% of the participants thought that in-class writing tasks are writing assessment ($n = 94$), while 79.8% of them considered out-of-class, extracurricular writing tasks as part of writing assessment ($n = 75$). Similarly, 92.6% of the participants ($n = 87$) reported that writing tasks in midterm and final exams are writing assessment. On the other side, the participants considered revisions or peer reviews as

part of writing assessment; 43.6% ($n = 41$) and 52.1% ($n = 49$) of the participants checked each item, respectively.

Secondly, Question 12 in the questionnaire asked participants about their overall feelings about assessing writing. The participants were asked to choose the best statement that described how they felt about assessing writing. Table 4.2 shows the findings for this item in the questionnaire.

Table 4.2. *How teachers feel about assessing writing*

	Frequency	Percentage
I feel like assessing writing is a waste of time	3	3.2%
I feel capable enough to assess writing	9	9.6%
I accept it as a necessary part of being a teacher	59	62.8%
I find it interesting and challenging	23	24.5%

As can be seen in Table 4.2, only 24.5% of the participants felt that assessing writing was interesting and challenging ($n = 23$). The most frequent answer for this item was the second option, “I accept it as a necessary part of being teacher” with 62.8% of the participants choosing this item for their answer ($n = 59$). Only 9.6% of the participants thought that they felt capable enough to assess writing ($n = 9$), whereas, strikingly, 3.2% of the participants reported that they felt assessing writing was a waste of time ($n = 3$).

4.1.1. Writing Assessment Strategies

In the third part of the questionnaire, there were five items which asked about participants’ assessment strategies. First, Question 13 asked participants if they provided their students with a rubric or a list of criteria for which they would be held accountable on the assignment. See Table 4.3 for the findings given for Question 13.

Table 4.3. *Providing students with criteria/rubrics*

	Frequency	Percentage
I never provide criteria/rubrics	2	2.1%
I seldom provide criteria/rubrics	4	4.3%
Yes, but not for every assignment	40	42.6%
Yes, I provide criteria/rubrics for every assignment	48	51.1%

As can be seen in Table 4.3, 51.1% of the participants stated that they provided criteria/rubrics for every assignment ($n = 48$), whereas 42.6% of the participants reported that they also provided criteria/rubrics for their students, but not for every writing assessment ($n = 40$). On the other side, the percentage of the participants who reported that they seldom provided criteria/rubrics for their students was 4.3% ($n = 4$). Finally, there were two participants who reported that they never provided criteria/rubrics for their students, making up the 2.1% of the participants.

In relation to Question 13, Question 14 asked participants if they used any strategies to ensure student comprehension of the assignment criteria/rubrics. The findings for this question can be found in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4. *Providing rubric training to the students*

	Frequency	Percentage
No	10	10.6%
Not sure	17	18.1%
Yes, occasionally	37	39.4%
Yes, regularly	30	31.9%

As can be seen in Table 4.4, 31.9% of the participants reported that they extensively used strategies to ensure student comprehension of the assignment criteria/rubrics ($n = 30$). This being the case, 39.4% of the participants stated that they occasionally used strategies for this purpose ($n = 37$). On the other side, 18.1% of the participants stated that they were not sure whether they used strategies to ensure student comprehension ($n = 17$), whereas 10.6% of the participants stated that they did not use any strategies when it came to ensuring student comprehension of the assignment criteria/rubrics ($n = 10$).

In tandem with Questions 13 and 14, Question 15 asked participants if they provided any training to students regarding the information on the criteria/rubrics. The findings for this question can be found in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. *How teachers provide rubric training to the students*

	Frequency	Percentage
I do not use rubrics in my classes	2	2.1%
I do not provide any training or introduction	8	8.5%
I provide an informal introduction, but I wouldn't call it training	78	83.0%
Yes, I have a specific approach	6	6.4%

As can be seen in Table 4.5, only 6.4% of the participants stated having a specific approach in providing training to students regarding the information on the rubric ($n = 6$). On the other side, 83.0% of the participants ($n = 70$) stated that they provided an informal introduction to the rubric in use, but they would not call it training. On the other side, 8.5% of the participants stated that they did not provide any training or introduction ($n = 8$), whereas only 2.1% of the participants reported not using rubrics in their classes ($n = 2$).

Furthermore, Question 16 asked participants about their approaches to assessing language issues in students' writing assessments, and they were asked to check all the items that applied to them. The findings for Question 16 can be found in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6. *Approaches to assessing language issues*

	Frequency	Percentage
Circle language errors and ask students to correct them	65	69.9%
Write in correct forms for student language errors	72	77.4%
Mark errors with some coding scheme to help identify errors	74	79.6%
Put a check in the margin by a sentence containing error(s)	15	16.1%
Ignore errors unless they cause major confusion	13	14.0%
Write end comments focusing on patterns	72	77.4%

As can be seen in Table 4.6, participants employ a wide variety of strategies in dealing with students' language errors while assessing their writing papers. First, 69.9% of the participants reported circling language errors and asking students to correct them ($n = 65$), while 77.4% of the participants opted for writing in correct forms of student language errors ($n = 72$). Furthermore, 79.6% of the participants reported marking the student errors with some coding scheme to help identify student errors ($n = 74$). On the other hand, the percentage of the participants who only put a check in the margin by a sentence containing errors was 16.1% ($n = 15$), whereas the percentage of participants who ignored errors unless they caused major confusion was 14.0% ($n = 13$). Finally, 77.4% of the participants stated that they preferred to write end comments focusing on specific patterns ($n = 72$), which included statements, such as 'you have a problem with subject/verb agreement' and 'see me to work on this.'

Finally, the last question in the ‘assessment strategies’ part asked which statements best described the effects of using rubrics for grading writing assignments. The findings for Question 17 can be found in Figure 4.1.

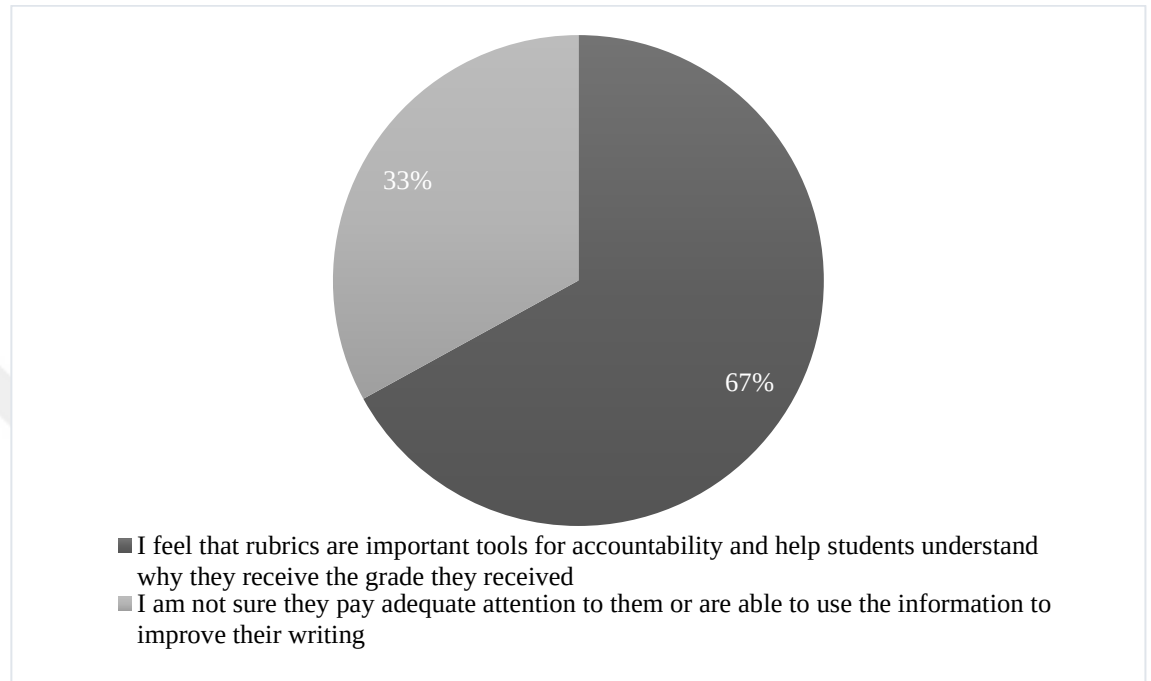


Figure 4.1. *The effects of using rubrics*

As can be seen in Figure 4.1, out of the four possible answers, the participants only chose two of the options. 67% of the participants ($n = 63$) stated that they felt rubrics were important tools for accountability and helped students understand why they received the grade they received. On the other side, 33% of the participants ($n = 31$) reported that they were not sure students paid adequate attention to the rubrics or were able to use the information to improve their writing. Interestingly, none of the participants chose “I don’t think rubrics help that much” or “I don’t use rubrics” as their answers for Question 17.

Following the questions which asked about participants’ assessment strategies, there were twenty-six Likert-scale questions which made inquiries into participants’ writing assessment beliefs, practices, and knowledge. There were sixteen questions (Questions 18 to 33) about participants’ beliefs about writing assessment. Additionally, there were four questions (Questions 34 to 37) about participants’ writing assessment practices. Finally, there were six questions (Questions 38 to 43) which asked about participants’ writing assessment knowledge. Overall, the Cronbach’s alpha for these

twenty-six questions was calculated to be .657. The following sections analyse the findings from these three parts in detail.

4.1.2. Writing Assessment Beliefs

The first part of the questionnaire involved sixteen questions (Questions 18 to 33), which aimed to investigate the writing assessment beliefs of the participants. The descriptive statistics for the writing assessment beliefs can be found in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 presents the descriptive statistics for participants' beliefs about writing assessment. Of the three components in the questionnaire, the lowest mean scores and the highest standard deviations were encountered in the part related to participants' beliefs about writing assessment. For Question 18, 'writing can be assessed indirectly through multiple-choice questions,' the mean score was 2.54, and the standard deviation was .980. 55.1% of the participants checked 'disagree or strongly disagree' as their answers. At the preparatory school in which the research was conducted, writing assessments are evaluated through open-ended writing exams, and multiple-choice type questions are not employed. However, these answers show the way into the minds of the participants.

Secondly, for Question 19, 'scoring of writing is always inaccurate,' the findings were close to the previous question. ($M = 2.46$; $SD = .713$). 59.6% of the participants checked 'disagree or strongly disagree' as their answers for this item. Although the participants were supposed to negotiate for any discrepancy between three or higher grades in students' papers and the institution has been using the same scoring criteria for the last ten years, they still believed that evaluating student papers could lead to inaccuracies. These answers also show what the participants think when it comes to grading students' papers.

Table 4.7. *Descriptive statistics for the writing assessment beliefs*

Writing Assessment Beliefs	Strongly	Not Sure	Agree or	M	SD
	Disagree or Disagree		Strongly Agree		
18. Writing can be assessed indirectly through multiple-choice questions.	51.1%	28.7%	20.2%	2.54	.980
19. Scoring of writing is always inaccurate.	59.6%	33.0%	7.4%	2.46	.713
20. Scoring of writing is subjective.	25.5%	24.5%	50.0%	3.35	1.013
21. Essay exams are best when it comes to assessing writing skills.	17.0%	45.7%	37.2%	3.22	.832
22. Writing is best assessed when integrated with other skills like reading and listening.	8.5%	33.0%	58.5%	3.61	.793
23. Alternative assessment (e.g., self- and peer assessment) can be a good technique for assessing writing.	8.5%	28.7%	62.8%	3.61	.736
24. In general, writing exams provide a good estimate of writing ability.	1.1%	21.3%	77.7%	3.82	.528
25. Writing assessment provides good feedback for writing instruction.	1.1%	11.7%	87.2%	3.99	.539
26. Rater training is not helpful for writing teachers.	10.6%	13.8%	75.5%	3.83	.923
27. A portfolio is a good tool for assessing writing.	4.3%	14.9%	80.9%	4.04	.775
28. When scoring writing, I believe content should receive more weight than accuracy.	31.9%	34.0%	34.0%	3.03	1.010
29. Alternative assessment (e.g., self- and peer assessment) provide an accurate picture of student writing ability.	22.3%	45.7%	31.9%	3.11	.873
30. Assessment plays an important role in writing classes.	4.3%	12.8%	83.0%	3.97	.695
31. Assessment is an important capability that writing teachers should master.	1.1%	6.4%	92.6%	4.16	.574
32. Writing assessment is time consuming.	55.3%	13.8%	30.9%	2.77	1.248
33. It is difficult to work with other colleagues during scoring of writing exams.	42.6%	29.8%	27.7%	2.89	.944

Third, concerning Question 26, which addressed the notion that ‘rater training is not helpful for writing teachers’, the findings indicated that participants preferred the idea that some form of training to aid in assessing and grading students’ papers might be beneficial for them ($M = 3.83$; $SD = .923$). 75.5% of the participants checked ‘agree or strongly agree’ for this item. Similarly, on a more positive note, for Question 27, ‘a portfolio is a good tool for assessing writing,’ had a high mean score in this part ($M = 4.04$; $SD = .775$). For this item, 80.9% of the participants checked ‘agree or strongly agree’ as their answers. The preparatory school in which the research study was conducted used to have portfolios as an extra-curricular activity more than ten years ago, and more senior and experienced teachers were already familiar with the process. As a result, their previous experiences might have played a key role in shaping their beliefs regarding this question.

Moreover, for Question 31, ‘assessment is an important capability that every writing teacher should master,’ acts as the summary of the part in the questionnaire, with the highest mean scores and a low standard deviation ($M = 4.16$; $SD = .574$). For this item, 92.6% of the participants checked ‘agree or strongly agree’ as their answers. Because the preparatory school where the study was conducted gives a high amount of importance to the assessment of writing, it is not surprising to discover that the teachers at the school view assessing writing as important.

4.1.3. Writing Assessment Practices

In this part of the questionnaire, there were four questions which asked the participants about their writing assessment practices (from Questions 34 to 37). The descriptive statistics for this part can be found in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8. *Descriptive statistics for the writing assessment practices*

Writing Assessment Practices	Strongly Disagree or Disagree	Not Sure	Agree or Strongly Agree	M	SD
34. I use scoring rubrics when grading writing tasks.	1.1%	1.1%	97.9%	4.37	.568
35. I discuss with colleagues the results of my writing exams.	18.1%	16.0%	66.0%	3.55	.911
36. I ask students to do self-assessment in writing classes.	24.5%	29.8%	45.7%	3.20	.875
37. I use a multiple-draft approach in which students receive feedback and revise one or more times as extracurricular activities.	27.7%	21.3%	51.1%	3.26	.961

As can be seen in Table 4.8, the highest mean score in this part comes from Question 34, ‘I use scoring rubrics when grading writing tasks’ ($M = 4.37$; $SD = .568$). For this item, 97.9% of the participants checked ‘agree or strongly agree’ for their answers. Although the preparatory school in this study has a scoring rubric, some participants do not opt to use that rubric while grading students’ writing tasks. However, in connection with Question 17, which asked about participants’ overall feelings concerning the use of rubrics, the answers to Question 34 also highlight that the participants try to put what they believe into practice when it comes to grading students’ writing assessments.

Second, Question 37 asked participants whether they use a multi-draft approach in which students receive feedback and revise one or more times as extra-curricular activities. 51.1% of the participants checked ‘agree or strongly agree’ for their answers for Question 37. Although such an approach is optional for both teachers and students, it is evident that the participants favour the multi-draft approach in their writing classes ($M = 3.26$; $SD = .961$). Additionally, in the past, the preparatory school in which the study was conducted had the portfolio component included in students’ overall end-of-term grades. Although this practice was discontinued a couple of years ago, the participants were familiar with the concept, and they still tried to implement it in their lessons.

4.1.4. Writing Assessment Knowledge

The last part of the questionnaire (Questions 38 to 43) asked participants about their writing assessment knowledge. The descriptive statistics for this part can be found in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9. *Descriptive statistics for the writing assessment knowledge*

Writing Assessment Knowledge	Strongly Disagree or Disagree	Not Sure	Agree or Strongly Agree	M	SD
38. I understand the concept of portfolio assessment.	4.3%	6.4%	89.4%	4.10	.689
39. I know what is meant by integrated tasks.	-	10.6%	89.4%	4.16	.592
40. I comprehend the concept of scoring rubrics.	-	5.3%	94.7%	4.24	.543
41. I understand the concept of alternative assessment.	5.3%	13.8%	80.9%	3.98	.762
42. I know how to design good writing tasks.	1.1%	35.1%	63.8%	3.76	.683
43. I know how to design scoring rubrics.	30.9%	39.4%	29.8%	3.02	.916

As can be seen from Table 4.9, several items had the highest individual mean scores. First, Question 38, 'I understand the concept of portfolio assessment,' has a high mean score in this part ($M = 4.10$; $SD = .689$). For this item, 89.4% of the participants chose 'agree or strongly agree' as their answers. As mentioned above, the senior and more experienced teachers were already familiar with the process of creating portfolios because of their past experiences. Second, Question 39, 'I know what is meant by integrated tasks,' has the second highest mean score in this part ($M = 4.16$; $SD = .592$). 89.4% of the participants chose 'agree or strongly agree' for this item. Finally, the highest mean score is from Question 40, 'I comprehend the concept of scoring rubrics,' in this part ($M = 4.24$; $SD = .543$). 94.7% of the participants chose 'agree or strongly agree' for this item. This being the case, in the same part, Question 43 asked participants if they knew how to design scoring rubrics, and this question gave the lowest mean score and the highest standard deviation in this part ($M = 3.02$; $SD = .916$), with 39.4% of the participants checking 'not sure' as their answers for this question.

Overall, it can be argued that the findings from the questionnaire indicate mixed results. The highest mean scores came from the knowledge section, whereas the mean scores and standard deviations from the beliefs and practices parts of the questionnaire point to mixed results. Based on these quantitative findings of the first phase of the study, the qualitative part of the study aimed to dive deeper into the beliefs, strategies, practices, and knowledge of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level, as well as the challenges they face during the assessment of writing and their future assessment training needs.

In the next section, qualitative findings from the semi-structured interviews are presented, and these findings are supported by the responses from the interviewees.

4.2. Qualitative Findings

In this section, responses from semi-structured interviews are presented in relation to the research questions of the study. Themes emerged from the interviews, categorised under relevant areas of investigation. Table 4.10 shows each emergent theme in relation to the research questions of the current study.

Table 4.10. *Thematic categorisation of the qualitative findings*

Research Question	Related Theme
RQ1: What are the writing assessment beliefs and perceptions of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level?	i. Importance of teaching and assessing writing
RQ2: What are their writing self-reported assessment strategies and practices at tertiary level?	i. Feedback strategies employed by Turkish EFL teachers ii. Method of feedback delivery: Written versus verbal approaches iii. Addressing students' common errors iv. Teaching error correction codes and scoring criteria
RQ3: What is their writing assessment knowledge at tertiary level?	i. Limited awareness of alternative assessment methods
RQ4: What kind of challenges do they face in assessing writing, and how do these challenges impact their assessment practices?	i. Coping with students' illegible handwriting ii. Addressing irrelevant content in student papers iii. Conflicts in collaborative grading iv. Other challenges in writing assessment
RQ5: What are their assessment training needs at tertiary level?	i. Assessment training and future training needs

4.2.1. Research Question 1: What are the writing assessment beliefs and perceptions of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level?

The first research question of the study aimed to investigate the writing assessment beliefs and perceptions of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level. When the responses in the semi-structured interviews were analysed, one common theme emerged: it is important to teach and assess writing, but it should be approached with caution, especially in connection with the other skills and systems. In the section below, this theme will be analysed in detail, supported with the direct quotations of the participants.

4.2.1.1. Importance of Teaching and Assessing Writing

At the beginning of the interviews, all participants were asked about their beliefs with regards to teaching and assessing writing. A high number of the participants believed that writing is an important productive skill to teach and assess, whereas there were some disagreements on the importance of teaching writing in the classes. When asked whether students should be taught how to write and whether they should be assessed accordingly, *Interviewee 1* said that “*especially for lower levels, I think writing is one of those things that is more important. I am saying this because, at lower levels, it is common of teachers to expect more structure, more grammar, and more focus on vocabulary.*”

Also, *Interviewee 1* compared writing as a productive skill with speaking and stated that “*when I teach lower levels like elementary and beginner, I think I rely more on writing in terms of production. But as I go higher, like most of the time, it is more likely that speaking takes much more space and time.*” In a similar vein, *Interviewee 6* reported having positive thoughts about the importance of teaching writing in the class. She said, “*writing is not just a skill, I think. It is a way of communication.*” Also, she pointed out how much time is devoted to teaching writing in the classroom and how this situation makes it important to teach more writing and assess it at the same time. In this sense, *Interviewee 6* said, “*I think teaching and assessing writing are both important because we provide lots of input in the class. And we have to assess the output, and the writing is one of the ways we can see students’ outputs.*”

Moreover, *Interviewee 2* was on the same train of thought as the other interviewees, and she suggested, “*writing is one of the skills that we use in our daily life. It is important for our native language, so it is important for English language teaching, too.*” In the

same vein, *Interviewee 3* also thought that it is important to teach writing and assess it in more than one way. Bringing this line of thought one step further, she stated,

I think it is important to assess students' writing in all aspects. Writing is one of the skills that students require to produce because students produce something, a kind of language, that they have learnt so far. So, it shows to a teacher what a student has learnt or hasn't learnt or what that student is capable of and what a student isn't capable of.

After being asked to elaborate on the details, *Interviewee 3* also expressed that assessing writing is as important as teaching writing because "*when we assess a student's writing in terms of not organisational content, also grammar, vocabulary, we also help them progress in these subcategories because they are so important.*" As a result of this type of assessment, she stated, teachers will be able to see how well their students have progressed in their writing studies.

To build on these responses, *Interviewee 14* stated that writing is more important because of its nature as a productive skill. She also stated that students would require to have more knowledge in language to be able to write in English. Stating, "*you need to have some information about grammar and vocabulary,*" she added that students need to receive a good instruction on writing if they are to produce anything in the language. Additionally, she expressed that writing is as important as speaking because through assessing writing, "*we can see how successful we are as teachers and how successful the learners are as learners of English.*"

Furthermore, *Interviewee 10* also think that teaching writing is of utmost importance because writing is in every part of our daily life. She said, "*we use language to communicate something, to understand something, to use something functional, and it is a very vital thing.*" She also stated that it is necessary to provide instruction for the students in terms of writing skills. She said,

These students will have to write something, whether they are in the business world, when they go to Erasmus, or even while playing video games, they will have to express themselves. Because of this, because of the necessity of this, because it is in life, and because we provide formal education here, of course, I think it is useful to assess it, but I have a higher belief in its necessity.

More strongly, *Interviewee 4* is of the opinion that teaching writing is incredibly important. He expressed that "*writing is as important as speaking. It is even more important than speaking in an academic setting. All skills might be important, but I think writing is an integral element.*" On top of that, he thinks that writing needs to be

constantly assessed because it is a productive skill. He stated, *“writing as a skill is important and should be measured. In fact, I am a person who thinks that these should be assessed in quizzes.”* Also, he stated that in-class writing tasks are not enough to improve students’ writing skills because of how little they add to students’ overall grades. As a result, by having writing quizzes, *Interviewee 4* thinks that students can be motivated more.

On the other side of the coin, other interviewees voiced opposite views and opinions opposed to what has been presented so far regarding the importance of teaching and assessing writing. To give an example, *Interviewee 7* thinks that writing is not the most important skill in English because *“for most students, the ones they are going to use the most are speaking and listening.”* He reported that reading also plays a vital role in students’ daily lives, but he did not express any need to pay attention to teaching writing. He stated that reading is also important for students. To exemplify, he stated,

And also, of course, with reading, writing is not the immediate productive skill, so they have got the time to figure it out. So, in terms of the actual ability to communicate when they go to another country, when they have a customer from another country or something, they are going to have to communicate in English, and that communication is going to be speaking and listening.

In a similar tone, *Interviewee 5* also questioned the teaching of writing in the classroom, especially considering the writing genres the students are taught at the preparatory school. She stated, *“of course, students will write something. That’s okay, but they don’t have to know all the genres.”* In addition, when asked to elaborate, she further questioned the writing instruction provided to the students within the classroom. She said,

Maybe if they just know how to write an email, that’s fine for them. Maybe, they don’t need to know how to write an essay or the other essay types. I know they will get some education in their department. But I believe that we expect too much in terms of writing. So, I don’t think that for each department, this much writing instruction is necessary.

In the same spirit, *Interviewee 8* advocated the teaching of writing although she questioned whether it should be assessed as importantly as teaching it in the classroom. She said, *“writing is really important, but I am not sure how important it is to assess it. I think analytical assessment is not necessary in writing, just a holistic one is enough in my opinion.”* Correspondingly, *Interviewee 9* stated that it is difficult to teach writing and assess students’ papers because *“it is difficult to do so in the classroom and because it is a time-consuming thing. Therefore, it is also more difficult for the teacher. There are such*

difficulties.” Also, she stated that she cannot trust students’ own writing abilities because *“the student probably makes a lot of use of the Internet. Therefore, you cannot be sure how much his/her homework reflects his/her own skills.”* Although she believes that all skills and systems in the language are essential in language proficiency, she questions her practices inside and outside the classroom.

Finally, *Interviewee 13* reported losing her belief in the importance of teaching and writing assessing, although she still believes that writing is an important skill to have. She believes that the rise of technology affected her beliefs, and she stated,

Writing is a kind of productive skill, and it is of course important, but, in these days, many students do not write because they have tablets, smartphones etc., so they don’t require to write something. That is a problem I guess because that really affects how they write, but I still believe that writing is one of the most important skills, and I always support this, I always say that there need to be separate courses for productive skills like speaking course or writing course apart from a main course.

When asked to elaborate further, she mentioned that students do not have a need to write outside of class. Stating that students can correct their mistakes digitally, she still believes that there should be more importance placed on writing courses.

Overall, although all participants thought that teaching and assessing writing might be important, they all gave differing opinions and points of view. While a high number of participants advocated that teaching and assessing writing are important subjects, others expressed their opinions on the opposite side, stating that teaching writing has begun to lose its significance because of technological advancements.

4.2.2. Research Question 2: What are their self-reported writing assessment strategies and practices at tertiary level?

Concerning the following research question of the current study, the participants were asked about the strategies and practices they employed in assessing their students’ papers. It was observed that all participants adhered to their own set of beliefs when it came to writing assessment strategies and practices. This being the case, the qualitative analysis indicated that the responses could be grouped into four main categories. The main categories are: (a) feedback strategies employed by Turkish EFL teachers; (b) method of feedback delivery: written versus verbal approaches; (c) addressing students’ common errors; and (d) teaching error correction codes and scoring criteria. These four themes are analysed in detail in relation to the second research question of the study.

4.2.2.1. Feedback strategies employed by Turkish EFL teachers

The first theme that emerged from the semi-structured interviews was related to the feedback strategies the participants employed in assessing students' papers. The general view on providing feedback was highly welcomed by the participants, although there was a limited number of opposing ideas.

To start with, all the participants seemed to agree to change their strategies based on the levels of the students and papers they were grading. For instance, *Interviewee 5* stated, "*it depends on the level*" before she decides how she is going to give feedback to the students. Similarly, *Interviewee 13* also expressed, "*it depends on the level, it depends on the type of mistake, and sometimes, it depends on the learner,*" while *Interviewee 14* stated, "*actually, my approach depends on the level of the students.*" In a similar vein, *Interviewee 1* also stated that "*there are a couple of things that I take into consideration when I am giving feedback.*" Overall, the participants seemed to think about how they were going to give feedback before they graded the papers.

In a more detail feedback session, *Interviewee 3* stated that she allocates more time to giving feedback to students' paper. She stated,

First, I read students' paper, and I focus on students' grammar and correct them, underline them, circle them in a way. So, I read the papers visually, show the students what kind of mistakes they make. Then I read it again. And in the second reading, I focus on, for example, on the content. And in the third reading, this time, I focus on the organisation. I usually write something about each in detail.

Additionally, she also mentioned that she gives clear feedback on students' papers, pointing to students' mistakes and suggesting improvements. On the other side, other participants expressed that, instead of correcting students' errors, they preferred to leave students in charge of their own learning, especially using error correction codes. To give an example, *Interviewee 2* stated, "*it might change for the level I teach, but generally, I prefer using error correction codes, so students can identify their mistakes.*" On the topic of using error correction codes in assessing students' papers, all participants voiced their opinions and stated that they are using these codes in their grading of the students' papers. For instance, *Interviewee 7* stated, "*I usually use a code, a key of the different types of mistakes, to highlight that there is a problem there and the kind of problem so the student can then figure it out.*"

In terms of giving more detailed feedback on students' errors, *Interviewee 9* explained how she deals with students' papers. She said, "*sometimes, I correct the*

mistakes. There is a capital letter error in the paper. Instead of writing 'I,' the student writes 'i' and I correct it. In the second or third mistakes, I just underline it or put it in a circle." Similarly, Interviewee 4 also reported following a similar procedure. He said, "I underline and write the code. If it is a tense error, I write 'T.' If it's a subject-verb agreement error, I write that, too. We have the error correction codes, I use them with my students, frankly." In terms of giving feedback to students in a way that they will understand, Interviewee 14 reported that she uses Turkish in her feedback. For her justification, she said,

You need to make them understand what they are doing wrong, and they do lots of things wrong. So, for this, I just use Turkish explanations for Turkish students, but I have a lot of students from different countries, as well. So, for them, I try to write the simplest explanation in English, which is very difficult for me, while giving feedback, to make him understand, and to make sure he can understand what I mean.

As for the grammatical and lexical mistakes, she reported using error correction codes and similar techniques because she thinks it is important for students to realise their mistakes. As she put it, "*we have only one chance to give them feedback.*" On the other side of the coin, there were a handful of practices and strategies mentioned by the other participants regarding the use of error correction codes. To give an example, Interviewee 6 said, "*if the students' level is high, I just underline the mistake. I think content should be more important, so I just underline the mistakes. If I don't have time to see the students again, I just write the correct version.*"

On a similar note, Interviewee 8 admitted to not using error correction codes when she graded students' papers. She said, "*we use a correction code here, but I don't use all the codes because then the paper seems really complicated. So, I generally put a tick or a smiley face. If I believe that the student has made a mistake and he or she cannot correct it, I correct the mistake.*" Along the same lines, Interviewee 10 was more vocal about her views on the lack of use of error correction codes. She stated,

In the past, I would sit down and use correction codes one by one, cross out each error, write 'sp' for spelling and 'ww' for wrong word. After many years, I don't do that anymore. I noticed that students did not go back no matter how much I wrote 'spelling mistakes' or used other error correction codes, and even if I explained what it was and what 'ww' means, they did not understand because they don't want me to write them codes, they want me to write the mistakes openly. Frankly, I was also demotivated because it requires a very high amount of time in terms of workload, mental and cognitive load. Now, I just write 'I didn't

understand,’ ‘use passive’ or ‘past participle.’ So, now, I am making it easier for them, and I am making it easier for myself, too.

Overall, all participants had differing views on how to give feedback to students’ papers. While several participants were adamant that they adhered to using error correction codes, others were reluctant to employ them in their practices due to several reasons, such as too much work and the reluctance of students towards their papers.

4.2.2.2. Method of feedback delivery: Written versus verbal approaches

The second theme which emerged during the writing assessment practices and strategies discussion was related to participants’ preferred method of giving feedback. Although participants expressed how they preferred to employ error correction codes in their feedback, they also mentioned different methods for delivering their feedback. Additionally, although participants conveyed that the expected mode of delivery was written, they also stated that they would prefer to include oral help for the students in their feedback but were hindered by certain outside factors, such as time constraints.

To begin with, *Interviewee 4* states, “*it’s better when it’s both. I mean, I wish we had an ideal environment where I could call every student to me and explain to each of them for five minutes what they were looking for. I’m sure I’ll see a fifty percent performance increase in the next assignment.*” The participant highlighted the need for verbal feedback delivery because he thought that it would be natural for students to ask questions about their papers. He concluded, “*both verbal and written feedback are definitely the most beneficial because you don’t know if the child will make sense of what you wrote on the paper or not.*” Similarly, *Interviewee 6* agreed that a combination of both methods would be beneficial for the students, saying, “*I like to give feedback in both ways. The short ones, grammar mistakes or just central space. Notes are written all around the paper, but if I want to give feedback considering the whole production, I give it orally.*”

Next, in line with these comments, *Interviewee 5* admitted to using both feedback methods in her practice. Because writing the feedback on the paper would take longer for her, she reported talking to students about their papers. She said, “*if I realise that this is going to take too much time, then I stop writing the notes, I write ‘talk to me’ or ‘take your paper and see me’ at the end of the paper.*” Although she stated that this practice “*depends on the task level and students specifically,*” she also expressed that this is one

of the ways she found to be successful because she did not want to rely on written feedback alone.

Moreover, *Interviewee 7* expressed that his favourite way of giving feedback was oral, but he also stated that he could not employ this method as often as he wished because of time constraints. He said,

The preference would be to sit down with each student and have the time to go through the paper and get them to work out the errors while I'm sat with them. Or while someone is sat with them to make sure they are finding the right answers. The syllabus does not allow time for that. So, we are in a situation where sometimes we have to show the paper, get them to look at it and ask us if they have questions. I know that a certain percentage of the students will not ask a question because they are either not as interested and invested as they should be in the process.

He further elaborated that each student should be given at least ten to twenty minutes for their verbal feedback, which would help them identify their mistakes and would be more fulfilling for students and teachers at the same time. Along the same lines, *Interviewee 9* said that she prefers to give longer written feedback on students' papers because she does not have sufficient time to talk to all the students one by one. For instance, she said, *"I prefer writing, and I write especially long on the papers because I don't have time to give feedback with oral words. I write what I have to say."* Correspondingly, *Interviewee 11* emphasised the importance of giving feedback by saying, *"if we don't give feedback, it's ridiculous. I would like to verbally support it because it's not beneficial for the student to see it and then leave it there. Mixed method is definitely the thing for me; that's the kind I feel best about."*

However, from another perspective, other participants stated that they only resorted to written feedback because of the lack of interest on the students' behalf. For instance, *Interviewee 10* reported giving only written feedback on students' papers. She further elaborated by saying that she gives written explanations for each strong and weak point, but she does not take the time to give more detailed or verbal feedback on students' papers. She said, *"I prefer to give feedback in writing because verbally, if I spend two minutes for each student in a class of fifteen people, it is already thirty minutes that I don't have."* She also complained that by giving verbal feedback in the classroom, she would be worried about her classroom management. She elaborated by saying, *"when you give one person two minutes, the others won't listen. So, there's going to be a hum in the class,*

and it's going to get very loud. So, I think it hinders classroom management a little bit. That's why I want to give feedback on paper."

Overall, all participants voiced their writing assessment practices and strategies when it comes to giving feedback to students' papers. While some participants preferred to give written feedback only, the others preferred to have a mixed method, which they thought would help the students identify their mistakes and improve their writing abilities.

4.2.2.3. Addressing students' common errors

The third theme that emerged during the semi-structured interviews related to Research Question 2 was about how the participants dealt with the common errors they came across in students' papers. Addressing students' common errors takes the form of pointing out the mistakes after the papers have been assessed and students' individual feedback has been given. Half of the participants reported addressing students' common grammar and lexical errors in the following lesson, dedicating a full lesson hour, and going over each point in a whole-class activity. To begin with, *Interviewee 13* said, *"I always note down those types of mistakes, and we go over them. Although we have advanced level learners, they still make basic mistakes, and I always write a sentence on the board with correct and incorrect versions as well to show it all together."* Similarly, *Interviewee 2* reported doing something similar in her classes, as well. She said,

I do it generally sometimes before giving the papers back after they get individual feedback. I especially focus on common errors. I write them on the board and write some examples. I want them to identify what is wrong there, how we can make it better. This is about the language part. I also focus on content and organisation issues as a whole class.

Additionally, *Interviewee 8* stated that she also addresses students' common errors before she gives the papers back to them. She said, *"I write the common mistakes on the board, and then I give them the paper. I do that especially about grammatical use."* When asked to elaborate her strategies about dealing with students' common errors, she further said, *"I think it is effective because they share a mistake with each other, so I think they get happy. They think 'I'm not the only one who made that mistake'."* On a similar note, *Interviewee 14* stated that she first deals with each student during the lesson and gives everyone individual feedback on their papers, in terms of content, organisation, and structure. She said, *"at the end of the lesson, I just write the common mistakes on the board, and I ask my students to find the mistakes or if there are some problems about*

organisation. Sometimes, we write another paragraph on a different topic to make sure they could understand the organisation.”

Next, *Interviewee 9* reported benefitting from technology when she wanted to address students’ common mistakes at the end of a writing assessment. She said, *“I write a few sentences with the mistakes on the board, or I write them on a word document and show them on the computer. I write ten sentences with mistakes, then I tell them to correct them.”* She also reported preparing PowerPoint presentations to help students identify their mistakes at the end of the assignment.

On the other hand, several participants expressed that they do not deal with students’ common errors. For instance, *Interviewee 7* said, *“they are not going to find the mistakes, they may not process that. We cannot tutor them individually, it’s impossible, and we don’t have the time.”* He also mentioned that this is an individual strategy and that it should be questioned if every teacher at the school is supposed to do a similar error check at the end of each writing assessment. Additionally, *Interviewee 3* also mentioned that she does not deal with students’ common errors, saying, *“I don’t prefer it a lot.”* Similarly, *Interviewee 6* said that she is not focusing on the mistakes because she thinks that content and organisation are more important. She said, *“I just don’t focus on the small grammatical and vocabulary mistakes.”*

Overall, several participants reported numerous ways to deal with students’ common errors, while others expressed that they prefer not to address the errors because of certain issues, such as time limitations and a lack of interest in dealing with the feedback provided by their teachers.

4.2.2.4. Teaching error correction codes and scoring criteria

The fourth and final theme regarding Research Question 2 was related to training the students and giving them a form of instruction, explaining how to interpret the error correction codes. Besides, training students also included instructing them about how the scoring criteria work. The participants expressed differing opinions in terms of training their students in these two areas. The analysis from the semi-structured interviews indicated various practices and strategies employed by the teachers. While some of the teachers were keen on training their students on the error correction codes and the scoring criteria, others had opposite ideas and avoided including students in the process.

To begin with, in terms of making students familiar with the use of error correction codes, most participants stated that they spent a considerable amount of time instructing students at the beginning of the academic term. For instance, as *Interviewee 6* said, “*at the beginning of the term, in the orientation lessons, I teach error correction codes.*” Similarly, *Interviewee 8* said, “*we have a standard procedure here. At the beginning of each term, we always give students presentations about what we are doing at this school, what they are going to encounter here, what are going to apply in the education process, and I teach error correction codes as a part of this instruction.*” Moreover, *Interviewee 2* said that she does give a lot of importance to teaching the codes although she makes a brief introduction at the beginning of the term, like the procedure mentioned by the other participants. She said, “*before their first task, I show the error correction codes that we use at the school, and I teach them one by one, but I don’t do it again later.*”

Moreover, *Interviewee 13* emphasised the importance of including students in the process, saying that “*I teach my students the error correction codes, otherwise it would be meaningless for them. So, at the very beginning, I always show the correction codes to them, and I do some examples.*” In a more detailed manner, *Interviewee 7* gives more explanatory instruction to the students, adapting the adopted error correction codes and making them simpler and more complete for the students. He said,

The codes that I use are fairly generic and self-explanatory, really. In the past, I have also used similar codes when they have sent me submissions through email or what have you, I have actually used a colour code and a full explanation below the text, so it is highlighted in different colours with an explanation at the bottom. So, it is normally clear to them what the reasons are.

Additionally, *Interviewee 10* also expressed how she instructs students on the error correction codes. However, she also mentioned that she briefly touches on them and then expects students to keep track of them themselves. She said, “*Yes, in a word file, I show them what the abbreviations mean. For example, ‘sp’ is for spelling mistakes. At first, I show the codes to the students, and I don’t offer it again. I tell my students to do their own tracking without me.*” On the other side, other participants were not employing similar strategies to include students in the use of error correction codes. To give an example, *Interviewee 12* said that she introduces the codes in a ten-minute period at the beginning of the term, but she also said, “*I don’t know if that counts as training, but I just show them.*”

In a similar vein, *Interviewee 9* said that she is not teaching students about the use of error correction codes, saying, *“I’m not doing it now, I was explaining every code one by one in the past, and I used to give sample sentence for each, but I don’t do it now.”* Similarly, *Interviewee 11* also reported not teaching error correction codes to the students in a detailed way, only the basics. She said, *“I teach the simple things on the go. For spelling, I am going to use ‘sp,’ and for word order, I am going to use ‘wo’.”* Because of the curriculum and time constraints, she also stated that she is not giving a one-to-one training to students. She said, *“I only show the ones I use a lot, and I want them to see for themselves. After a while, I just underline it if they make a lot of spelling or word order mistakes.”* Finally, the participants voiced differing opinions on whether they should teach the error correction codes to their students and how much they should be included in the process.

Second, as for training students on how to interpret the assessment criteria and guide them on how their papers are going to be assessed, the participants reported that they devote a considerable amount of time to explaining the descriptors which are found in the scoring criteria. It should be mentioned that for each in-class writing assignment, the task file is shared with the students, including the task instructions, the requirements, and the assessment criteria, to increase fairness and transparency.

Considering this information, the participants stated that they thought it important to give their students a form of instruction in terms of the assessment criteria. For instance, *Interviewee 5* said, *“before assigning them the task, I show them the criteria on the screen, and I tell them there are four components. I explain if they don’t provide enough, they will lose points.”* She elaborated that she follows this procedure because she wants her students to know why they are losing points in their papers. She said, *“sometimes, they believe that they write perfectly, but I give them 14 out of 20, and they ask why they take this grade. So, I tell them what I expect from them through the assessment criteria.”* Similarly, *Interviewee 2* also stated that she wants her students to know how their papers are graded. She said,

For the first task or before their exam, I show it to the students. I tell them, ‘These are the parts that you are evaluated; vocabulary, grammar, organisation, and content because sometimes students think they are only evaluated by the mistakes or highlighted parts in their papers. So, I show them the criteria. Also, when it comes to longer papers like paragraphs and essays, I work with sample papers from the students. I’m not doing this regularly, but I am doing it for essay teaching.

In a similar vein, *Interviewee 10* also stated that she takes the time to explain how the scoring criteria works when students' papers are graded. She said, *"I do tell them what we expect by translating the descriptors into Turkish. I focus on each band. I want students to understand, so I tell them the criteria is important, but also using it correctly is also important."* Additionally, *Interviewee 11* mentioned that the students may not be aware of the scoring criteria and that they do not know how their papers are going to be assessed. She said, *"frankly, it takes a while for them to understand. But if we do it without clarifying in advance that it will be evaluated with specific criteria, then assessment will be incomplete; that's why I explain the criteria."*

Additionally, *Interviewee 12* emphasised the importance of introducing the scoring criteria. She pointed out the benefits of helping students become familiar with the descriptors in the assessment criteria. She said,

It is important in terms of transparency. Students have the right to know how and what I will evaluate. At the beginning of the term, I show them the criteria. Generally, students misunderstand spelling. They don't know that spelling mistakes are a lexical problem. So, I need to explain it in detail. Otherwise, students get confused. I usually explain it once, but if I feel a problem in the tasks, I can repeat it.

On the other side, there were several participants who stated that they do not give a lot of importance in dealing with the assessment criteria. For instance, *Interviewee 14* said that she only spares a small amount of time at the beginning of the term and that she does not fully explain the descriptors in the criteria. Similarly, *Interviewee 8* complained about a lack of student interest, saying, *"when I try to explain it in a deeper way, they don't care about it. They just want to know their grades; they don't want to know what each point refers to."* Finally, *Interviewee 3* also said that she does not really teach her students the criteria, but she only shows the descriptors by translating them into Turkish. She said, *"last term, my students' level was a little bit higher, so they could understand the rubric very well, but this term, I haven't still taught them, but I will."* She also acknowledged that she uses a voluntary students' paper to explain how the assessment criteria work.

Overall, the participants also had differing ideas when it came to training their students on the assessment criteria. Several participants stated that they are devoting a lot of time to explaining to students how their papers are going to be assessed, whereas others reported not giving it much attention despite stating that they deal with the assessment criteria in their own ways.

Overall, regarding Research Question 2, which asked about participants' strategies and practices in terms of their writing assessments, four main themes emerged: feedback strategies, methods of feedback delivery, addressing students' common errors, and teaching error correction codes and scoring criteria. Like what was discovered in the beliefs and perceptions pertaining to writing assessment, participants revealed both similar and differing strategies and practices when it comes to writing assessment.

4.2.3. Research Question 3: What is their writing assessment knowledge at tertiary level?

Research Question 3 of the study aimed to investigate the writing assessment knowledge of the participants. For this purpose, a series of questions were asked to learn more about the knowledge levels of the participants in the study. It must be kept in mind that because of the organisational decisions, the preparatory school in which the study was conducted had a standard curriculum that all teachers needed to follow. Therefore, several assessment techniques, such as self-assessment and peer assessment, are not implemented in the school system. Although the semi-structured interview questions aimed to learn about depth of knowledge in terms of the participants' knowledge, there is only one common category which emerged at the end of the qualitative analysis. Because most of the participants had implemented portfolio as an alternative assessment in the past, the only theme was related to this assessment tool. In the section below, participants' views and ideas regarding portfolio are analysed in detail, supported by direct quotations from the participants.

4.2.3.1. *Limited awareness of alternative assessment methods*

The only theme that emerged relating to Research Question 3 was related to how little the participants were aware of alternative assessment methods, such as self-assessment, peer assessment, portfolios, and projects. However, when all participants were asked to elaborate on their experiences, they reported implementing portfolios in the past at the institution as part of the official school programme. When prompted further to explain their points of view concerning portfolios and whether it is possible to implement them in the syllabus in the future, participants expressed differing opinions on the matter. Overall, although their lack of knowledge of the other alternative assessment

methods was found to be dominant, their grasp of the portfolio as a concept was quite strong, supported by their individual experiences in the past.

To begin with, *Interviewee 6* thought that the implementation of a portfolio in the school system could be beneficial for the students. She said,

I think it is better than writing exams, especially if you want to give more effective feedback. And if we want the students to think on their mistakes and improve their writing, portfolio is better because it focuses on the process, not the product. It includes grammar knowledge, vocabulary knowledge, and helps students to improve all skills to write effective essays.

Similarly, *Interviewee 9* said that she used portfolios in the past as a student and recalled the effectiveness of the procedure fondly. She pointed out how portfolios can help students correct their mistakes and improve their writing skills. She said,

It is still practice being able to write sentences, without any mistakes. So, practice makes perfect. The second time you write the same task without mistakes. Even if it was a simple sentence, I think it would be a benefit. I also think that students can make themselves happy by seeing their work, the whole period in a file. I did portfolio when I was a student, and I still remember the benefits.

On a similar note, *Interviewee 7*, having adopted portfolio procedure in the past, emphasised how the process can help students focus on their development as writers. He said, *“for the students who are interested in improving their writing, it would be useful because like any portfolio of work, it shows where you were and where you are, so they can actually see the improvement and the development of their work.”* Additionally, *Interviewee 2* believed the implementation of portfolios can also help with more variety in the classroom. She said, *“it might help students, especially using drafts for tasks. We can use such alternative assessment techniques; we can integrate them easily.”* Also, *Interviewee 3* stated that it would be helpful for students to be engaged in a multi-draft approach in terms of portfolios. She said, *“I’m not really sure if a student will really take of their portfolio quite well, but I find them really efficient to help students improve their writing skills.”* Finally, *Interviewee 12* also stated that she finds the idea of portfolio useful. She even suggested, *“maybe we could have an online portfolio, which would make it even more useful.”*

On the other side, other participants expressed negative opinions on the use of portfolios due to a variety of reasons. The main reason participants stated opinions against the portfolio was because of their concerns over copying and getting help from online resources, such as artificial intelligence. For instance, *Interviewee 11* was against the idea

of having portfolios at the school; she said, “*not if we’re going to keep this syllabus and these types of tasks. I find our current assignments a little bit restrictive for the portfolio.*” Also, *Interviewee 8* pointed to the rise of the technology, which might make it difficult for students to show their true writing skills. She said,

I think any assessment application should be evaluated in its time and turn. In the past, portfolios were a good idea. Our students were very used to writing, dealing with pen and paper tasks. I mean, the Internet wasn’t this improved, so they were trying to create something themselves. But now, I think it might not work that well because right now, we have different kinds of students. They are really bound to digital technology. I don’t think they read that much. That’s why they have problems with expressing themselves. I don’t think that it will work well here now.

Similarly, *Interviewee 10* also pointed to the technology and how it might affect the usefulness of the portfolios negatively. She said, “*I think it will not be very useful because everything is already at hand; there is something called ChatGPT. If not, we would still have Google Translate.*” Additionally, *Interviewee 13* complained about the help students might get from the Internet. She said,

Because of artificial intelligence, I don’t know whether it would be a good idea because many students would not do those types of tasks on their own, so they would get help from the artificial intelligence. That’s why I have some question marks about the use of portfolios, but this is the reality. I like the idea of portfolios because students can do many things there, but because of AI, I have huge concerns.

Finally, there were several participants who stated that portfolios could increase the burden on teachers, although they still admitted that they could be useful for students. Overall, the semi-structured interviews have revealed that participants lacked the necessary writing assessment knowledge in relation to alternative assessment techniques. Because of their firsthand experiences in the institution in the past and because the preparatory school where the study took place does not include other alternative assessment techniques, portfolios were the only alternative assessment tool the participants had ideas about. Participants revealed differing opinions about portfolios, ranging from their effectiveness in increasing students’ writing abilities to their hindrances because students might get unwanted help from the artificial intelligence platforms. Overall, alternative assessment is an area with which participants might need to become more familiar.

4.2.4. Research Question 4: What kind of challenges do they face in assessing writing, and how do these challenges impact their assessment practices?

Research Question 4 of the current study aimed to investigate the challenges Turkish EFL teachers face when they are engaged in assessing writing and what kind of impacts these challenges have on their assessment practices. For this purpose, a series of questions were asked during the semi-structured interviews, and participants were invited to elaborate on their answers. According to the qualitative data analysis at the end of the semi-structured interviews, four main themes emerged related to this research question: (a) coping with students' illegible handwriting, (b) addressing irrelevant content in student papers, (c) conflicts in collaborative grading, and (d) other challenges in assessing writing. The following sections analyse these subthemes in detail.

4.2.4.1. Coping with students' illegible handwriting

The first theme which emerged in the semi-structured interviews was related to the students' handwriting. Although participants stated that it is not the biggest challenge which they encounter in assessing students' papers, they still voiced a lot of concerns which affected their assessment performances and practices when they assessed students' papers. Participants expressed different opinions and viewpoints regarding students' illegible handwriting, which has a negative influence on their writing assessment practices. For instance, *Interviewee 4* said, “*well, students' handwriting is a big problem. I'm easily distracted by really bad handwriting.*” Similarly, *Interviewee 3* said that bad handwriting is one of the biggest problems for her in assessing students' papers as she said, “*last week, we had a writing task, and handwriting of one of my students was so terrible that I couldn't read anything, so I forced myself to read again and again to try to understand.*”

Additionally, *Interviewee 1* also complained about the negativity of the quality of students' handwriting. He said, “*I think with Gen Z coming up, things are changing there, too; because they have been on computers or on phones most of their time, they haven't done much of handwriting, and their handwriting is in most cases not eligible.*” Also, *Interviewee 5* complained how bad student handwriting can influence her assessment performance. She said, “*sometimes, student writes one thing, but I understand something else. I say this is wrong. I give the feedback, but actually this student wrote something correct in their writing.*”

On another note, several participants mentioned the difficulty in understanding the handwriting of students who come from diverse cultures and are from different nationalities. For instance, *Interviewee 7* said, “sometimes, foreign students are a big challenge for me because they use different alphabets and different styles. I cannot read their handwritings, so I cannot give useful feedback.” Regarding this challenge, *Interviewee 4* said, “with foreign students, it has started to become a problem for me because they cannot write even in a line, so I cannot understand the rest of the sentence. It’s generally too difficult for me.”

Correspondingly, several participants mentioned how students’ style and use of letters and punctuation make it difficult for them to understand what they are going to evaluate, which has a direct effect on how they are going to assess students’ papers. For instance, *Interviewee 9* said that she cannot understand “how the punctuation works, where the capital letter is, where the comma is, where the sentence starts, where it ends... Sometimes, what they write is hard to erase, so they erase and rewrite, which makes it more difficult to read.” She even said, “we became like pharmacists trying to describe doctors’ horrible handwriting. We’re both trying to read the handwriting and trying to figure out the content as well.” Additionally, *Interviewee 7* also complained about the students’ use of the alphabet and punctuation marks, saying he could not figure out the writing well enough to grade the papers and give relevant feedback. He said,

A lot of students I have encountered at the prep school seem to lack some fairly basic literacy skills and some of the basic sentence structures. They might be in our top level, but they still don’t know how to use a full stop. They don’t know how to punctuate with a capital letter or a comma. And then, with the really bad handwriting, it becomes a very hard task to grade a paper effectively because you’re really struggling to read what they’ve written. And how can you give a fair assessment if you can’t be sure what you’re reading?

Overall, the participants voiced similar concerns and difficulties they have encountered in dealing with students’ illegible handwriting. This challenge could stem from punctuation marks, the use of letters and style, or simply bad handwriting. Although students’ illegible handwriting did not take considerable time in the semi-structured interviews, participants expressed that this was one of the factors which influenced their assessment capabilities.

4.2.4.2. Addressing irrelevant content in student papers

The second theme which emerged at the end of the semi-structured interview questions related to the challenges which participants encountered during the process of assessing students' papers was related to how they regarded parts of the papers which might be considered relevant or irrelevant to the task topic. Although not all the participants were vocal about this issue, more than half of the participants stated that they sometimes find it difficult to decide if one student paper should be considered relevant. It must be stated that at the preparatory school in which the study was conducted, the procedure is such that even though the paper might include parts that might be considered irrelevant, the paper is still graded according to the other descriptors in the scoring criteria. As a result, although the student might lose several points in terms of content, the rest of the paper is still evaluated, and the corresponding grades are given.

During the semi-structured interviews, when this topic was brought up, several participants stated that there should be irrelevant papers, which means that those should be given the lowest grade, 5 out of 100. To elucidate the struggle the participants had when they tried to decide if a paper was irrelevant or not, *Interviewee 2* said, *"I do not have challenges for each paper, but sometimes there might be some papers to decide if they are relevant or irrelevant to the topic, to the question we ask in the task or the exam... This might be a challenge to decide."* Similarly, *Interviewee 9* approached the issue from another perspective. She said, *"I think it depends how irrelevant it is. We are too tolerant in this regard. If we can be a little tougher, I think it will also encourage the student. It's a bit difficult, but we shouldn't accept absurd things as relevant."* Additionally, *Interviewee 12* also talked about the difficulty in deciding whether she should consider a student paper irrelevant. She said, *"to give an irrelevant grade, yes, that is a bit of a difficult decision. I think we should penalise because reading comprehension is also a part of writing."*

On another note, other participants were more vocal and wished for stricter procedures related to irrelevant papers. For instance, *Interviewee 3* said, *"we haven't graded students because of irrelevancy, so somehow, we try to find clues if students have mentioned anything related to the task question. But I think we should have the right to give the students 1 point. Since I cannot give 1, I just give very low grades from each band in the criteria."* Similarly, *Interviewee 11* said, *"not everything is irrelevant, but sometimes, when you ask about school, the student writes about a party. So, if it's really*

irrelevant, I should be able to give the paper irrelevant grade. The idea of irrelevancy is the same everywhere.” Moving forward, *Interviewee 13* also mentioned how problematic irrelevant papers can get for her. She said, *“if it doesn’t answer the question, yes, it’s a big problem because I don’t know if the student has memorised and then come to the classroom and written it.”*

Finally, *Interviewee 10* complained about considering a student paper relevant to the task because the student associated the task topic with a few words. She also explained her point of view with an example. She said,

Let’s say that the topic is the harms of social media. Then he explains how to solve these problems. Yes, it is about the topic, but it’s a completely different focus. The grammar is good, the vocabulary is good, the organisation is good. But our goal is for the students to talk about the harmful sides, to give explanations. If the student does something else, then there is a problem. Because I don’t know whether he understood the task there, he may have been confused, but that shouldn’t be my problem.

In a similar vein and more strictly, *Interviewee 4* expressed that there should be irrelevant papers and that he should have the right to give low points if the paper is considered irrelevant. He gave examples from his practice and compared his experiences with those of other international exams. He said,

The paper should be considered irrelevant, and even no points should be awarded for that paper because he doesn’t understand the question. If you answer the question incorrectly, it doesn’t make sense whether that answer is as good as you want it to be. If his grammar and vocabulary is good, then how did he misunderstand the question in the first place? In other words, a student who can produce such a good level of English is very unlikely to misunderstand the question. As a result, I do think there should be irrelevant grades.

Overall, all the participants expressed themselves regarding what should be done with student papers, which might be considered irrelevant to the writing question. The participants believed they should have the right to give out irrelevant grades, but they could not do so because of organisational decisions. While some participants were feeling fine with this decision, others were very vocal about the topic and wished for a change in the procedure.

4.2.4.3. Conflicts in collaborative grading

The third theme that emerged during the semi-structured interviews related to challenges the participants encountered during the assessment of writing included working with other teachers, with whom they had to negotiate at the end of the grading

process. It should be noted that at the preparatory school in which the study was conducted, the student papers in the midterm, final, and proficiency exams are graded by two teachers, who compare their grades and check for discrepancies. Any discrepancy higher than two grades must be negotiated, and then the final writing grade of the student is given. This is a process all teachers must follow at the institution. However, when the participants were asked about their challenges during the semi-structured interviews, one of the challenges they reported was related to the collaborative grading of the student papers during midterm, final, and proficiency exams, which take place at the school throughout the academic year.

To begin with, all the participants reported contrasting ideas on the topic of collaborating with other colleagues in terms of negotiating students' written paper grades. For instance, *Interviewee 2* said that negotiation is a necessary part of the writing process. She said, *"it is good that two teachers assess the paper. I think it increases the objectivity of the writing assessment and the quality of writing assessment. Not challenging or enjoying, it is just a process that I need to do."* Equally, *Interviewee 9* also thinks that negotiation is something to be done during the exam weeks. *"I always work harmoniously. It is not something I am dreading."* Additionally, *Interviewee 11* also stated that she is satisfied with the negotiation process. She said, *"frankly, it would be a lie if I said that I had a huge problem with negotiation. I have been here for 15-16 years. It is easy for me to do the negotiations with my colleagues."*

On the other side of the coin, other participants had more negative opinions concerning the negotiation process, mainly because of individual differences between the teachers who are grading the papers together. For instance, *Interviewee 14* said,

With some people, I would say negotiation is a challenge, because when it comes to writing, it's not like white and black. There are also some individualities and some different ideas. Everyone has an idea about what's wrong and what's correct and what's incorrect in the papers. So, with some people, it's very difficult, but with some people, it's very easy.

Additionally, there were other participants who mentioned that collaborating with other teachers could be problematic because of individual differences. For instance, *Interviewee 6* said, *"it depends on my colleague. For example, one of my colleagues can focus a lot on grammar and vocabulary mistakes, and I just focus on the content. I have difficulty understanding that."* Besides, *Interviewee 5* also mentioned that the process of negotiation is colleague dependent. She said,

It depends on the teacher you negotiate with because teachers are always in a rush, and they don't want to spend much time on negotiation. If they see there is a discrepancy, they seek the easy way out. They want to change the grades without grading the papers again. This is not a real discussion, so this is not in favour of the student. Maybe the student deserves more, and we should discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the paper again, but in this institution, I guess the teacher you will negotiate with is what is important.

Comparably, *Interviewee 3* mentioned that how the process goes depends on the teacher she is going to negotiate with, and the entire process is a challenge for her. She was more interested in being fair, and she said,

Negotiation is a top challenge. If there is a discrepancy, it could be hard to persuade the other teacher. Instead of grading the paper again, that person generally just changes the grades. But I question myself whether I give the correct grade because if I don't, that will have a possibility to affect students' career or future life in a bad way. So, most of the time, I find myself questioning the procedure...if I am doing my job right or wrong.

Moreover, other participants also mentioned that how the negotiation process works depends on the collaboration with the other teachers. *Interviewee 7* said, "*it depends on who you are grading the papers with.*" When asked to elaborate further, he pointed out that this might be because of the varied opinions of the teachers who view the grading process differently. He said, "*there are a lot of teachers here. They have a lot of different opinions. Some of them are very different to mine about what an accurate or a good quality paper would be. With those different personalities, it's often a challenge to get a balanced grade out, I think.*"

Finally, *Interviewee 10* expressed her ideas and beliefs on the process of negotiation with her colleagues. She complained about how her more senior colleagues tried to impose their ideas on her. She said, "*it is very difficult to do this with two people. Older teachers expect me to change my grades because they believe their grades are more correct than mine because of their experience as a teacher at the institution. I call it veteran terror.*"

Overall, although several participants thought that negotiation was a necessary part of the writing assessment, others had more negative beliefs and opinions in terms of collaboratively negotiating students' papers during midterm, final, and proficiency exams at the institution. Most participants mentioned that working with others and negotiating with them over the discrepancies in students' written papers could be a challenge mainly because of individual differences, differing viewpoints, and beliefs in terms of what is correct and what is incorrect in a student's paper.

4.2.4.4. Other challenges in writing assessment

Beside the previous categories which emerged during the discussions in the semi-structured interviews, several other topics were raised, although these topics were not mentioned by all the participants in the study. As a result, it is thought to be an efficient idea to categorise all these topics under one category as a response to Research Question 4 of the current study. It must be acknowledged that these challenges are personal for the participants who expressed them, but during the interviews, they were very vocal about their effects on their assessment performances. These challenges mentioned by the participants are given below in detail.

First, *Interviewee 10* mentioned the cognitive load of grading a high number of papers at the same time. Because she wanted to grade each student in the same manner and fairly, she thought that grading papers in succession could be a challenge for her. She said, *“it could be difficult to standardise and provide fairness if you grade twenty papers in one sitting. I think it is very difficult to try to make sense of what is written repeatedly on the same subject.”* Also, she was concerned about her mental well-being because of the toll assessing papers could extract from her. She said, *“when evaluating the first student and the fourth student, you might be affected by mental fatigue, and you want to grade all papers equally.”* As a result, for her, grading papers in the same manner was *“a huge drain on my mental energy.”*

Second, the writing question itself was reported to be a challenge for *Interviewee 6*, who reported that even though the task requires students to write more complex sentences, she ends up grading papers that are remarkably simple. She said, *“one of the challenges is the writing question and the writing genre. I sometimes have difficulty in grading those papers. Students sometimes write simple sentences, not the ones we teach. The papers have the necessary organisation, but I cannot decide if they meet the criteria.”* She also expressed that although students met certain parts of the task criteria, she reported not being certain of how to grade each paper.

Third, *Interviewee 5* stated that explaining the exam results to the students and justifying their grades could be a challenge for her. She explained that students sometimes question why they take the grades that they take in the exam. She said, *“it’s not the score that I give you. This is the score that you take. That’s the difference here because they don’t like their grades.”* Additionally, because of the negotiation process, sometimes, teachers need to give feedback to the students on their papers, which are assessed and

graded by other teachers. Regarding this topic, *Interviewee 5* said that this situation could also prove a challenge for her because she felt she needed to defend someone else's beliefs and feedback, even though she sometimes questions this kind of practice. She said, *"I am not the one who evaluated and gave the grades of the papers, but I have to show them their papers and give feedback. So, I have to explain another teachers' perspective to the students."* She expressed that explaining the scores and feedback could be difficult for her. She said, *"that's something that makes me unhappy."*

Finally, *Interviewee 7* mentioned that using the assessment criteria is a challenge for him. Specifically, he stated that it is sometimes possible that the students get higher grades than he feels they deserve because of the assessment criteria. He said, *"one of the problems I have with assessing the papers is that I don't agree with the assessment criteria. I'm seeing that I've graded it how I believe is accurate, and I realise that the student is going to get 10 or 12 for something that should worth 6 because of the grading criteria."* He was concerned that such a grading could give the students the wrong impression, which is why he thought grading the papers according to the current assessment criteria was a challenge for him. He said, *"the student is going away with the wrong idea of their writing in my view. Barely half a sentence is accurate, but the student's thinking it's good enough when it isn't. Assessment criteria is incorrectly high and generous."* He concluded by expressing that he is trying to do everything he can to assess the students fairly, but using the assessment criteria is a challenge for him in terms of grading the papers.

Overall, although not all the participants were concerned with these challenges in this category, these participants were very vocal about the challenges they encountered in the assessment of writing. While one participant was concerned about the cognitive load of grading a sizeable number of papers in succession, another was unsure about how to grade certain papers because of the writing question and the task type. Similarly, one participant found it exceedingly difficult to communicate the results to the students, especially in terms of the papers which are evaluated by another teacher, and another participant reported having problems due to the assessment criteria used at the school. Overall, all participants reported encountering challenges and problems during the process of writing assessments, ways to deal with these problems, and how these challenges affected their assessment capabilities.

4.2.5. Research Question 5: What are their assessment training needs at tertiary level?

The last research question of the current study aimed to investigate the professional and personal development needs of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level. After the discussions regarding the challenges and problems the participants encountered during the assessment of writing, the participants were also asked questions related to their future training in assessment. The qualitative data analysis revealed one common category related to Research Question 5: assessment training and future training needs. The data from the semi-structured interviews are analysed below in detail, supported by direct excerpts from the participants.

4.2.5.1. Assessment training and future training needs

The last theme which emerged during the semi-structured interviews was related to participants' assessment training in the past and their future training needs in the field of LTA. During the semi-structured interviews, all the participants were asked about their background training in terms of assessment in general and in writing, and what kind of assessment they previously received. All the participants reported having received one general assessment course during their undergraduate years, which is given at every English Language Teaching department in Türkiye. For instance, *Interviewee 2* stated that in this course, she said, *"I learnt how to create tests, cloze tests, multiple-choice questions, but I don't think I learnt much about speaking or writing."* When the participants were asked about other assessment training in the past, they reported not receiving another formal training in their pre-service training or in-service years. Participants were also asked whether they received any specific training in writing assessment, but none of the participants reported receiving such training either during their pre-service or in-service years.

On the other side, the participants were asked how they learnt about assessment after they started their job as EFL teachers. Remarkably, all participants reported that they learnt about assessment on the job learning from their colleagues or while they were engaged in assessment activities in their classes. For instance, *Interviewee 3* said, *"I haven't received any training, like in workshops, or seminars, but when I first started working here, I learnt how to grade papers in the meetings with my other colleagues."* Likewise, *Interviewee 4* said that although he received a general assessment course in his

undergraduate studies, he said, *“I don’t think it was a course that prepared us for the future. After all, I learnt about measurement and evaluation while working in the testing unit.”* Additionally, Interviewee 5 also mentioned that she learnt about assessment while working in the testing unit at the institution. She said, *“when I first started working in this institution, I was a part of the testing unit in my sixth month. And then I learnt it by doing. So, I observed the meetings, I checked my colleagues’ practices and strategies they followed while preparing their questions.”*

Interviewee 5 also mentioned that several of the senior teachers in the school helped her become more familiar with assessment procedures. She said, *“we had some meetings every week, and we talked about the points we needed to take into account while assessing papers. So, my colleagues helped me a lot.”* Similarly, Interviewee 1 mentioned that the help of his colleagues helped him become more comfortable and knowledgeable in the assessment process. He said, *“for grading papers, all the colleagues that started working with me at the same time were in a meeting. Senior teachers gave us some papers, first they told us about the rubric and the criteria, how assessment works, and the overall procedure at the school.”* He continued to say that he learnt about assessment only through this programme at the beginning of his career as an EFL teacher. Additionally, Interviewee 8 said that she also had help from her colleagues when she started her job, but she also said, *“I dealt with everything on my own. I worked in the testing unit, and I learnt while doing and from others. We also got some guidance from other teachers, but it was mostly my experience.”*

Furthermore, Interviewee 11 reported that she had taken some training as part of her graduate studies and through the norming sessions she had attended at the school, like the rest of the participants in the study. She said, *“I think I’ve learnt a little bit more through my individual effort. Because I teach IELTS and TOEFL lessons for private students, I have studied the criteria offered by such standardised exams. I think I’ve learnt everything myself.”* In summary, all the participants reported having received a general language testing and assessment course during their undergraduate studies. Although several participants received assessment training during their graduate years, all participants reported that they learnt about assessment either on the job, from their colleagues, or through their own arduous work. It is important to note that the only type of assessment training in terms of writing came from norming sessions and initiation programmes when

the participants started their work. It is crucial to note that none of the participants reported receiving any kind of training in the assessment of writing.

Following this discussion on participants' previous assessment training in the past, either in their pre-service or in-service years, there were a series of questions regarding their future training needs. Specifically, the participants were asked whether they would want extensive training in assessment in general and/or in assessment of writing. The semi-structured interviews also included questions concerning what specific training needs the participants had. The general tendency towards professional and personal development regarding assessment training was focused on having some kind of training in general assessment. To begin with, *Interviewee 12* said, *"I would like to learn productive skills better. I want more hands-on-practice. I want to have skills that we can put on paper, not how to prepare multiple choice questions."* Additionally, *Interviewee 7* expressed that he would love to have extensive training in assessment in general. Specifically, he said he would like to receive training *"in terms of the methodology of assessing, why we're assessing, and what we are assessing for; that side of things would be interesting."* Similarly, *Interviewee 8* reported that she would love to receive training in writing assessment, but she also said, *"I'd like to get some training in testing and evaluation in general, but writing and speaking are critical points. A formal training on these topics would be beneficial."*

Specifically, other participants were more vocal about the specific future needs they had in terms of assessment training. First, the most recurring specific training need the participants mentioned during the semi-structured interviews was related to creating and interpreting scoring rubrics. For instance, *Interviewee 6* mentioned that there are many important topics when it comes to assessment, but she said, *"I think the most important one is the rubric and the assessment criteria."* Additionally, *Interviewee 14* mentioned that well-designed training in the preparation of rubrics and criteria is more necessary for the teachers at the institution than other topics. She said, *"I believe, as teachers, we have different points of views about criteria, about rubrics, so we understand different things. That's why we must have a common opinion on this. For this, we should have a training."* Also, *Interviewee 13* emphasised the importance of interpreting the bands and descriptors in the scoring rubrics. She said, *"as a learner, I have always asked for the criteria that my teachers will use while assessing my work, so I think it's very important because we should know what we expect from the criteria. That's why I think it's important."*

Second, in relation to creating their own rubrics and interpreting the assessment criteria in general, the participants also reported that they might need specific training on how to grade a writing paper fairly. To give an example, *Interviewee 3* said that being knowledgeable about grading papers and communicating the results to the students are both important for teachers. She said, “*when a student comes to us with their writing, we must know how to grade that paper. So, it’s important for us to have more training in that regard.*” Additionally, *Interviewee 5* stated that writing will always be important in the future, so every teacher should be equipped with the necessary assessment training. She said, “*if we accept writing as part of our assessment component, we will keep grading papers. So, if we don’t know how we grade the papers, which points we should take into consideration, then it is going to be a problem.*”

Third, in terms of giving feedback to the students at the end of a grading process, *Interviewee 1* expressed that having a training session on how to give beneficial feedback on students’ paper would be welcome. He said, “*the training could be about how to give feedback. I think it is also a part of assessment. If you know how to give efficient, effective feedback, you can become a better grader.*” Besides, *Interviewee 6* mentioned that giving feedback is important for her and that she would like to receive more training on the topic. She said, “*if assessing is part of our job, then we should focus on giving feedback, too. Everyone needs that kind of training, so we can be fair to the students.*”

On the other side of the coin, there were several participants who reported that learning how to design writing tasks would be a good improvement for their assessment practices. For instance, *Interviewee 2* said, “*designing tasks is important because assessing writing is not limited to just grading a paper, we might also learn how to design writing tasks in detail.*” *Interviewee 5* also emphasised that assessment involves more than grading papers; teachers should also possess knowledge of designing effective writing prompts. She said, “*we are focusing too much on grading, but designing speaking or writing tasks are also a part of the assessment process.*”

Finally, several participants expressed that they should learn more about other assessment techniques and contemporary developments in LTA. For instance, *Interviewee 9* said, “*there are new assessment methods that we do not know or that are open to development. For example, we’re not doing peer assessment now, but if there is an effective way to do it, I’d like to learn about it in the future.*” Similarly, *Interviewee 3* said

that she is interested in learning more about assessment in the future, especially in terms of newer developments in the field. She said,

I think we still need a kind of training because there are new technologies, new things happening in the ELT department, and most of the time, we are unaware of them. So, as a teacher of 15 years of experience, I need that training. I want to learn about the new techniques, new studies in the field.

Additionally, *Interviewee 11* also mentioned that it would be a promising idea for her to learn about other assessment techniques in the future. She said, *“I’d like to hear something about writing in assessment and especially alternative assessment. I would also like to receive a training on how to integrate alternative and writing assessment in our system.”* In the end, it must be acknowledged that the participants who have completed their CELTA stated that there could be an intensive training like CELTA but one that focuses, specifically on LTA. For instance, *Interviewee 4* said, *“there could be a training called CELTA in Testing,”* while *Interviewee 11* said, *“I remember how I felt in CELTA, I had a very good training, and I still remember what we did in those sessions. Something like that in the spirit of CELTA for testing could be a beneficial training.”*

Overall, the discussions in the semi-structured interviews regarding Research Question 5 revealed that the participants have not received sufficient training in general assessment or in the assessment of writing. However, they stated their future training needs based on their previous experiences. Creating rubrics, interpreting the criteria and rubric, crafting writing questions, learning more about the more recent developments in LTA, and receiving more intensive training in the field of testing were the common themes found in the data analysis concerning the final research question of the current study.

4.3.Conclusion

The current study aimed to investigate the beliefs, perceptions, strategies, practices, and knowledge of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level. For this purpose, two different data collection tools were implemented in the study. As the first data collection tool, a questionnaire adapted from Crusan et al. (2016) was used to gather the quantitative data.

The findings from the quantitative part of the study specifically aimed to get a general portrait of participants’ strategies, beliefs, practices, and knowledge. During a one-month period, 94 participants answered the questionnaire, and all their answers have been analysed and reported in the findings section. The findings from the questionnaire indicated that the participants adopted similar strategies in their writing assessments. For

instance, 51.1% of the participants reported that they provided criteria/rubrics for the writing assessment ($n = 48$) although the percentage of participants who occasionally provided rubric training was 39.4% ($n = 37$). Additionally, the findings showed that participants adopted different approaches to dealing with students' language errors in their writing assessments, such as writing end comments, marking errors with some coding scheme, and writing in the correct forms of student language errors.

Secondly, there were sixteen questions (Questions 18 to 33) which asked about teachers' writing assessment beliefs. The analysis showed varied findings in terms of teachers' beliefs about writing assessment. For instance, the highest mean score in this part of the questionnaire came from Question 31; participants reported that they believed 'assessment is an important capability that writing teachers should master' ($M = 4.16$; $SD = .574$). Correspondingly, Question 27, 'a portfolio is a good tool for assessing writing,' also had a high mean score ($M = 4.04$; $SD = .775$). It can be argued that participants' previous experiences and practices positively affected their beliefs, as at the prep-school in which the study was conducted, portfolios were a compulsory component in the past.

Third, there were four questions (Questions 34 to 37) which asked about participants' writing assessment practices. The findings indicated that teachers 'use scoring rubrics when grading writing tasks' in their writing assessments ($M = 4.37$; $SD = .568$). Participants' practices are revealed in more detail during the semi-structured interviews.

Finally, there were six questions (Questions 38 to 43) which asked about participants' writing assessment knowledge. The participants reported that they 'understand the concept of portfolio assessment' ($M = 4.10$; $SD = .689$) and that they 'know what is meant by integrated tasks' ($M = 4.16$; $SD = .592$). Additionally, the highest mean score belonged to Question 41, with participants reporting they 'comprehend the concept of scoring rubrics' ($M = 4.24$; $SD = .543$). Overall, the participants showed an elevated level of writing assessment knowledge.

Following the qualitative analysis, thirteen questions were prepared and consulted with two experts who were actively engaged in language testing and assessment activities. At the end of the analysis of the semi-structured interviews, several themes emerged in relation to the research questions of the current study. In relation to RQ 1, which aimed to investigate the participants' writing assessment beliefs, the emergent theme was 'the importance of teaching and assessing writing.' Although some participants thought that

teaching and assessing were both important, others reported that they were not as important as other skills, such as speaking.

Concerning RQ 2, which aimed to investigate participants' writing assessment strategies and practices, four different themes emerged. Participants reported employing different strategies while they were engaged in giving feedback to students, such as error codes. Also, the second emergent theme was related to participants' preferred choice of giving feedback. While some participants preferred a mixed method of both verbal and written feedback, other participants preferred to give students their feedback in only written form. The third emergent theme related to this research question was how the participants addressed students' common errors. Although all participants complained about not being able to devote enough time to give all students individual feedback, they still managed to find the classroom time to address students' common errors through such methods as helping students discover their own mistakes. The last and fourth theme was related to the practices the participants employed in terms of training their students on how to interpret and use error correction codes and scoring criteria. Most participants reported following different strategies for training their students in these two areas.

When it comes to RQ 3, which investigated the participants' writing assessment knowledge, the analysis revealed that although participants were knowledgeable about certain alternative assessment methods, such as portfolios, they were not equipped with the necessary knowledge about other alternative assessment tools, such as self- and peer assessment.

Regarding RQ 4, which asked about the challenges the participants encounter when they are engaged in writing assessments, there were three main emergent themes. Several participants complained about students' illegible handwriting, which negatively affected their assessment performances. Additionally, participants voiced different opinions regarding grading papers, which they thought were irrelevant. The third theme related to this research question indicated that participants held different beliefs in terms of negotiating with their colleagues. Although some participants were happy with how the negotiation process worked, others complained and asked for improvements as the negotiations continued. Finally, although not every participant talked about these issues, there were several challenges brought up by the participants, such as the cognitive load of grading papers, writing tasks, communicating the exam results to students, and using the assessment criteria.

Finally, the findings concerning the last research question, which asked about the participants' personal and professional developments and their future training needs, indicated that the participants received little to no training in terms of assessment in general and assessment in writing. As a result, they reported that certain training sessions would be beneficial for them in the future, such as an intensive course on testing, how to interpret and use scoring rubrics, giving more beneficial feedback, and learning more about other assessment techniques.

Overall, the findings section laid out the five research questions which aimed to investigate the writing assessment beliefs, perceptions, practices, strategies, knowledge, challenges, and future needs of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level. The following chapter discusses the findings of the study in detail.

5.DISCUSSION

In this chapter, the findings of the current study are discussed in detail. The discussion of the findings is focused on the research questions of the study, and the following subsections focus on each research question separately.

5.1.Discussion on Turkish EFL Teachers' Beliefs on Writing Assessment

Through the first research question of the current study, the primary objective was to investigate the beliefs of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level concerning writing assessment.

For this purpose, there were several questions in the questionnaire in the first part of the study. To begin with, Question 11 asked teachers what assessment tools they considered to be writing assessment. According to the findings, 92.6% of the participants thought that the writing tasks in the midterm and final exams were writing exams ($n = 87$). Correspondingly, Question 12 asked the participants about their overall feelings about the assessment of writing. The findings indicate that 62.8% of the participants in the study reported that they accept writing assessment as a necessary part of being a teacher ($n = 59$). Additionally, Questions between 18 and 33 also aimed to investigate the participants' writing assessment beliefs, which correspond to the theme which emerged at the end of the semi-structured interviews: the importance of teaching and assessing writing.

The findings from the current study in terms of Turkish EFL teachers' beliefs and perceptions on the importance of teaching and assessing writing at tertiary level can be approached from a variety of angles. To begin with, the participants in the questionnaire believed that portfolio is a valuable tool to assess writing ($M = 4.04$; $SD = .775$), and the same topic was brought up by the participants during the semi-structured interview discussions. Although there were differing opinions on the effectiveness of portfolios in the current state of the preparatory school, all interview participants agreed on the efficacy of implementing portfolios as a teaching and learning component. This finding of the current study echoes that of similar research studies in the LTA field. For instance, Nezakatgoo (2011) suggested that implementing portfolios can foster students' development in writing skills, as emphasising the writing process, and employing portfolios as an assessment tool can inspire students with confidence in their writing

skills. This notion is also voiced by the participants during the semi-structured interviews in the current study.

Second, during the semi-structured interviews, each participant approached teaching and assessing writing from their own perspective. While several participants reported that writing assessment is as necessary as the teaching of it, others questioned its importance and its effects on students' future academic careers. The reason this finding is significant is that teachers' personal and contextual experiences in the past play a crucial part in shaping how they approach writing assessment and its teaching. Depending on their personal choices and preferences, teachers have personal and individual responses to the assessment of writing. This notion is significant in that previous research has evidenced that teachers, students, and other stakeholders in the assessment process interpret their experiences based on social norms, personal beliefs, and contextual experiences, which are all shaped by the surrounding cultural context (Yan et al., 2018; Wicking, 2015). Indeed, the sociocultural context and the individual backgrounds of both teachers and learners significantly shape individuals' beliefs and perceptions regarding assessment in general (Elwood & Murphy, 2015). It is important to note that Türkiye is a country where summative assessment plays a more crucial role in students' academic lives; however, the participants believed that formative assessment is more important for their students, another finding echoed in the existing literature (e.g., Burner, 2015).

Additionally, Rogers et al. (2007) found that teachers' beliefs across three different contexts (assessment procedures, value attributed to assessment, and the necessity of engagement in assessment) appeared to be varied, uncertain, and contradictory. Correspondingly, the responses from both the quantitative and qualitative parts of the current study indicated a similar story in the Turkish context. As a result, it can also be discussed that teachers' beliefs and perceptions concerning the assessment of writing have the capacity to impact their own effectiveness as teachers as well as their learners' performance in L2 writing instruction (Karaca & Uysal, 2021). As evident by the practices and strategies that the participants reported implementing in their writing classes, their beliefs are also shaped by their experiences as learners. This can refer to the proposal that writing teachers' beliefs can guide their classroom practices, as evidenced by other similar research studies in the field (e.g., Kim, 2015; Yigitoglu, 2011). Overall, it can be discussed that the participants carried their own experiences as students into their

identities and roles as teachers, which shaped their current in-class practices and strategies.

Conversely, in the literature, there are several research studies which have yielded findings which are different from those found in the current study in terms of teachers' beliefs and perceptions. For instance, Muñoz et al. (2012) discovered teachers view assessment through a formative lens, serving educational regulation. However, despite endorsing the idea of assessment for formative purposes, there appeared to be a misalignment between their reported beliefs and their actual assessment practices, as evidenced by their comments. However, in the current study, teachers reported that teaching writing and assessing it are equally important and that they viewed assessment as serving a formative function, especially through alternative assessment tools such as portfolios. Strikingly, this finding of the current study is also in alignment with that of Gebril (2017), who found out that teachers leaned towards employing formative assessment techniques in their classes, including quizzes, exams, oral questions, and portfolios. This finding is considered important because the participants in the current research setting have more responsibilities in the formative assessment as the summative assessment is prepared by a testing unit. As a result, it can be discussed that participants' beliefs are shaped more by institutional regulations.

In conclusion, the findings of the current study are in alignment with the findings from the other studies in the field although there is a considerable number of differences in terms of their writing assessment beliefs and perceptions.

5.2. Discussion on Turkish EFL Teachers' Strategies and Practices on Writing Assessment

The second research question of the study aimed to discover the strategies and practices of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level concerning the assessment of writing. In the first part of the data collection, through the questionnaire, Questions from 13 to 17 asked the participants about their writing assessment strategies, while Questions from 34 to 37 asked about their writing assessment practices. The findings indicated that the participants tend to employ a myriad of strategies in the assessment of writing, and their practices concerning writing assessment differ from each other, although certain similar practices and strategies were reported by the participants during the semi-structured interviews. In accordance with the questionnaire findings, the analysis at the end of the

semi-structured interviews revealed four distinct themes related to the writing assessment strategies and practices of the participants: feedback strategies, feedback delivery methods, addressing students' common errors, and training students in terms of error correction codes and scoring criteria.

The findings of this part of the study can be discussed in certain ways. First, the findings from the current study in terms of the practices and strategies employed by the teachers are reflected in similar research studies in the field. For instance, in the current study, participants had different opinions and, as a result, practices regarding how best they could provide feedback to their students' writing assessments. As a result, it can be argued that their beliefs are reflected in their actions in relation to their strategies. To elucidate, participants reported that they are using different strategies to deal with different issues, although they did not specifically mention what type of strategies they adopted, such as cognitive and metacognitive methods. However, they mentioned strategies about how they approached giving detailed feedback and providing training in assessment criteria, which echoes other research studies in the field. To give an example, Bui et al. (2023) discovered that pre-service EFL teachers resort to rhetorical, metacognitive, and cognitive strategies in relation to their L2 academic writing strategies, which suggests that there is a relationship between how teachers give feedback and how it can impact learners' academic success. This finding is striking in that the participants in the current study aimed for their students to learn from the feedback on their writing assessments. It can be argued that the participants were more interested in dealing with language errors so that they could also receive feedback on how they give feedback and improve their teaching and assessment practices.

Additionally, the participants in the present study expressed that how they give feedback on students' papers is of crucial importance, in terms of both teaching and learning. They reported that feedback should be given ample time inside the classroom and that it should help students learn from their mistakes, although there were several complaints about the lack of in-class time which could be devoted to providing feedback alone, followed by a complaint regarding the necessity to follow the syllabus at all times. Besides, the participants stated that whole-class activities would also help students improve their writing skills, notifying them that all students can make mistakes and that it is best if they are dealt with within the classroom setting. It should be noted that a suitable number of the participants in the current study reported that giving feedback to

the students should aim to improve the students' writing performances. Similarly, Carless et al. (2006) explained the components of effective and efficient feedback in their research, which involved explaining writing task requirements, providing descriptive and diagnostic feedback on students' writing assessments, engaging students in the feedback process more actively, and aiding them in improving their future writing successes. Correspondingly, Lee (2017) expressed that effective feedback within writing classrooms is most effectively viewed as a vital component of classroom assessment, integrating teaching, learning, and assessment practices. Finally, Crusan et al. (2016) have evidenced that it is important to aid students in comprehending and employing the diverse elements of the scoring criteria to evaluate the writing papers. Overall, although participants adopted different practices and strategies from each other, their objective remained the same: to improve students' learning.

Furthermore, in the current study, the participants reported that their feedback does not only focus on grammatical and lexical structures in students' papers, but also on the content of the writing papers as well as their organisational structures. This report is in alignment with previous research in the field of writing assessment, especially about giving feedback. For instance, there has been a call for teacher written feedback to have a more balanced approach in terms of content, organisation, grammar, and style (Ferris, 2014; Mao & Crosthwaite, 2019). Moreover, additional research, exemplified by Biber et al. (2011), has demonstrated that feedback addressing both content and form has the capacity to result in greater student success, especially compared to feedback solely dependent on language and form. However, there is an increasing number of research studies in the field which have demonstrated that engaging students in assessment can have a negative washback effect on both teaching and learning (e.g., Şenel & Tütüniş, 2011; Tsagari, 2009). Overall, the findings from the current study are in alignment with those of the studies in the existing literature in terms of providing feedback on students' writing assessments.

In terms of the last theme related to the second research question of the study, there were differing opinions among the participants of the current study. Although some participants tried to provide students with some sort of training in terms of error correction codes and assessment criteria, others reported that they did not think training students in these two areas was most important. Ample evidence can be traced in the literature regarding both sides of the story. For instance, Ferris (2006) found out that there is a

strong relationship between teachers' use of error codes and how students tend to improve themselves at the end of the feedback session, which is consistent with the findings from the current study, as the participants agreed that their students should work on the error codes themselves to figure out their own mistakes. Similarly, Lee (2004) also suggested that participating teachers and students preferred comprehensive error feedback in terms of their writing assessments, another research study echoing the findings of the current study. Hence, it can be discussed that despite the participants' lack of formal assessment training in writing, they still demonstrated a tendency towards implementing practices and strategies aimed at improving students' writing proficiency.

In summary, while existing literature suggests the efficacy of employing assessment criteria for enhancing students' writing proficiency (Andrade et al., 2008), the participants in the current study expressed opposite opinions and points of view in terms of training students in the assessment criteria of their writing papers. Conversely, there have been critics of relying too heavily on the rubrics, as it has been suggested that rubrics make teachers and students focus on the less important qualities in terms of writing performances (e.g., Kohn, 2006; Wilson, 2006). Nonetheless, the negative comments presented in the current study did not express the severity reported in the existing literature in relation to assessment criteria and scoring rubrics.

To conclude, the findings of the current study are said to be aligned with the findings from other studies in the research field, despite certain differences in terms of writing assessment practices and strategies.

5.3. Discussion on Turkish EFL Teachers' Writing Assessment Knowledge

The third research question of the present research study aimed to identify the writing assessment knowledge of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level. For this purpose, in the first part of the data collection, Questions from 38 to 43 in the questionnaire asked the participants about their writing assessment knowledge. Following the analysis, the quantitative findings from this part of the questionnaire pointed to an elevated level of writing assessment knowledge, with the findings being highest of all three Likert-scale questions. Conversely, the discussions during the semi-structured interviews revealed that participants were more familiar with one alternative assessment tool (i.e., portfolio), which made up the only theme which emerged at the end of the qualitative analysis and highlighted the limited writing assessment knowledge of the participants.

The findings concerning the third research question can be discussed in several ways. First, it should be acknowledged that empirical research studies aiming to uncover the LAL and LAK levels of teachers have been more popular in the literature since the introduction of AL by Stiggins in 1991. The findings regarding the familiarity of the current study' participants with assessment knowledge are consistent with the other research studies in the literature, such as Plake et al. (1993) and Hasselgreen et al. (2004), two of the earliest studies for this specific purpose. The participants in the current study were equipped with the necessary assessment knowledge, especially in terms of certain alternative assessment tools (i.e., portfolios). However, the fact that the participants lacked the LTA literacy in assessment in general is consistent with the findings from the other research studies in the literature. For instance, Vogt and Tsagari (2014) discovered that LTA literacy of the European teachers was underdeveloped because they received little to no training in assessment in general. Additionally, as reported by the semi-structured interviews in the present study, insufficient knowledge and skills in LTA did not prepare teachers to deal with assessment activities in their classrooms and caused them to struggle with certain assessment-related activities. Also, other similar research studies have demonstrated that teacher AL is insufficient and needs more development in the future (e.g., Mertler, 2009; Öz & Atay, 2017; Xu & Brown, 2017).

Additionally, it should be noted that the highest mean scores of the questionnaire findings came from the last part of the questionnaire, participants' writing assessment knowledge. Although the semi-structured interview questions aimed to investigate this issue further, the participants demonstrated limited knowledge in terms of writing assessment literacy. As a result, it can be discussed that there is a misalignment between their reported knowledge and their actual assessment performances. The reason for this discrepancy can be related to what the participants are required to do at the preparatory school in which the study was conducted because the only formative assessment tool which is officially adopted at the school is the in-class writing tasks. Also, there is a unit at the school which is responsible for preparing achievement tests for summative purposes, and another unit is responsible for preparing formative assessments. Therefore, it can be suggested that the participants are not required to be equipped with knowledge regarding other assessment tools, such as self-assessment, peer assessment, and projects. Overall, the fact that the participants are still considered competent in terms of their LAL

levels and knowledge is consistent with the findings in the existing literature (e.g., Jannati, 2015).

Furthermore, it should be noted that, during the semi-structured interviews, the participants did not demonstrate any knowledge concerning such assessment-related concepts as AoL, AfL, and AaL. Participants were vocal about the benefits of employing alternative assessment techniques in their classes, especially portfolios as an assessment tool to assess students' writing performances, and about learning more about more contemporary developments in the LTA field; however, mainly because of the organisational and administrative decisions and regulations, the participants were not equipped with more writing assessment knowledge. This fact is also consistent with the other research studies in the field, such as Lam (2019), who discovered that participants had only fundamental knowledge of assessment but were more optimistic about other assessment tools in the future in their institutions. Additionally, Lam (2019) observed a discrepancy between teachers' perceived levels of LAL and their formal training in the field, a finding also mirroring the findings of the present study. Hence, it can be argued that the low levels of assessment knowledge can be explained by participants' lack of training in assessment in general and especially in writing, another finding of the current study mirrored in the existing literature (e.g., Soltanpour & Valizadeh, 2018; Tsagari & Vogt, 2017).

In summary, the findings concerning the writing assessment knowledge of the participants seem to be in alignment with the other research studies in the field, although there are several contrasts between them and the current study.

5.4. Discussion on Turkish EFL Teachers' Writing Assessment Challenges

The fourth research question of the study aimed to identify the challenges Turkish EFL teachers encountered while they were engaged in activities related to writing assessment. For this purpose, several questions were prepared for the semi-structured interviews, and participants were invited to elaborate on their answers as much as possible. Following the discussions, the qualitative analysis of the semi-structured interviews revealed several common codes and topics, which were put into broader categories, such as students' illegible handwriting, dealing with irrelevant content, the negotiation process with other colleagues, and other challenges brought up by the participants during the discussions.

The findings of the fourth research question of the study can be discussed in several ways. First, it must be acknowledged that the participants stated a considerable number of problems and challenges they encountered, especially when they were engaged in assessment-related writing tasks, such as grading papers, negotiating with colleagues, and giving feedback. Although the semi-structured questions were aimed at investigating other challenges, including organisational and administrative regulations, the participants reported challenges related to their writing performances and practices. This perspective, which was revealed in the current study, mirrors what was proposed in the existing literature regarding challenges encountered during the assessment process. To give an example, Biggs (1999) suggested that despite its crucial role in shaping students' learning outcomes, assessment is one of the concepts which is frequently misunderstood and poorly executed. Additionally, Alam and Aktar (2019) suggested that teachers often confuse the purpose of assessment (i.e., formative/summative), the purposes of curricular and assessment-related activities, and the effects of personal influences on assessment. As a result, it can be discussed that the participants of the current study are affected by the same misunderstanding, mirroring the discussions in the existing literature.

Furthermore, the participants in the current study voiced a substantial number of challenges which were related to the feedback processes and dealing with students' writing assessments. During the interviews, they reported that their writing performances and capabilities were negatively affected by the challenges they encountered, which might be considered barriers, as called by Stiggins (1995). Additionally, Ahmed (2018) discovered that in the Arabian countries, university EFL students encountered many problems regarding their writing skills, such as language errors, a lack of lexical range, and semantic errors. Therefore, it can be argued that teachers must devote some of their time to dealing with students' problems, which, in turn, creates challenges for teachers they are not prepared for or equipped enough to deal with. Likewise, the predominant challenges expressed by the participants in the current study revolved around the content and language proficiency, which were more visible in the students' papers.

Correspondingly, although the participants mentioned several challenges they encountered during their assessment-related practices, most of what they reported was not reflected in the existing literature. For example, Bachman (2013) suggested that the new and recent challenges in the LTA field were related to the changing role of assessment and the necessity of training teachers in assessment. Overall, participants' lack of

knowledge and, notably, their lack of interest in LTA can be attributed to the escalating demands of the workplace (Coombe et al., 2012). At this point, it should be mentioned that the participants in this research setting are not required to be involved in assessment practices related to summative and formative assessment, as these assessment tools are prepared by two testing units at the school, which might cause the participants to let other people prepare assessments for them. Hence, the challenges the participants in the current study encountered are not reflected in the existing literature.

In summary, the findings concerning the fourth research question of the current study align with the findings from the other research studies in the LTA field, although there are certain differences in terms of the kinds of challenges mentioned by the participants.

5.5. Discussion on Turkish EFL Teachers' Assessment Training Needs

The final research question of the current study aimed to uncover the assessment background of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level as well as their future training needs in terms of assessment in general and assessment in writing. During the semi-structured interviews, all participants were invited to share their assessment-related experiences and needs in terms of future assessment training. Subsequently, after conducting qualitative analysis, it was observed that all participants expressed a common need for further training in assessment in specific areas, such as creating and interpreting scoring rubrics, designing better writing tasks and questions, learning more about the developments in the LTA field, and receiving more intensive training in assessment in general.

The findings concerning the fifth and final research question of the current study can be discussed in several ways. To begin with, it should be noted that a considerable body of research studies has underscored the importance of providing intensive assessment training to all stakeholders to increase their LAL and LAK levels. Consistent with the already existing literature in the LTA field (e.g., Davidheiser, 2013; DeLuca et al., 2016; Vogt & Tsagari, 2014), the current study has also discovered mixed findings in the quantitative part and that they need further assistance to increase their overall assessment knowledge and skills. In line with what the participants stated during the semi-structured interviews, the findings of the current study echo the calls for action in the existing literature.

Additionally, the participants reported that they require more firsthand experience in terms of writing assessment, especially in areas of scoring rubrics and designing better writing tasks. Given the absence of assessment training among all participants of the current study, including both general assessment practices and those specific to writing, it is considered logical for them to express an immediate need for further understanding and knowledge of in-class assessment methods as well as learning more about practices and strategies. This discovery from the current study aligns with other research studies in the literature. For instance, Büyükkarcı (2016) found that foreign language teachers require more intensive training both in knowledge assessment and in skills and principles of classroom assessment. Because the participants were more engaged in in-class assessment practices at the preparatory school in which the research study was conducted, including assessment activities, such as grading papers and giving feedback, it can be argued that participants were more inclined to receive training in the assessment of writing regarding these topics. This finding is also consistent with similar research studies in the field (e.g., Crusan et al., 2016; Karaca & Uysal, 2021; Kim, 2015), all of which pointed out that teachers require more training to be considered knowledgeable in terms of writing assessment.

Furthermore, the participants in the current study stated that they learnt about assessment either from their colleagues or on the job, another finding of the current study also mirroring the findings from other research studies in the literature (e.g., Tsagari & Vogt, 2017; Vogt et al., 2020). Because the participants did not receive any formal training in assessment during their undergraduate studies or after they started their jobs as teachers, it can be argued that they resorted to the only options they had available to them, such as mentors, colleagues, and school meetings, which helped them learn more about assessment on the job or from others. Likewise, Öz and Atay (2017) suggested that it is imperative for pre-service teacher education to allocate more time and attention to assessment to increase the quality of teacher assessment and help them perform better in their professional practices in the future. Also, the participants in this study expressed a need for comprehensive assessment training. Hence, it can be suggested that this indicates a lack of confidence in their current practices, underscoring the necessity for more formal training to enhance their proficiency in assessment-related tasks within their professional roles. As suggested by Lam (2014), there should be a balance between teachers' knowledge and practices. As a result, pre-service teachers' assessment knowledge and

skills as part of pedagogical content knowledge should be incorporated into the education system (Gu, 2013; Inbar-Lourie, 2013). Overall, the need for more training in assessment in general and in writing has been continuously mentioned in the existing LTA literature (e.g., Crusan et al., 2016; Lam, 2019; Hyland, 2019).

In summary, the findings concerning the fifth research question of the study seem to echo the findings of the other research studies in the field. Overall, this chapter focused on the discussions concerning all research questions of the study. The next and closing chapter concludes the current study with a summary, implications, limitations, and future suggestions for the study.



6.CONCLUSION

The concluding chapter of the current study presents an overview of the study. First, the chapter elaborates on the summary of the research, laying out the main findings. Next, the following section addresses the pedagogical implications of the study. Finally, this chapter concludes the research, discussing the limitations of the study, followed by suggestions for future studies.

6.1.Summary of the Study

The aim of the current study was to investigate the beliefs, practices, strategies, knowledge, and challenges of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level. The study also aimed to investigate the assessment background and future assessment training needs of the participants. For this purpose, a convergent parallel design (Creswell, 2015) was implemented in the study. In the first part of the study, the Writing Assessment Literacy Questionnaire, designed by Crusan et al. (2016), was used to get quantitative data regarding the research questions of the study. The questionnaire was adapted and distributed to the voluntary participants, with revisions and adjustments made to better align with the research context of the study. In the end, 94 teachers completed the questionnaire, all of which were included in the quantitative analysis of the study.

Following the quantitative analysis of the study, several open-ended questions were prepared, and a subset of teachers who answered the questionnaire were extended invitations to participate in the semi-structured interviews. After getting expert opinion on the semi-structured interview questions, thirteen interview questions were finalised, with two warm-up questions to be used at the beginning of the semi-structured interviews. In the end, fourteen teachers agreed to participate in the semi-structured interviews, which lasted between twenty to fifty minutes.

After the semi-structured interviews were finished, all the recordings were transcribed, and the data analysis process began. First, the datasets were read to become familiar with the topics. A second reading was done to get a general sense of what was talked about during the discussions. The step involved coding the transcriptions and labelling each term separately. Later, these codes were put into broader categories, which comprised the themes of the current study. When the analysis was finished, the datasets and themes were shared with another colleague, who was asked to read them to check if there were any similarities and differences.

According to the quantitative findings of the study, Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level employ different strategies and practices in terms of writing assessment. The highest mean scores from the questionnaire came from the writing assessment knowledge part ($M = 3.875$; $SD = .483$), while the sections regarding beliefs ($M = 3.399$; $SD = .273$) and practices ($M = 3.595$; $SD = .523$) revealed mixed results. Based on the findings, fourteen teachers volunteered to participate in the semi-structured interviews.

After the quantitative analysis and the preparation of the interview questions, there were fourteen semi-structured interviews conducted at each participant's convenient time and place. Interview data were analysed in relation to the research questions of the study. For each research question, certain themes emerged at the end of the analysis. Regarding the first research question, which asked about participants' writing assessment beliefs, one theme emerged: the importance of teaching and assessing writing. Several participants thought that teaching and assessing writing were important, while there were other reports, saying that other skills, such as listening and speaking, were more important.

Regarding the second research question of the study, which asked about participants' writing practices and strategies, several themes emerged at the end of the qualitative analysis. These themes were: (a) feedback strategies employed by Turkish EFL teachers; (b) method of feedback delivery: written versus verbal approaches; (c) addressing students' common errors; and (d) teaching error correction codes and scoring criteria. Regarding the practices and strategies employed and reported by the participants, the findings showed that although there are certain similarities, there were different practices as to how each participant approaches giving feedback, addressing language errors, and including students in the assessment process.

The third research question of the study aimed to investigate the writing assessment knowledge of the participants. For this purpose, the participants were asked a series of questions. The findings revealed a lack of assessment knowledge in terms of writing assessment. Considering the participants' previous practices, all the participants mentioned one alternative assessment tool: portfolio. Having employed portfolios in the past as either teachers or students, the participants reported their familiarity with this assessment technique, although there was no mention of other assessment tools during the semi-structured interviews.

The fourth research question of the study aimed to uncover participants' challenges they faced while they were engaged in the assessment of writing. The qualitative analysis revealed several common themes voiced by all the participants. The main themes were: (a) coping with students' illegible handwriting; (b) addressing irrelevant content in student papers; and (c) collaborative grading. However, there were other challenges brought up by the participants, and these themes were put under another category: other challenges in writing assessment. Overall, while several participants mentioned different challenges which they thought affected their assessment performances negatively, others voiced personal problems which they tried to cope with in their own ways.

The last research question of the research study aimed to find out the future assessment training needs of the participants. During the semi-structured interviews, the participants voiced their needs and opinions as to what kind of training they needed for their professional and personal development. The qualitative analysis indicated that the participants did not receive any formal training during their undergraduate or in-service years, except for one undergraduate course. As a result, they stated that they would love to receive assessment training on topics, such as creating and interpreting scoring rubrics, designing better writing tasks and questions, learning more about the developments in the LTA field, and receiving more intensive training in assessment in general.

In the end, the findings of the study showed different opinions and beliefs in terms of writing assessment, most of which are consistent with the findings from the existing LTA literature. In the next section, the pedagogical implications of the findings of the current study are discussed.

6.2. Pedagogical Implications

As an understudied topic in the LTA field, writing assessment literacy has become a crucial field that continuously evolves within the literature. As a result, there have been several research studies which investigate this issue and urge other researchers to keep investigating WAL to increase our understanding of this field. Therefore, the findings of the current study obtained from addressing the research questions of the study provide valuable pedagogical implications which are aimed at increasing and enhancing the WAL of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level. The following section discusses these implications based on the findings of the study.

First, one of the most significant implications of the current study is related to the professional and personal development of EFL teachers. For this purpose, EFL teachers should be educated in terms of assessment in general before they start their jobs as full-time practitioners. Currently, there is only one compulsory LTA course in the faculties of education in Türkiye. Therefore, more attention and time should be allocated to the training of pre-service teachers so that they can be ready and feel competent enough to conduct assessment-related tasks at their workplaces. As evidenced by previous research studies in the field (e.g., Ölmezer-Öztürk, 2021; Sevimel-Şahin & Şubaşı, 2021; Volante & Fazio, 2007), the training of teachers starts with their pre-service education, and it is observed that these pre-service teachers do not receive the necessary training for their future assessment practices. Hence, there is a critical need for educational institutions, including schools, universities, and policymakers, to acknowledge the necessity of equipping pre-service teachers with the necessary assessment training and education to foster their professional development and personal growth.

Similarly, another pedagogical implication is the necessity of including assessment training within the in-service programmes. The findings of the current study have revealed a severe lack of assessment training during the in-service years, which implies that teachers lack the necessary assessment knowledge in their practices. Consequently, it would be beneficial if there were more professional development opportunities for them. As reported by the participants in the study, there are specific needs and requirements in terms of training in assessment in general and assessment in writing. Correspondingly, there should be a needs analysis to determine the specific needs of teachers so that the right programmes can be developed for them. Therefore, it falls on the educational institutions to include them in the development process so that their choice of training could be provided to the teachers. As evidenced by previous research in the LTA field (e.g., Dempsey, 2009; Lam, 2019; Lee, 2016), more school-teacher cooperation is necessary to encompass all the topics reported by the teachers.

Another pedagogical implication is the need to create the writing assessment practices and strategies employed by the teachers. Because teachers spend most of their time engaged in assessment activities with their colleagues, it is crucial to create an environment where teachers can interact with and learn from each other. As evidenced by the reports of the participants in the current study, teachers can learn about assessment practices from their colleagues with one-on-one interactions or through meetings with the

colleagues. In other words, it is a key component for teachers to be a part of the community of practice. For this purpose, by providing teachers with norming sessions, classroom observations, and weekly meetings, school administrations can provide the necessary in-service training the teachers require.

Another pedagogical implication of the current study is related to the writing practices and strategies employed by the EFL teachers. The participants in the study were heavily invested in discovering the best way to give feedback to their students. Although the current study focuses on teachers' WAL and its components, students should also be included in the assessment process. At this point, it can be argued that it is also students' responsibility to learn how to receive feedback and how to interpret the feedback given to them by their teachers, which is another concept in the LTA field called student feedback literacy. Previous research has also highlighted the need to improve students' knowledge and understanding of the assessment-related tasks, especially in relation to feedback (e.g., Carless & Boud, 2018; Ketonen et al., 2020; Yu & Liu, 2021). Likewise, this topic has been discussed in the Turkish context, calling for action to include students more in the writing assessment process (Özçubuk & Merç, 2024). Overall, it can be argued that previous research studies in similar areas suggested that students should be actively involved in the assessment process, which will help researchers and theorists foster and increase our understanding of what WAL entails for both teachers and students.

Finally, Weigle (2007) suggested that every teacher should possess an adequate comprehension of assessment principles and that it is crucial to encourage teachers to actively seek out and build on this knowledge as a vital aspect of their continuous professional development. Therefore, it falls on the shoulders of those responsible for laws and regulations to create the most suitable environment for EFL teachers to thrive and prosper in.

6.3.Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

The findings of the current study have revealed several insights into the beliefs, practices, strategies, and knowledge of Turkish EFL teachers at tertiary level, as well as their challenges and their future assessment training needs. However, the study has some limitations. The following section discusses these limitations and offers several suggestions for future research studies.

First, the current research was conducted at a preparatory school of a state university in Türkiye. Therefore, the findings only shed light on the writing assessment literacy of the Turkish EFL teachers at this preparatory school. For future studies, different research contexts can be chosen so that more data can be collected. For instance, other cities in Türkiye can be included in future studies, and findings from these universities can be compared with each other. Additionally, private schools, language schools, and EFL teachers from primary and secondary schools can be included in future studies to identify the writing assessment literacy of the teachers so that the findings from the current study can be replicated. Also, although the current study aimed to investigate the WAL of Turkish EFL teachers, more studies can be conducted on an international level and have the findings from the two diverse cultures and backgrounds compared against each other to reach richer and more diverse data.

Correspondingly, in the current research setting, the curriculum followed an integrated syllabus, and there was not a course solely devoted to writing skills. However, there are other preparatory schools and institutions in which writing is taught as a separate skill. In the future, more studies can be conducted to include EFL teachers who teach writing courses in these research contexts. Furthermore, a study in which the WAL of teachers from these two approaches to writing courses is compared can be conducted in the future, conducting research studies in different contexts (e.g., Cui et al., 2022).

Furthermore, in the current study, a convergent parallel design was employed as the research design, implementing questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Due to the data collection tools employed in the study, the participants might have willingly participated in the study because of social motives. Also, their answers in both parts of the study may have been influenced by their answers to give socially acceptable responses (King & Bruner, 2000). Additionally, the study heavily depended on the self-reported data from the participants, assuming that all participants were familiar with the terms which were used in the data collection tools. Also, during the semi-structured interviews, the researcher was present as the interviewer, which may have also influenced the participants to give their answers to please the researcher, which is known as the halo effect. Although it is observed that this is not the case, the possibility cannot be entirely ruled out.

As a response to these limitations, more data collection tools can be implemented in future studies. For this purpose, in-class observations, focus-group meetings, and teachers' field notes can be used to triangulate the data. To eliminate the possible biases

which might arise, future studies can also use students' papers and compare them with teachers' strategies and practices. Additionally, the grades of the students' papers can also be incorporated as a data collection tool to increase the generalisability and reliability of the study findings. Correspondingly, future studies can expand the participant pool and extend the research duration to include more data from teachers to better understand their practices and strategies.

Finally, another limitation of the current study was that it only focused on teachers' perspectives, considering their beliefs, practices, strategies, and knowledge. In the future, more stakeholders can be included in future studies, such as students (e.g., Vogt et al., 2020) and even non-practitioners (e.g., Pill & Harding, 2013). By expanding the participant pool and adding diversity, future research studies can correlate the findings from different stakeholders and increase the generalisability of the findings. Additionally, in the current study, native language, gender, or programme of graduation were not used as variables. As a result, in future studies in which the teachers are involved as the primary participants, these variables can be included, and the data can be analysed accordingly.

Overall, the current study, which aimed to investigate the writing assessment literacy of Turkish EFL teachers, had some limitations, although it attempted to increase our understanding of WAL as a concept and answer the call made both on a national and international level. Despite the limitations, to increase the generalisability and credibility of the findings, future research studies can investigate a variety of topics suggested above, such as expanding the participant pool, expanding the research contexts, and including other stakeholders as participants.

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APPENDIX 1 – Consent Form

GÖNÜLLÜ KATILIM FORMU

Bu çalışma, “**Hazırlık Okulu İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Yazma Değerlendirme Okuryazarlığı**” başlıklı bir tez çalışması olup Türkiye’deki bir İngilizce hazırlık okulundaki öğretim elemanlarının yazma değerlendirme okuryazarlığını ölçme amacını taşımaktadır. Çalışma, Doğukan Hazar ÖZÇUBUK tarafından yürütülmekte ve sonuçları ile yazma değerlendirme okuryazarlığının gelişimine ışık tutulacaktır.

- Bu çalışmaya katılımınız gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır.
- Çalışmanın amacı doğrultusunda, anket ve görüşme yoluyla sizden veriler toplanacaktır.
- İsminizi yazmak ya da kimliğinizi açığa çıkaracak bir bilgi vermek zorunda değilsiniz/araştırmada katılımcıların isimleri gizli tutulacaktır.
- Araştırma kapsamında toplanan veriler, sadece bilimsel amaçlar doğrultusunda kullanılacak, araştırmanın amacı dışında ya da bir başka araştırmada kullanılmayacak ve gerekmesi halinde, sizin (yazılı) izniniz olmadan başkalarıyla paylaşılmayacaktır.
- İstemeniz halinde sizden toplanan verileri inceleme hakkınız bulunmaktadır.
- Sizden toplanan veriler gizlilik ilkesine göre korunacak ve araştırma bitiminde arşivlenecek veya imha edilecektir.
- Veri toplama sürecinde/süreçlerinde size rahatsızlık verebilecek herhangi bir soru/talep olmayacaktır. Yine de katılımınız sırasında herhangi bir sebepten rahatsızlık hissederseniz çalışmadan istediğiniz zamanda ayrılabilirsiniz. Çalışmadan ayrılmanız durumunda sizden toplanan veriler çalışmadan çıkarılacak ve imha edilecektir.

Gönüllü katılım formunu okumak ve değerlendirmek üzere ayırdığınız zaman için teşekkür ederim. Çalışma hakkındaki sorularınızı Anadolu Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksek Okulu’ndan Doğukan Hazar ÖZÇUBUK’a yöneltebilirsiniz.

Araştırmacı Adı: Doğukan Hazar ÖZÇUBUK
Adres:

İş Tel : +
Cep Tel :

İstediğim zaman çalışmadan çekilebileceğimin ve katılımımın gönüllü olduğunun bilincinde olarak, bu çalışmada tarafımdan sağlanan bilgilerin toplanmasına ve bilimsel olarak kullanılmasına izin veriyorum. (Lütfen bu formu doldurup imzaladıktan sonra veri toplayan kişiye veriniz.)

☐

Katılımcı Ad ve Soyadı:

İmza:

Tarih:

Appendix 2 – Writing Assessment Literacy Questionnaire

Examination of the Writing Assessment Literacy (WAL) of English as A Foreign Language (EFL) Instructors in Turkish Preparatory Schools

This research, which will be conducted as part of MA thesis study titled “Examination of the Writing Assessment Literacy (WAL) of English as A Foreign Language (EFL) Instructors in Turkish Preparatory Schools,” aims to determine the level of writing assessment literacy of the instructors teaching in the preparatory schools and to reveal their knowledge, skills, practices, and perceptions on this subject.

The information obtained after the research will not be used except for the purpose of this research or in another study. Study information will not be copied and shared with people other than the researcher without the knowledge of the participants. Participation in the research is voluntary. The personal information of each participant who voluntarily participates in the research will not be shared with anyone, and this information will be kept confidential. The data collected from you will be protected according to the principle of confidentiality and will be archived or destroyed at the end of the research.

Except where specified, please select only ONE option that BEST answers the question for you.
Thank you for your interest, time, and contribution to the study.

Doğukan Hazar ÖZÇUBUK
E-mail:

I agree to this study with my own consent, knowing that I can leave the study if I wish, and that the information I have provided will be used for scientific purposes.

☐ I accept.

Part I: Demographic Information

1. Gender:
☐ Female ☐ Male
2. Age:
☐ 20-29 ☐ 40-49
☐ 30-39 ☐ 50+
3. How long have you been teaching EFL?
☐ 1-5 ☐ 16-20
☐ 6-10 ☐ 20+
☐ 11-15
4. Which department did you graduate from (BA degree)?
☐ English Language Teaching
☐ English Language and Literature
☐ Translation and Interpretation Studies
☐ American Culture and Literature
☐ Other: _____

5. What is your highest degree gained?
- ☐ BA degree
 - ☐ MA degree
 - ☐ PhD degree
6. Other professional development courses and certificates. Please, check **ALL** that apply.
- ☐ CELTA
 - ☐ DELTA
 - ☐ TESOL
 - ☐ Other: _____
7. Which of the target courses have you taught in the past? Please, check **ALL** that apply.
- ☐ Beginning Writing
 - ☐ Intermediate Writing
 - ☐ Advanced Writing
 - ☐ Writing Skills (ELT Department)
 - ☐ Academic Writing (ELT Department)

Part II: About You

8. What kinds of training prepared you to teach writing? Please, check **ALL** that apply.
- ☐ graduate course(s) in teaching writing
 - ☐ undergraduate course(s) in teaching writing
 - ☐ practicum or internship course(s) in teaching writing
 - ☐ in-service workshops or training on teaching writing
 - ☐ professional conference presentations or workshops on writing
 - ☐ none of the above
 - ☐ other _____
9. Have you ever received formal training in assessment in general? Please, check **ALL** that apply.
- ☐ Yes, as part of a course (graduate, undergraduate, practicum, internship).
 - ☐ Yes, as part of pre-service or in-service training for a current or former job.
 - ☐ Yes, at a professional conference.
 - ☐ No, I have never received any formal training about assessment.
10. Have you ever received formal training in the assessment of writing? Please, check **ALL** that apply.
- ☐ Yes, as part of a course (graduate, undergraduate, practicum, internship).
 - ☐ Yes, as part of pre-service or in-service training for a current or former job.
 - ☐ Yes, at a professional conference.
 - ☐ No, I have never received any formal training about writing assessment.
11. Check **ALL** the activities that you consider to be writing assessment.
- ☐ Quizzes
 - ☐ In-class writing tasks
 - ☐ Out of class writing tasks
 - ☐ Midterm/Final exams
 - ☐ Revisions
 - ☐ Peer review
12. Which statement **BEST** describes how you feel about assessing writing?
- ☐ I find it interesting and challenging.
 - ☐ I accept it as a necessary part of being a teacher.
 - ☐ I feel capable enough to assess writing.
 - ☐ I feel like assessing writing is a waste of time.

Part III: Your Assessment Strategies

13. When you give a writing assignment, do you provide students with a rubric or a list of criteria for which they will be held accountable on the assignment?
- ☐ Yes, I provide criteria/rubrics for every assignment.
 - ☐ Yes, but not for every assignment.
 - ☐ I seldom provide criteria/rubrics.
 - ☐ I never provide criteria/rubrics.
14. Do you use any strategies to ensure student comprehension of the assignment criteria/rubrics?
- ☐ Yes, regularly.
 - ☐ Yes, occasionally.
 - ☐ Not sure.
 - ☐ No.
15. If you use rubrics as a tool for writing assessment, do you provide any training to students regarding the information on the rubric?
- ☐ Yes, I have a specific approach.
 - ☐ I provide an informal introduction to the rubric in use, but I wouldn't call it training.
 - ☐ I do not provide any training or introduction.
 - ☐ I do not use rubrics in my classes.
16. What is your approach to assessing language issues in student writing? Please, check **ALL** that apply.
- ☐ Circle language errors and ask students to correct them.
 - ☐ Write in correct forms for student language errors.
 - ☐ Mark errors with some coding scheme to help identify errors.
 - ☐ Put a check in the margin by a sentence containing error(s).
 - ☐ Ignore errors unless they cause major confusion.
 - ☐ Write end comments focusing on patterns (e.g., You have a problem with subject/verb agreement; see Chapter X in the text or see me to work on this).
17. Regardless of your overall approach to assessment, which statement **BEST** describes the effects of using rubrics for grading writing assignments?
- ☐ I feel that rubrics are important tools for accountability and help students understand why they receive the grade they received.
 - ☐ I am not sure they pay adequate attention to them or are able to use the information to improve their writing.
 - ☐ I don't think rubrics help that much.
 - ☐ I don't use rubrics.

Part IV: Your beliefs about writing assessment

Please circle the answer that best describes your beliefs, practices, and knowledge. There are no right or wrong answers.

	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Disagree (D)	Not Sure (NS)	Agree (A)	Strongly Agree (SA)
Your beliefs about writing assessment					
18. Writing can be assessed indirectly through multiple-choice questions.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
19. Scoring of writing is always inaccurate.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
20. Scoring of writing is subjective.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
21. Essay exams are best when it comes to assessing writing skills.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
22. Writing is best assessed when integrated with other skills like reading and listening.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
23. Alternative assessment (e.g., self- and peer assessment) can be a good technique for assessing writing.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
24. In general, writing exams provide a good estimate of writing ability.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
25. Writing assessment provides good feedback for writing instruction.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
26. Rater training is not helpful for writing teachers.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
27. A portfolio is a good tool for assessing writing.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
28. When scoring writing, I believe content should receive more weight than accuracy (grammar).	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
29. Alternative assessment (e.g., self- and peer assessment) provides an accurate picture of student writing ability.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
30. Assessment plays an important role in writing classes.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
31. Assessment is an important capability that writing teachers should master.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
32. Writing assessment is time consuming.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
33. It is difficult to work with other colleagues during scoring of writing exams.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree

	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Disagree (D)	Not Sure (NS)	Agree (A)	Strongly Agree (SA)
Part V: Your writing assessment practices					
34. I use scoring rubrics when grading writing tasks.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
35. I discuss with colleagues the results of my writing exams.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
36. I ask students to do self-assessment in writing classes.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
37. I use a multiple-draft approach in which students receive feedback and revise one or more times as extracurricular activities.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
Part VI: Your writing assessment knowledge					
38. I understand the concept of portfolio assessment.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
39. I know what is meant by integrated writing tasks.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
40. I comprehend the concept of scoring rubrics.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
41. I understand the concept of alternative assessment.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
42. I know how to design good writing tasks.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
43. I know how to design scoring rubrics.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree

As a follow-up to this survey, I would like to conduct interviews with interested teachers to explore these topics in more depth. This interview would last around 30 minutes and be arranged at a time and place convenient to you. If you would like to volunteer to be an interview participant, please provide your name to express your interest. Your comments & opinions will be kept anonymous in all analyses and reports on this research.

IF INTERESTED IN FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEWS

NAME: _____

Appendix 3 – Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Warm-up Questions:

- i. To start off, could you share a little bit about yourself and your journey as an EFL instructor?
- ii. Reflecting on your teaching career, can you share a success story of a student who made considerable progress in their writing skills under your guidance? Why do you think they became successful?

Interview Questions

1. Can you provide some information about your background and training as an EFL instructor, particularly in relation to writing assessment?
2. Do you think you have received adequate training in writing assessments during your pre-service education? What about in-service training?
3. How do you perceive the role of writing assessment in the language learning process?
4. In your opinion, what are the key purposes of assessing writing skills in an EFL context?
 - a. What is the importance of assessing writing for you? Is it as important as the other skills?
5. What is your approach to addressing errors within students' written assignments?
 - a. Do you employ direct feedback, involving the underlining of grammatical inaccuracies and providing the correct form, or do you prefer indirect feedback, signalling the presence of an error without offering correction (i.e., error codes)?
 - b. Furthermore, what rationale informs your choice of feedback strategy?
 - c. Which one do you prefer more: written or verbal feedback? Can you elaborate?
6. To what extent do you think your students are aware of the criteria by which their writing is assessed?
 - a. Do you teach your students how to use the assessment criteria?
7. How would you define alternative assessment in the context of writing assessment?
8. To what extent do you think these alternative writing assessments are feasible in your work context? (e.g., self- and peer assessment, portfolio assessment, etc.)
9. What specific needs do you identify for professional development in assessment of writing?
10. In your opinion, how important is ongoing professional development for EFL instructors in improving their writing assessment practices?
11. What challenges do you encounter when assessing your students' writing abilities?
12. Are there specific aspects of writing assessment that you find more challenging than others?
 - a. What do you think about papers that you might grade as "irrelevant"?
13. What suggestions do you have for improving the Writing Assessment Literacy of EFL instructors in Turkish preparatory schools?

Appendix 4 – Ethic Committee Approval

Evrak Kayıt Tarihi: 10.01.2024

Protokol No: 679641

Tarih: 29.01.2024



ANADOLU ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL VE BEŞERÎ BİLİMLER BİLİMSEL ARAŞTIRMA VE YAYIN ETİĞİ KURULU
KARAR BELGESİ

ÇALIŞMANIN TÜRÜ:	Yüksek Lisans Tez Çalışması
KONU:	Eğitim Bilimleri
BAŞLIK:	Türkiye'deki Hazırlık Okullarında İngilizceyi Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğreten (EFL) Okutmanların Yazma Değerlendirme Okuryazarlığının (WAL) İncelenmesi Examination of the Writing Assessment Literacy (WAL) of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Instructors in Turkish Preparatory Schools
PROJE/TEZ YÜRÜTÜCÜSÜ:	Prof. Dr. Ali MERÇ
TEZ YAZARI:	Doğukan Hazar ÖZÇUBUK
ALT KOMİSYON GÖRÜŞÜ:	-
KARAR:	Olumlu

Appendix 5 – Research Permit

Ana.Üni.: 15.02.2024-697559



T.C.
ANADOLU ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Genel Sekreterlik
Yazı İşleri Müdürlüğü



Sayı : E-63784619-100-697559
Konu : Dođukan Hazar ÖZÇUBUK'un
Araştırma İzni

15.02.2024

Dağıtım Yerlerine

İlgi : Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsünün 12.02.2024 tarihli ve 695685 sayılı yazısı.

İlgi'de kayıtlı yazı ile Prof. Dr. Ali MERCİ'nin danışmanlığında "Türkiye'deki Hazırlık Okullarında İngilizceyi Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğreten (EFL) Okutmanların Yazma Değerlendirme Okuryazarlığının (WAL) İncelenmesi (Examination of the Writing Assessment Literacy (WAL) of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Instructors in Turkish Preparatory Schools)" başlıklı yüksek lisans tez çalışmasını hazırladığı belirtilen Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı İngilizce Eğitimi Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Dođukan Hazar ÖZÇUBUK'un 2023-2024 bahar döneminde Üniversitemiz Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulunda İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğreten öğretim elemanları ile araştırma gerçekleştirmesi Rektörlüğümüzce uygun görülmüştür.

Bilgilerini ve gereğini rica ederim.

Prof. Dr. Süleyman SÖZEN
Rektör a.
Rektör Yardımcısı

Dağıtım:
Gereği:
Lisansüstü Eğitim Enstitüsü Müdürlüğüne

Bilgi:
Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu Müdürlüğüne

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Publications

Özçubuk, D. H., & Merç, A. (2024). An in-depth examination of writing assessment literacy among university preparatory students in Turkish higher education. *Erzincan Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 26(2), 291-304.
<https://doi.org/10.17556/erziefd.1427430>

Certificates

2013, CELTA (Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)

2023, TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages)