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**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

**A COMPARISON OF EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF FORMATIVE**  
**ASSESSMENT IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS**

**THESIS BY**

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## ÖZET

# ÖZEL VE DEVLET OKULLARINDA ÇALIŞAN İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN BİÇİMLENDİRİCİ DEĞERLENDİRME ALGILARININ KARŞILAŞTIRILMASI

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Devlet okulunda çalışan bir İngilizce öğretmeni olarak Türkiye'deki devlet ve özel okullarında çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin biçimlendirici değerlendirmeyi nasıl algıladıkları ilgimi çeken bir konu olmuştur. Bu çalışma İngilizce öğretmenlerinin biçimlendirici değerlendirmeyi nasıl algıladıklarını ve çalıştıkları okul türlerine göre aralarında istatistiksel olarak bir anlamsal fark olup olmadığını araştırmak için yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmadaki katılımcılar çoğunluğu Orta Karadeniz bölgesinde olan Devlet ve Özel okullarda görev yapan İngilizce öğretmenleridir. Bu araştırmada nitel ve nicel araştırma yöntemleri birlikte kullanılmıştır. Veriler, çoğunluğu Orta Karadeniz bölgesinde olmak üzere, Türkiye'deki toplamda 39 ilkokul, ortaokul ve liseden elde edilmiştir.

Bu çalışma İngilizce öğretmenlerinin değerlendirmeyi aynı şekilde algıladıklarını ama devlet ve özel okullarda çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin sınıf içi uygulama yönünden birbirlerinden farklı olduklarını göstermiştir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Değerlendirme, Biçimlendirici Değerlendirme, Sonuç bazlı değerlendirme, Portfolyo değerlendirmesi, Akran değerlendirmesi, Öz değerlendirme.

## **ABSTRACT**

### **A COMPARISON OF EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS**

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As an EFL teacher working in a public school, I was interested in finding out how EFL teachers in public and private schools perceived formative assessment in Turkey. This research was done to investigate how EFL teachers perceive formative assessment and whether there is a statistically significant difference between teachers' perception regarding the type of school they work at. The participants of this study were EFL teachers working in public and private schools mostly in Central Black Sea region. This study was conducted by using qualitative and quantitative research design. Data were gathered from 100 EFL teachers from 39 primary, secondary and high schools in Central Black Sea region in Turkey.

This study showed that most of the participant EFL teachers perceived assessment in the same way but EFL teachers working in public and private schools differ from each other in terms of their classroom practices.

**Keywords:** Assessment, Formative Assessment, Summative Assessment, Portfolio assessment, Peer-Assessment, Self-assessment

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

**CCSSO:** The Council of Chief State School Officers

**OECD:** Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

**MoNE:** Ministry of National Education

**PS:** Perception Statement

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# CHAPTER I

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter starts with a discussion of the background of the study. Then, it presents the statement of the problem, the aim of the study, the research questions and the limitations of the study. Finally, operational definitions of the study are pointed out.

### 1.1. Background of the study

Globally, educators have been paying much more attention to the assessments practices in their classrooms to raise students' achievement (Wei, 2011) since the assessment, indeed, is one of the most important practices that teachers do in their classrooms for their students (Mertler, 2009; Trotter, 2006) as assessment practices used at schools have impact on nearly every student learning (Scouller, 1998).

Assessment is an inseparable part of education. That is, it is systematically collected information of students' current knowledge and what they are able to do within and/or after a teaching process to improve student learning (Dikli, 2003). Dietel, Herman & Knuth (1991) explain assessment as a tool for a better understanding of students' current knowledge. Similarly, according to Black & Wiliam (1998a) assessment is all the practices that the teachers and the students use to get information to improve teaching and learning.

In education, one of the main purposes of assessment is to inform both the students and teachers about the education process, that is, the results of an assessment ought to ensure the teachers whether the intended learning goals have been achieved or not so the teachers can choose the correct practices-what to teach and how to teach- for their students in classes, and students develop their thinking skills for learning (Rudner & Schafer, 2002; Looney, 2011).

Assessment gives chances to student to understand where s/he is in the learning process and to realize in which conditions they learn best.

When we go through related literature, we find that there are two main types of assessment. The first one is *summative assessment*, which is also called as traditional assessment, or assessment of learning and the second one is *formative assessment*, which is also called as *assessment for learning*, or alternative assessment (Dikli, 2003; Harlen, 2007; Black & Wiliam, 1998a; Stiggins, 2007).

Assessment in education is generally understood as the use of grades, comparing student's grade with other students' grades without taking their needs and interest into account (Buldu & Buldu, 2010) and "teachers often use summative assessments to document student mastery at the end of instruction" (Hoover & Abrams, 2013, p. 219). Summative assessment involves what students know at the testing time after a teaching period but not the outcomes through their learning process (Brown, Bull & Pendlebury, 1997).

Alternative assessment not only for the students but also for the teachers provides information about how the process is going on in classrooms through the learning targets, for students, formative assessment is a lever that helps them which skills or knowledge they need to improve their learning and encourages them for the next steps (Brookhart, 2008).

In most of the education systems in the world, summative assessment is used (Adediwura, 2012), and assessment is perceived as the terms like testing, examining and grading (Heywood, 2000). To illustrate, assessment types traditionally used in classes for grading or for placement do not motivate students but increase the anxiety (Stiggins, 2005). From the similar point of view, Büyükkarcı (2010) states:

The tests or assessment techniques utilized in classes for grading the students are believed to create and increase test anxiety. Most students in a class are affected from this anxiety before or during a test, and it may result in different physical consequences such as stomachache, sleeplessness, or some performance problems like student's showing a performance in the exams no matter how much they know (p. 2).

Therefore, assessment has been seen as the great intimidator (Stiggins, 2005), which should be extinguished by the teachers for a better learning and teaching. Educational institutions are founded for the main purpose that students may learn. So,

there is a need to determine whether students have in fact learnt or not. Due to the importance attached to learning assessment, the common purpose of the schools might be thought as to assess learning (Song & Koh, 2010). Though the intended educational goals to be achieved prescribed by the government should be through the formative assessment, still high-stake national examinations have an effective and important role in placing the students according to their results of school reports serve as a tool for student selection and accountability (Song & Koh, 2010), “the school examinations mirror the public examinations so that students are to learn how to respond to public examinations” (Heywood, 2000, p. 17). “...testing provides incentives to students and their teachers to improve test performance. The society accessibility to test results also pushes schools to provide any support necessary for the same purpose” (Adediwura, 2012, p. 99). For this reason the term *assessment for learning* seems not help student learning.

On the other hand, formative assessment facilitates learning by giving an opportunity to teachers to monitor and to question themselves about where they are in teaching so as to increase their students' knowledge and develop their understanding (Black & Wiliam, 1998b), and also provides an opportunity to understand what students know and don't know through the taught subjects to make essential changes needed in teaching and learning, using techniques such as teacher observation and classroom discussion (Boston, 2002). Authors of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2005) said that alternative assessment is an interactive assessment of student learning progress so that teachers could identify student's learning needs and do the appropriate changes during the process. Kahl (2005) similarly, describes formative assessment as a “midstream” tool that teachers use “to measure student grasp of the specific topics and skills they are teaching” (p. 38).

According to Black & Wiliam (1998a), learning is an ongoing process driven by teachers and students in classrooms. In that sense, teachers are important as well as the assessment in educational process. Teachers are the most important key of learning in classrooms, so they are to make their job best in classrooms (Black & Wiliam, 1998a).

On the other hand, most of the researchers agree that formative assessment practices help the low-achieving students more than the high-achieving students (Cauley & McMillan, 2010).

An ongoing interaction should exist between the students and the teacher if the aim is to understand the students better and make them gain the intended goals so that the assessment can become more important for the students as a daily classroom practice than the assessment itself (Ökten, 2009). In our educational system the aim of the students is to pass the examinations or get high marks from the tests. Most of the teachers use summative assessment because it aims to record the overall achievement of a student in a systematic way. That is, how assessment information is used is more important than its format (Rudner & Schafer, 2002; Black & Wiliam, 1998b).

Table 1 presents the characteristic differences between the uses of formative and summative assessment (Owens & Strunk, 2014, p. 10) as in the following:

**Table 1. The differences between the use of formative assessment and summative assessment**

<b>Assessment for Learning</b>	<b>Assessment of Learning</b>
Teachers, students and parents are the primary users	Teachers, principals, supervisors, program planners and policy makers are the primary users
During learning	After learning
Used to provide information on what and how to improve achievement	Used to certify student competence
Used by teachers to identify and respond to student needs	Used to rank and sort students
Purpose: improve learning	Purpose: document achievement of standards
Primary motivator: belief that success is achievable	Primary motivator: threat of punishment, promise of reward
Continuous	Periodic
Examples: peer assessment, using rubrics with students, descriptive feedback	Examples: final exams, placement tests, state assessments, unit tests

The characteristics stated above explain the reasons why formative assessment practices are implemented by many teachers in their classrooms and these practices may

encourage them to change the way they think of teaching and learning and also the way(s) they use to teach their students (Mansell & James, 2009). For these reasons, formative assessment can be used as the most important assessment practice to improve the learning quality, rather than sorting students into winners and losers (Stiggins, 2007).

## **1.2. Statement of the problem**

Most probably the assessment is the critical issue that determines students' learning; if they like teachers' assessment practices they may learn better and if not, they may ignore teachers' teaching (Brown, 2004). For that reason, rather than hindering learning, our assessment practices should help students learn how to learn, critically think of their own thinking and understanding (Brown, 2004).

As it is mentioned above, in education, assessment is one of the most important components of learning. Moreover, teachers' beliefs often influence their assessment practices about student learning (Donaghue, 2003).

Black & William (1998b), reviewing 250 studies on this issue from all over the world, found that formative assessment has remarkably learning gains in increasing students' achievement when compared to summative assessment. Therefore, teachers need to master to be good assessors as a part of good formative assessment.

Studies in the field of general education have shown that test results across the world are used as an indicator of the quality of schools, the accountability of education system, and the performance of the teachers (Adediwura, 2012), for example, selecting the best student for the next level of education or monitoring school performance. It can be concluded that testing only motivates students and teachers to work towards performance goals rather than learning goals. Linn (2001) states that, increases in test scores, especially in high-stakes tests, it is mostly because of students' familiarity with the test formats not due to real learning.

“Teachers and school administrators have access to a variety of assessment data sources to inform decision-making” (Hoover & Abrams, 2013, p. 219). In Turkey, teachers often use summative assessments periodically to document student learning at the end of the units. This means assessment of learning rather than assessment for



learning which, in fact, should be done for an effective learning. Despite the fact that summative assessment has many disadvantages and limitations, it has a substantial role also in our country and cannot be left out in educational setting. Therefore, it is necessary to use formative assessment instead of summative assessment to increase students' learning (Wei, 2011). When students engage in formative assessment procedures, Boud (1999) claims that they become more encouraged and responsible for their own learning. Black & Wiliam (1998b) claim that noteworthy learning gains for students and teachers only occur when teachers know how to implement the process. They report that most of the teachers do not understand formative assessment adequately because of their beliefs about the teaching role, implying formative assessment only develops student learning when the teacher focuses on the student learning process. Only if the teachers accept that learning is an ongoing lifelong process then they empower themselves and their students. The more teachers use formative assessment, the more they will be able to help the students use their learning for other purposes (Harlen, Brand & Brown, 2003).

It is obvious that the summative assessment is not a real indicator to measure the learners' real learning. Although assessment of learning helps teachers get information quickly about their students' current knowledge, it does not give a chance to teachers about the students' progress at all. Whereas, formative assessment helps students be motivated, creative, and think critically, have the ability of analysis, synthesis and evaluation since it emphasizes to cultivate students' during the process of assessment (Qu & Zhang, 2013). In our education system, assessment tools used in schools are mostly summative assessment which are also called the achievement tests and are based on what is taught and what to be tested and these are-currently- either the national tests or unit tests of which the standards have already been prescribed by the government.

If the aim is to prepare our students to become life-long learners, it is essential to use formative assessment, at least, more than it is used at present (Ökten, 2009).

### **1.3. Aim of the study**

This study is based on the assumption that one of the most important goals of language education is to produce autonomous learners who are able to monitor and evaluate their own learning and set up short-term and long-term learning goals.

Students' engagement in formative assessment procedures during the language learning process help them to take on the responsibility for their own learning and to use both in-class and out-of-class learning opportunities effectively. The starting point to establish such a learning culture seems to elicit language teachers' perception of assessment and formative assessment to take action steps accordingly. Therefore, the first aim of this study is to identify EFL teachers' perception of assessment and formative assessment. The second aim is to learn whether there is a significant difference between the perceptions of EFL teachers working in public and state schools.

#### **1.4. Research Questions**

This study is an attempt to find the answers to the following questions:

- 1- What are EFL teachers' perceptions of assessment?
- 2- What are EFL teachers' perceptions of formative assessment?
- 3- What are public school EFL teachers' perceptions of formative assessment?
- 4- What are private school EFL teachers' perceptions of formative assessment?
- 5- Is there a significant difference between private school EFL teachers' and public school EFL teachers' perception of formative assessment?

#### **1.5. Limitations**

Although teachers' perception of formative assessment influences their classroom practices and students' understanding the literature on teachers' perception of formative assessment is quiet limited. The present study focuses on a target population consisting of limited number of private and public school English language teachers. In Central Black Sea region there are a few private schools, therefore, this fact should be taken into consideration while generalizing the results of this study.

#### **1.6. Operational Definitions**

**Assessment:** "The process of collecting information purposefully using different methods/strategies and tools for the purposes of informing decision" (Susuwele-Banda, 2005, p. 11).

**Formative Assessment:** "An assessment is formative to the extent that the information from the assessment is fed back within the system and actually used to improve the

performance of the system in some way” (Wiliam & Leahy, 2007, p. 31), and “it is an essential component” (Black & Wiliam, 1998b, p. 87), “both to the teachers and to the pupil about present understanding and skill development in order to determine the way forward” (Harlen & James, 1997, p. 369). Following this line of argument, Sadler (1989) states “Formative assessment is concerned with how judgments about the quality of student responses (performances, pieces, or works) can be used to shape and improve the student’s competence by short-circuiting the randomness and inefficiency of trial-and-error learning” (p. 120).

**Summative Assessment:** It is an assessment “that takes place at the end of a learning process or program to determine mastery of the material and for accountability purposes, such as assigning a grade” (Diana, Candace & Korczaka, 2012, p. 14), and it is designed to measure student achievement to get information about the current level of a student’s performance at the end of a teaching period, and to grade students’ learning by the help of a clear evaluation criteria (Qu & Zhang, 2013; Trotter, 2006).

## CHAPTER II

### 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to review the relevant literature and to give background information about the personal construct theory, assessment, summative assessment, formative assessment, and the reasons for developing formative assessment in English classrooms and the benefits and the effects of formative assessment on student learning.

#### 2.2. Personal Construct Theory

“There is no single best explanation of learning. Different learning theories of learning offer more or less useful explanations depending on what is to be explained” (Hoy, Davis & Anderman, 2013, pp. 9-10). In general, learning is when a change in behavior occurs through personal experiences (De Houwer, Barnes-Holmes & Moors, 2013).

From the constructivist point of view, since assessment shapes the way of student’s getting the knowledge, assessment should be used as a tool to improve the students’ learning approach and to enhance deep understanding but should not be used to evaluate or grade the students by getting high marks from the exams or accomplishing the tasks given by their lecturers (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). That is, learning is not something transferred from the teacher to the student directly but it is something that the student, himself, creates. In that sense, for the goal of instructional improvement, constructivist approach prefers formative assessment practices in classrooms to summative assessment (Lake & Tessmer, 1997; Fensham, Gunstone & White, 1994).

According to constructivism, learning is an active, constructive process, and the students learn by building knowledge under the guidance of the teachers by engaging with teaching and learning activities (Kinash & Knight, 2013). That is, unlike the behaviorist learning theory, constructivist learning theory gives opportunities to the learners about what they know and how they construct knowledge rather than their

behavioral responses (Weegar & Pacis, 2012). Constructivist approach defines the learner as an information constructor. According to this approach, the learner actively constructs or creates his/her own knowledge linking new information to previous knowledge (Duffy & Jonassen, 1992).

Constructivist teachers, in their classrooms, guide their students by asking questions that will lead and help them develop their own conclusions on the subject. On the other hand, teachers who are not constructivist use the same material in the same way to all students, not considering students' individual differences and interests and in this way; in fact, they are not able to help their students integrate their previous knowledge with new one. However, each student in the classrooms has a different life experience and if the experiences in the classrooms cohere with their own experiences then the real or better learning happens, if not, then the students memorize the material that they need to pass the exams which they will not be able to use it in other contexts (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). According to Kinash & Knight (2013), constructivism:

.... provides a simple but effective framework so that students not only 'understand' a topic, whatever that may specifically mean, but have changed their behavior, attitudes, or empowered their thinking with respect to some aspect of the discipline. Constructive alignment states at the very beginning, exactly what outcomes are intended, which should be aligned with open-ended assessment tasks that may result in other unanticipated, yet still desirable learning outcomes. In other words, constructive alignment is not a closed-loop system. It clearly defines the framework within which students may engage with the content consistently, but in their own way (p. 26).

Today we, as teachers, need students who are "thinkers and problem solvers" (Brooks & Brooks, 1999, p. x), so the instructions we use in classes should meet the needs of today's students and "provide opportunities for students to become" (Beer, 2012, p. 3), not only the ready-information consumers but also the creators (Dwyer, Ringstaff & Haymore, 1994).

### **2.3. Assessment**

Assessment, indeed, is strongly supported to promote student learning. However,

in classrooms, assessment is not yet mostly used for promoting learning. It is a well-known fact that assessment in education system is one of the main factors that affects both teaching and learning. Students develop their learning styles or strategies for learning according to the assessment practices that their teachers use in the process of language instruction. To illustrate, students modify their learning strategies and examination preparation depending on the type of the approach that the teachers use for student assessment. For this reason, if the teacher aims to measure the students' learning process and uses the appropriate assessment practices during the teaching period then the students consciously or unconsciously learn the task (Kay, 2005; Bloxham & Boyd, 2007; Struyven, Dochy & Janssens, 2005; Thomas, 2012).

Broadfoot (1996) briefly states, assessment in education is really very important tool to identify the strengths and weaknesses of not only the students but also the education institutions and as a result of this, the necessary changes for a better teaching and learning can be done. "It shapes the experience of students and influences their behavior more than the teaching they receive" (Bloxham & Boyd, 2007, p. 3).

Assessment is a complex way to collect, analyse and evaluate the teaching and learning process and its outcomes; teachers use these outcomes so that the teachers could do the changes needed for students to improve their learning by using the appropriate assessment practices (Remesal, 2011, p.473). "Assessments provide students with essential feedback for learning and give teachers important information to use in making instructional decisions to further student performance" (Karp & Woods, 2008, p. 328). Hence, assessment is a process in which it should be ongoing and integrated with instructions that's why, we cannot tell when and where the teaching ends and assessment process begins (Checkley, 1997).

In general, students' achievement at school is assessed with the grades taken from the test and examinations, but to make the students become life-long learners not only the students' performance inside but also outside the classroom should be taken into consideration. Teachers should be aware of the importance of the types of the assessment if the aim is to reach the intended goals (Ökten, 2009). More explicitly, teachers should not only collect the information about the learners' knowledge that they

already have but also they should make judgments about each learner's learning progress (Matsenjwa, 2013).

The purpose of education is to make students gain the prescribed behaviors or skills; therefore, teachers should be skillful and well educated on good assessment practices (Thomas, 2012). Inside the classrooms, students' needs and interests should be taken into consideration by the teachers to determine the teaching programme (Qu & Zhang, 2013).

#### **2.4. Summative Assessment**

Summative assessment helps teachers sum up or make judgments about what the student has learnt or can remember about the course after a teaching program at the end of the term (Bloom, 1971).

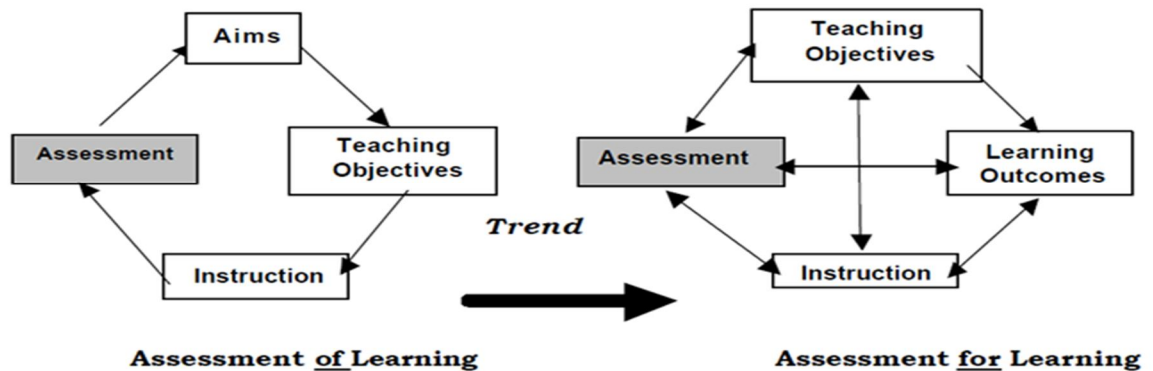
Reviews of the related literature reveal that most scholars prefer formative assessment to summative and they insistently state assessment for learning is more effective than assessment of learning.

Alkharusi (2010) says that for an effective and better learning greater importance should be given to the learning than grading and during the teaching and learning process this is possible only with formative assessment not with summative assessment. Boston (2002) suggests and encourages using formative assessment with the belief that formative assessment helps students realize the gap(s) between the intended knowledge and the current knowledge they have. With a great agreement on this subject, Black & Wiliam (1998b) emphasize that summative assessment, namely, grading students with marks and comparing the students with one another, causes superficial learning and brings out the competition between the students rather than personal development.

#### **2.5. Formative Assessment**

Assessment for learning, apart from the assessment of learning, makes teaching and learning better when the practices such as dialogues, presentations and role plays are used as a part of everyday classroom practices (Klenowski, 2009). The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) (2008) defined formative assessment "as a process used

by teachers and students during instruction that provides feedback to adjust ongoing teaching and learning to improve students' achievement of intended outcomes" (p. 3).



**Figure 2.1. Current changes in the assessment process**

Figure 1 shows the cycles of both Summative assessment and Formative assessment (Pongi, 2004, p. 10). Even though many teachers view assessment as an end of the teaching and learning process, assessment is an inseparable part of the process (Pongi, 2004).

Formative assessment is also beneficial for “the teachers by allowing them to monitor the impact of their teaching on students’ understanding and behavior so that they can modify their pedagogical strategies when needed” (Aboulsoud, 2011, p. 2).

## **2.6. Formative Assessment Procedure**

As it was mentioned above, formative assessment has two main functions. One of them is for teachers to gather data about student learning so as to make necessary changes or modifications to achieve effective learning. The second aim is to promote student engagement and responsibility in the language learning process, which in turn helps students to become autonomous learners. The possible tools to put the philosophy of formative assessment procedures in classroom practices are explored in sub-sections 2.6.1, 2.6.2, 2.6.3 and 2.6.4.

### **2.6.1. Feedback**

“One of the important ways practitioners can influence the learning process is by providing individuals with feedback about their actions. Feedback is a general term used



to describe the information a learner receives about the performance of a movement or skill” (Kirazcı, 2013, p. 1133). Traditionally, when it is used to sum up a student’s achievement it is summative assessment that measures the current knowledge of a student while formative assessment provides information for students as feedback about their own learning achievements aiming to enhance students’ learning, and also informs students about what to do and how to do better (Macfarlane-Dick, Matthew, Nicol, Ross & Smith, 2004). Menges & Brinko (1986) state that feedback “powerfully influence subsequent teaching” (p. 13).

### **2.6.2. Self Assessment**

Assessment becomes formative assessment when the teachers share the intended targets and assessment criteria with students using a language in a friendly way, then self-assessment practices provide both to the students and to the teachers descriptive feedback. In this way, students, themselves, can easily determine their path toward the achievement targets determined before by their teachers (Stiggins, 2007).

According to Boud (1999) “Self-assessment is a systematic process of data-driven self-reflection. It is directed towards coherent and clearly articulated goals to inform decision-making and operational practices. Self-assessment requires that students be involved in deciding ‘what is good work in any given situation’ ” (p. 2), and again Brooks & Brooks (1999) suggests that since the students do not learn in the same way and are the most important part of self-assessment practices in classrooms they should notice and recognize the best practice(s) for themselves and apply them to the their tasks. Following the same line of argument, Fallows & Chandramohan (2001) believe self-assessment requires a student to “undertake an honest and self-critical reflection on his or her own work” (p. 232).

Self-assessment cannot be effective if the student does not understand the assessment criteria (Macalister, 2006), having similar idea Nicol & Macfarlane-Dick (2004) state the most important aspect of self-assessment is when the students know the assessment criteria in advance of their performance then they have clear goals for their work, so that the students do not need to guess what is most important or how the teachers will judge their work. Authorized scholars about this issue reveal that self-assessment significantly encourages students to engage in making decisions about their

abilities and achievements when the students are aware of the process (O'Farrell, 2002; Boud, 1999).

### **2.6.3. Peer Assessment**

Peer assessment is defined as "...an arrangement for learners to consider and specify the level, value, or quality of a product or performance of other equal status learners" (Topping, 2009, p. 20). Black & William (1998a) summarize the key ingredient of formative assessment by saying "For assessment to function formatively, the results have to be used to adjust teaching and learning" (p. 4).

It is a movement away from the managerial role of assessment, towards one where students take more responsibility for, and a role in, their own learning. It is usually associated with the ideas of constructivism, with its primary role being to inform the teacher of students' progress rather than seeking to assign grades or make final judgments (Foley, 2013, pp. 202-203).

Fallows & Chandramohan (2001) state that peer assessment is the task in which students assess each other's works individually or in groups by giving written or oral feedback according to the criteria established previously. With the help of peer assessment students become more objective and they are encouraged at "making critical judgements on the work of others" (Bostock, 2000, p. 2), and "Peer assessment can deepen the student learning experience as students can learn a great deal about their own work from assessing other students' attempts at a similar task" (O'Farrell, 2002, p. 12). Furthermore, McGarrigle (2013) highlight how peer assessment fits into social constructivist curriculum by stating

...peer assessment can motivate students to engage with each other's learning products offering the potential for them to debate and discuss relevant content. Such an approach to learning fits neatly within a social constructivist approach suggesting that learning can be facilitated if students can be guided to talk with each other about their work (p. 2).

### **2.6.4. Portfolio**

The use of portfolio as a learning tool is popular since it achieves the intended

goals in teaching and learning which is not possible with the use of summative assessment (Wolfe & Miller, 1997). Portfolio is defined as “an organized purposeful collection of evidences accumulated on a student’s academic progress, achievements, skills, characteristics, and attitudes over time” (Tangdhanakanond & Wongwanich, 2012, p. 72). Kunkle (2009) claims that “the portfolio provides a qualitative method of assessing student learning” (p. 4). Accordingly, Paulson, Paulson & Meyer (1991) summarize how formative assessment and portfolio are related as “Developing a portfolio offers the students an opportunity to learn about learning [and]... is something that is done by the students, not to the student” (p. 61). So, it is important to point out that, portfolio assessment aims to provide feedback to students so that they may assess, control and improve their learning strategies, critical thinking and achievement by realizing their strengths and weaknesses.

## **2.7. Students’ perception of assessment**

Assessment methods that teachers use in education have expanded considerably in recent years. Multiple-choice examination and the traditional evaluation had been the most popular and most used assessment types before these new methods -portfolios, self and peer assessment, feedback- became prevalent (Sambell, McDowell & Brown, 1997).

The studies reveal that the most perceived assessment methods by students have been multiple-choice and essay examinations and again the studies done to provide an insight on this issue clearly show that generally the aim of the students is not understanding the meaning of a text or an assignment but to get a high grade as much as possible by meeting the requirements of the given task (Struyven et al., 2005). Students cope with the text or the assignment rather than learn the material and they mostly prefer multiple-choice examinations as more favorable one since their aim is to achieve the possible highest scores for academic purposes (Struyven et al., 2005; Chen & Hoshower, 2003). Therefore, they study their task in detail, trying to memorize it.

Assessment that constitutes an important part in students’ life has an important influence on students’ learning (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). Struyven et al., (2005), “...the nature of student learning in turn is very closely related to the student’s approach to learning” (p. 326). If the learners are active in the learning process, that is, providing

that they could monitor and are aware of the quality of their own learning then the assessment becomes formative assessment and then there will be improvement in learning (Maclellan, 2001).

## **2.8. Teachers' perception of assessment**

Teachers' choice of assessment type is usually influenced from a variety of factors, such as their beliefs about language learning and teaching, their years of teaching experience, type of the school that they work at and their students' characteristics, etc. (Pajares, 1992; Sach, 2012; Broadfoot & Black, 2004), although they "...have access to a variety of assessment data sources" (Hoover & Abrams, 2013, p. 219). As pointed out by Veal (1988) there seems to be "a need for a description of the reasons why teachers select and use certain assessment techniques, or why they choose not to formally assess their students" (p. 328).

In his study Büyükkarcı (2014) sheds lights on the gap between the theory and practice by indicating that teachers have a positive perception of formative assessment but they are not able to use the principles of formative assessments in their classes effectively and gives two main reasons; first one is *overcrowded classrooms* and the second one is that the teachers have too much work to do. Similarly, Veal (1988) supports this by noting:

While many believe that teachers should be doing more assessment, there appear to be some good reasons why they are not. It is important to recognize that teachers often operate under difficult circumstances and many problems exist which keep them from utilizing all the techniques they know and in most cases, teachers explained the paucity of assessment with complaints about lack of time and difficulties with administration of tests (p. 340).

"Assessment improves when it helps teachers and students to improve their teaching and learning respectively and when it describes student abilities in a valid, reliable fashion" (Brown, 2008, p. 112). Teachers should know that assessment practices may influence students' learning so teachers now ask themselves why they prefer to evaluate by testing or grading students' current knowledge rather than the

achievement (Veal, 1988) and teachers' knowledge and experiences shape the their classroom practices (Thomas, 2012).

## CHAPTER III

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Introduction

The first aim of this study was to identify EFL teachers' perception of assessment and formative assessment. The second aim was to learn whether there is a significant difference between the perceptions of EFL teachers working in public and state schools. This chapter describes and explains the research design, the participants, the data collection tool, the data collection procedures, and the methods used for data analysis.

#### 3.2. Research Design

This study employed a descriptive research design. Descriptive research design is defined as "...the survey, as when researchers summarize the characteristics (abilities, preferences, behaviors, and so on) of individuals or groups or (sometimes) physical environments (such as schools)" (Fraenkel, Wallen & Hyun, 1993, p. 15).

In this study, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to collect and to analyze the data with an attempt to find out the EFL teachers' perception of assessment and formative assessment in addition to finding out whether there is a significant difference between the perceptions of EFL teachers working in public and state schools. According to Hopkins (2000), the aim of the quantitative research is to reveal the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable in a population. Among the quantitative research methods, a survey research method was used to collect data. In literature, survey design includes longitudinal studies by questionnaires and interviews to collect data. For Wellington & Szczerbinski (2007), survey method "...most commonly involves the use of questionnaire, to give a wider picture or an overview" and "...can provide answers to the questions What? Where? When? and How?, but it is not easy to find out Why?. The main emphasis with a survey questionnaire tends to be on 'fact finding' "(p. 95).

This study employed qualitative research design as well. “Qualitative research is an approach that allows you to examine people’s experiences in detail, by using a specific set of research methods such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observation, content analysis, visual methods, and life histories or biographies” (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2010, pp. 8-9). Further, Fraenkel et al., (2012) state that qualitative research is important as it “investigates the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or materials” (p. 426).

### **3.3. Participants**

The participants in this study were 100 EFL teachers from 39 schools in Turkey (22 private schools and 17 public schools), regardless of the school type that the teachers work at. Random sampling strategy was used when choosing the participants of the study. According to Fraenkel et al., (2012) define random sampling as a method “in which each and every member of the population has an equal and dependent chance of being selected” (p. 94). Otherwise, if the participants had been chosen from one type of school such as Anatolian High Schools or vocational high schools, or had been the ones who had teaching experiences over a certain year the data would have been limited to the perceptions of those teachers only who work at those types of schools have a certain experience.

Out of 100 EFL teachers, 50 of them were from public schools (24 male and 26 female) and 50 teachers were from private schools (26 male and 24 female). As indicated in Table 1, the participants of the study were classified into three groups on the basis of their age, as Group 1, 2 and 3. The participants’ age in Group 1 ranged between 20 and 29, in Group 2 the age range was between 30-39 and in Group 3 it was 40 and over. On whole, the participants’ age ranged between 23 and 50. As it is shown in Table 1, more than half of the participant teachers were aged between 30-39 years. It is interesting that approximately 80% of the teachers in Group 1 were from private schools while 64% of the teachers were from public schools in Group 2 as well as the Group 3.

**Table 2. Age / type cross tabulation**

<b>Age</b>	<b>School type</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Private schools</b>	<b>Public schools</b>	
Group 1	25	6	31
Group 2	21	37	58
Group 3	4	7	11
Total	50	50	100

In Table 2, the participants were classified into three categories according to their years of teaching experience. The first one shows the number of the participants who had 0-3 years of teaching experience, the other one reveals the number of the participants who had 4-10 years of teaching experience and the last one indicates the number of the participants who had 11-20 years of teaching experience. As it is shown in Table 2, the largest group of the teachers in this study had 4-10 years of teaching experience and those who had 11-20 years of experience closely followed this. On the other hand, the smallest group was the youngest one. It is surprising that there was no teacher who had 0-3 years of experience in public schools.

**Table 3. Experience / type cross tabulation**

<b>Teaching years</b>	<b>School type</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Private schools</b>	<b>Public schools</b>	
0-3 years	11		11
4-10 years	27	22	49
11-20 years	12	28	40
Total	50	50	100

As it can be seen from Table 4, of 100 teachers only 2 participant teachers had postgraduate diplomas and 98 held Bachelor's degrees.

**Table 4. Teachers' educational background**

	<b>School type</b>		<b>Total</b>
	<b>Private schools</b>	<b>Public schools</b>	
Bachelor degree	49	49	98
Postgraduate	1	1	2



### **3.4. Data Collection Tool**

The original data collection tool which was prepared by three professionals (two teachers and an Educational Psychologist) and used by Elizabeth Sach (2012) in her study was used in this study. In the original questionnaire, there was one part and it consisted of 14 perception statements.

The questionnaire used in this present research consisted of 2 parts. In part I, 14 perception statements were used as in the original questionnaire and in part II an open-ended question which aimed to understand the EFL teachers' attitudes towards assessment better was added to the questionnaire. Part I consisted of 14 perception statements on a three-point Likert-type rating scale where 1 was *Disagree*, 2 was *Neutral* and 3 was *Agree*.

### **3.5. Data Analysis Procedures**

The quantitative data collected through the questionnaire survey was coded and analyzed by using the latest version of SPSS (version 22). A t-test was used to find out whether there was a significant difference between the perceptions of ELT teachers working in private and public schools. The responses given to the open-ended question were evaluated through content analysis. Content analysis is defined as “any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages” (Holsti, 1968, p. 608).

## CHAPTER IV

### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and the discussion of the study. The purpose of the study was to identify EFL teachers' perception of assessment and formative assessment. It also aimed to learn whether there is a significant difference between the perceptions of EFL teachers working in public and private schools. The data of the study were gathered through a Survey (see Appendix 2), which consisted of two main sections. The findings of the study are presented in two main sections. In the first section, the findings gathered from the qualitative data are presented. In the second section, the findings elicited through the quantitative data are discussed.

#### 4.2. Findings from the Qualitative Data

Our first research question was *What are EFL teachers' perception of assessment?*. We used an open-ended question in order to find out EFL teachers' perception of assessment.

##### 4.2.1. EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Assessment

According to the responses to the open-ended question, 33 participants from public schools and 36 participants from private schools stated that the assessment is something through which both students and teachers decide their strategies during the process and is also an endless process, not limited with tests or examinations. Assessment is also necessary for students to identify their weaknesses and strengths. The following quotations should measure the process of teaching and learning. The following quotations illustrate the findings stated above:

*Assessment is essential to the monitoring of progress in learning.*

*Assessment is a process of teaching more effectively. Assessment can be helpful for finding new ways of teaching. Assessment can say us what can be taught and what cannot be taught.*

*Assessment is a process through which both teachers and students improve their teaching and learning strategies. Also they get informed of what is going on in their educational environment and they identify their strengths and weaknesses.*

Conversely, the other 13 sampled EFL teachers from public schools and 14 sampled EFL teachers from private schools stated that assessment is any kind of written exams what teachers do to measure students' learning after a teaching period. Some sample quotations supporting this belief are:

*Assessment must judge the learning process.*

*Testing students' current knowledge.*

*To measure the students' knowledge level by the help of the Essay exams or Multiple-choice exams.*

What is interesting here is that out of 100 EFL teachers only 4 of them indicated that *it is nothing*.

### **4.3. Findings from the Quantitative Data**

We used a questionnaire to get the data about EFL teachers' perception of formative assessment. The findings through this data would give answers to the research questions in sub-sections 4.3.1., 4.3.2., 4.3.3., 4.3.4. and 4.3.5. respectively.

#### **4.3.1. EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Formative Assessment**

Table 5 shows the responses of all the teachers participated in this study to the questionnaire. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data regardless of the school types they were working in, their ages or years of teaching experiences. Perception statements were sorted by the highest agreement percentage to the lowest level. According to Table 5, the highest agreement was with the Perception Statement 6 *Children need to know why they are being assessed* with a percentage of 84. Of the teachers, 15% expressed their uncertainty with this statement and 1% of the teachers disagreed with this statement. This shows that EFL teachers working both in public and private schools are aware that students are the most important part of assessment.

**Table 5. EFL Teachers' perception of formative assessment**

<b>Perception statement (dependent variable)</b>	<b>Agree (%)</b>	<b>Neutral (%)</b>	<b>Disagree (%)</b>
PS 6 : Children need to know why they are being assessed	84	15	1
PS 4 : Making mistakes enhances learning	78	19	3
PS 3 : The aim of formative assessment is to promote learning	76	19	5
PS 1 : All children can make progress in learning	70	15	15
PS 11 : I would benefit from more training in the use of formative assessment techniques	68	24	8
Per 2 : I use evidence from formative assessment to develop my teaching	65	28	7
PS 5 : Baseline assessment is essential to the monitoring of progress in learning	61	37	2
PS 14 : Children can often say why their work is good or why they don't understand	49	30	21
Per 10 : Parents have much to contribute to the formative assessment process	48	34	18
PS 12 : I feel able to influence attitudes among my colleagues in school	46	47	7
PS13 : Children have the maturity to understand their learning goals	45	31	24
PS 9 : I teach children how to assess the work of their peers against agreed criteria	40	41	19
PS 8 : National Curriculum test results can be useful to inform new learning targets	39	41	20
PS 7 : Formative assessment practices are frequently shared among staff at my school	35	37	28

Supporting this Browder (2003) states if children know why they are being assessed it is possible for them to improve their learning and achieve the intended learning goals. However, majority of the teachers (above 70%) also agreed that *Making mistakes help students learning* (Perception Statement 4), as Gibbs & Simpson (2004) said students learn not only by their own mistakes but also by each other's mistakes. EFL teachers saw *the aim of formative assessment as to promote learning* (Perception Statement 3), as stated by Bell (2001) aim of the formative assessment "...is to improve the learning, during the learning" (p. 1).

Nevertheless, they thought *all children can make progress in learning* (Perception Statement 1). If the correct assessment methods and teaching strategies are used then the students can make progress in learning (Gibbs & Simpson 2004; Richards, 2001). While 68% of the teachers agreed with the Perception Statement 11 *I would benefit from more training in the use of formative assessment techniques*, 65% of them believed that *I use evidence from formative assessment to develop their teaching* (Perception Statement 2). "Formative assessment, if used effectively, can provide teachers and their students with the information they need to move learning forward" (Heritage, 2007, p. 140).

Teachers with a percentage of 61 agreed that *Baseline assessment is a need to monitor the progress of learning* while 37% of them state uncertainty about this Perception Statement 5. On this subject Kyriakides (1999) states "Baseline assessment may produce information about what children know and what they do not know in order to help teachers decide how to identify and meet children's learning needs and how to use their teaching time and their resources" (p. 358).

Less than half of the teachers believed that *Children can often say why their work is good or why they don't understand* and *Parents have much to contribute to the formative assessment process*. The number of those who disagree with the Perception Statement 14 is considerably high. Only 46% of the teachers claimed that *I feel able to influence attitudes among my colleagues in school* but 47% were neutral with this perception statement. 45% of them again did not think that *Children have the maturity to understand their learning goals*. Moreover, with a 40% agreement with the Perception Statement 9 *I teach children how to assess the work of their peers against the agreed criteria* shows that peer assessment, which is an inseparable part of

formative assessment, is ignored. So, majority of the teachers ignore the importance of peer assessment. McGarrigle (2013) states that “peer assessment can motivate students to engage with each other’s learning products offering the potential for them to debate and discuss relevant content” (p. 2). Similarly, with the help of peer assessment, students could be more objective against peers’ works and could better understand where he is in his learning (Nezvalová, 2010).

It is interesting that it is the least agreed perception statement (Perception Statement 7), which was appreciated approximately by only one-quarter that *Formative assessment practices are frequently shared among staff at my school*. Therefore, teachers were really not aware of the value of sharing experiences of assessment practices. As Black & Wiliam stated (1998b), teachers in the same school do not share the methods they use to measure students’ learning and skills with their colleagues.

#### **4.3.2. EFL Public School Teachers’ Perceptions of Formative Assessment**

Table 6 shows the formative assessment perception of EFL teachers working at public schools. The highest agreement with perception statements are: *Children need to know why they are being assessed* and *The aim of formative assessment is to promote learning* with a percentage of 90% and 76% respectively. Other statements perceived by the EFL teachers are: *Making mistakes enhances learning*”, *“I would benefit from more training in the use of formative assessment techniques*, *All children can make progress in learning* and *Baseline assessment is essential to the monitoring of progress in learning* with a percentage of 70%, 68%, 68% and 62% respectively. 58% of EFL teachers in public schools also perceived formative assessment as to develop their teaching (Perception Statement 2). While 34% of them stated uncertainty only 8% of them disagreed with this statement. It is interesting that while 40% of the teachers believed that *Parents have much to contribute to the formative assessment process* a similar majority had no idea about this statement. Perception statement 14 *Children can often say why their work is good or why they don’t understand* was agreed by 38% of the teachers and not agreed by 28% of them. 36% of the teachers agreed with the statement *I teach children how to assess the work of their peers against agreed criteria*.

**Table 6. EFL Teachers' perception of formative assessment in public schools**

<b>Perception statement (dependent variable)</b>		<b>Agree (%)</b>	<b>Neutral (%)</b>	<b>Disagree (%)</b>
PS 6 :	Children need to know why they are being assessed	90	8	2
PS 3 :	The aim of formative assessment is to promote learning	76	20	4
PS 4 :	Making mistakes enhances learning	70	24	6
PS 11 :	I would benefit from more training in the use of formative assessment techniques	68	26	6
PS 1 :	All children can make progress in learning	68	14	18
PS 5 :	Baseline assessment is essential to the monitoring of progress in learning	64	32	4
PS 2 :	I use evidence from formative assessment to develop my teaching	58	34	8
PS 10 :	Parents have much to contribute to the formative assessment process	40	36	24
PS 14 :	Children can often say why their work is good or why they don't understand	38	34	28
PS 9 :	I teach children how to assess the work of their peers against agreed criteria	36	38	26
PS 12 :	I feel able to influence attitudes among my colleagues in school	34	56	10
PS 8 :	National Curriculum test results can be useful to inform new learning targets	34	46	20
PS 7 :	Formative assessment practices are frequently shared among staff at my school	32	38	30
PS 13 :	Children have the maturity to understand their learning goals	30	34	36

Curiously, more than the agreement percentage, 38% of the teachers showed uncertainty about peer assessment. What is interesting with the statement 12 is that while 34% of the teachers agreed with this statement, 56% of them showed uncertainty and only 10% of them disagreed. A similar majority agreed with the statement 8 *National Curriculum test results can be useful to inform new learning targets* but 46% were uncertain about this statement. This shows that teachers do not benefit from National Curriculum test results to inform new learning targets. 32% of the teachers showed agreement with the statement that *Formative assessment practices are frequently shared among staff at my school*. 38% of the teachers were neutral about this statement while 30% of them disagreed. To the public schools' EFL teachers, the least agreed and the most disagreed perception statement is *Children have the maturity to understand their learning goals* with a 34% of uncertainty.

#### **4.3.3. EFL Private School Teachers' Perceptions of Formative Assessment**

Table 7 explains how EFL teachers in private schools perceive formative assessment. Perception statement 4 *Making mistakes enhances learning* is the highest agreed perception statement with 86% and only 14% of them showed uncertainty about this statement. No teachers disagreed with the Perception Statement 4. 78% of the teachers stated certainty about the Perception statement 6 *Children need to know why they are being assessed* while 22% of the teachers were neutral. Similar to the Perception Statement 4, no teacher agreed with this statement. Similar majority (76%) expressed the belief that *The aim of formative assessment is to promote learning* (Perception statement 3). On the other hand, 18% of them stated uncertainty while 6% did not agree with this statement. 72% of EFL teachers thought that *I use evidence from formative assessment to develop my teaching* but 22% of them had no idea while 6% disagreed with this statement. The same majority expressed agreement with the Perception Statement 1 that *All children can make progress in learning* and 64% of the teachers stated that *I benefit from more training in the use of formative assessment techniques* in relation to the Perception Statement 11 whilst the 10% disagreed and 22% of them showed uncertainty about this statement. Of 50 teachers 30 teachers (60%) believed that *Children have the maturity to understand their learning goals* but 28% of them were not clear about this statement. Moreover, 12% disagreed with the Perception Statement 13. In relation to the statement 14 that *Children can often say why their*



**Table 7. EFL Teachers' perception of formative assessment in private schools**

<b>Perception statement (dependent variable)</b>		<b>Agree (%)</b>	<b>Neutral (%)</b>	<b>Disagree (%)</b>
PS4 :	Making mistakes enhances learning	86	14	0
PS6 :	Children need to know why they are being assessed	78	22	0
PS3 :	The aim of formative assessment is to promote learning	76	18	6
PS2 :	I use evidence from formative assessment to develop my teaching	72	22	6
PS1 :	All children can make progress in learning	72	16	12
PS11 :	I would benefit from more training in the use of formative assessment techniques	68	22	10
PS13 :	Children have the maturity to understand their learning goals	60	28	12
PS14 :	Children can often say why their work is good or why they don't understand	60	26	14
PS5 :	Baseline assessment is essential to the monitoring of progress in learning	58	42	0
PS12 :	I feel able to influence attitudes among my colleagues in school	58	38	4
PS10 :	Parents have much to contribute to the formative assessment process	56	32	12
PS9 :	I teach children how to assess the work of their pers against agreed criteria	44	44	12
PS8 :	National Curriculum test results can be useful to inform new learning targets	44	36	20
PS7 :	Formative assessment practices are frequently shared among staff at my school	38	36	26

*work is good or why they don't understand* 60% of the participant teachers from private schools agreed with this statement and 26% of the teachers were uncertain while 14% disagreed. The agreement percentage (58%) stated for the Perception Statement 5 and 12 was same. Similar majority of the teachers (58%) agreed with the Perception Statement 5 that *Baseline assessment is essential to the monitoring of progress in learning* and the uncertainty percentages shown by the teachers were 42% and 38% respectively. Furthermore, the teachers did not believe that *Parents have much to contribute to the formative assessment process* with a percentage of 12% and 56% agreed with this statement. It is interesting that less than half of the EFL teachers in private schools (44%) agreed with the Perception Statement 9 that *I teach children how to assess the work of their peers against agreed criteria* and also the same majority expressed uncertainty. Only 12% did not approve this statement. While 44% of the teachers believed that they get benefit from National Curriculum test results to inform new learning targets, 36% of them were uncertain and 20% disagreed with this statement. It is surprising that just 38% of the teachers stated that they frequently shared formative assessment practices with their colleagues. While a similar majority had no idea, 26% of them disagreed with this statement.

#### **4.3.4. Differences between EFL Public and Private School Teachers' Perceptions of Formative Assessment**

Public school EFL teachers agree most (90%) with the Perception Statement 6 *Children need to know why they are being assessed* while 78% of private school EFL teachers agreed with this statement. Private school EFL teachers showed most agreement (86%) with the Perception Statement 4 *Making mistakes enhance learning*, however, 70% of the public school teachers believed that learning is enhanced by making mistakes. Both private and public school EFL teachers agreed with the Perception Statement 3 that *The aim of formative assessment is to promote learning* with a percentage of 76% and agree with the Perception Statement 11 that *I would benefit from more training in the use of formative assessment techniques* with a percentage of 68%. For the Perception Statement 1 *All children can make progress in learning* public school EFL teachers showed agreement with a percentage of 68%, and 72% of the private school EFL teachers agreed with this statement. While 72% of the private school EFL teachers believe that *I use evidence from formative assessment to*

*develop my teaching*, only 58% of the public school EFL teachers believed in this statement. It is interesting that 60% of the private school EFL teachers expressed agreement with the Perception Statement 13 that *Children have the maturity to understand their learning goals* while it is the least agreed perception statement by the public school EFL teachers. Moreover, 28% of the private school teachers showed uncertainty and only 12% of them disagreed with this statement while 34% of the public school EFL teachers are neutral and 36% of them did not agree with this statement. Public school EFL teachers expressed agreement with the Perception Statement 5 that *Baseline assessment is essential to the monitoring of progress in learning* with a percentage of 64% and 32% of them showed uncertainty while 4% of them disagreed with this statement. On the other hand, private school EFL teachers agreed with this statement with a percentage of 58% and 42% of them had no idea about the statement. 60% of the private schools EFL teachers believed that *Children can often say why their work is good or why they don't understand* and 26% of them were not certain about this statement while 14% of them did not agree with the Perception Statement 14. However, only 38% of the public schools EFL teachers agreed with this statement, 34% of them showed uncertainty and 28% of them disagreed with this statement.

It is surprising that, 40% of the public school EFL teachers and 56% of the private schools EFL teachers believed that *Parents have much to contribute to the formative assessment process* while 36% of the public schools EFL teachers had no idea and 24% of them did not agree, 32% of the private schools EFL teachers were uncertain and 12% of them disagreed with this statement. 58% of the participants from private schools expressed that they believed in the Perception Statement 12 that *I feel able to influence attitudes among my colleagues in school* while 38% of them were neutral and only 4% of them disagreed with this statement. Whereas, 34% of the public schools EFL teachers showed agreement with this statement and 56% of them were uncertain about the Perception Statement 12 while 10% of them did not agree with this perception statement. 44% of the participants from private schools agreed with the perception statement that *I teach children how to assess the work of their peers against agreed criteria*, 44% of them were not sure about the statement and 12% of them disagreed with this statement. However, 36% of the EFL teachers from public schools believed in

this perception statement, 38% of them were neutral and 26% of them disagreed with this statement.

While the Perception Statement 8 *National Curriculum test results can be useful to inform new learning targets* was agreed by the 34% of public schools EFL teachers and was agreed by the 44% of EFL teachers from private schools. What is interesting here is that nearly the half of the participant teachers from public schools had no idea with a percentage of 46% and 20% of them disagreed with this statement. On the other hand, 36% of the EFL teachers from private schools were not certain about the statement and 20% of them disagreed with this statement as well as the public school EFL teachers. 32% of the EFL teachers from public schools and 38% of the EFL teachers from private schools agreed with the Perception Statement 7 that *Formative assessment practices are frequently shared among my staff at my school* which should be, in fact, done by all teachers to improve teaching and learning. 38% of the participant teachers –more than the agreement percentage- from public schools were neutral and with a similar percentage to the agreement percentage 30% of them disagreed with this statement. 36% of the private school EFL teachers showed uncertainty while 26% of them did not agree with this perception statement.

#### **4.3.5. A Comparison of EFL teachers' perception of formative assessment in public and private schools**

Table 8 shows that the mean of the perception of formative assessment of EFL teachers working in private schools is 35.33 over 42 and the standard deviation is 3,9. On the other hand, the mean of perception of formative assessment of EFL teachers working in public schools is 33.16 over 42 and with a 4.01 standard deviation. To find out whether there was a significant difference between these two groups of teachers independent sample t-test was used. Data gotten from the t-test showed that there was a significant difference between the groups [ $t(98)=2.778, p<0.05$ ] this revealed that the teachers working in private schools used formative assessment practices than the teachers working in public schools.

**Table 8. EFL teachers' perception of formative assessment within all perception statements**

<b>Type</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>p</b>
Private	50	35,36	3,9006	2,78	98	0,007
Public	50	33,16	4,01711			

## CHAPTER V

### 5. CONCLUSIONS

#### 5.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a brief summary and the conclusions of the study. Then it focuses on the suggestions for further studies.

#### 5.2. Summary of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to find out EFL teachers' perception of formative assessment and whether there was a significant difference between the EFL teachers working at private and public schools in terms of formative assessment.

This study was carried out with 100 EFL teachers 50 of whom were from public schools and 50 of whom were from private schools. As mentioned previously (see Chapter 3), this study employed both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the items in the questionnaire and content analysis was used to analyze the responses to the open-ended question.

The following research questions, formulated to conduct the study, will lead the chapter:

- 1- What are EFL teachers' perceptions of assessment?
- 2- What are EFL teachers' perceptions of formative assessment?
- 3- What are public school EFL teachers' perceptions of formative assessment?
- 4- What are private school EFL teachers' perceptions of formative assessment?
- 5- Is there a significant difference between private school EFL teachers' and public school EFL teachers' perception of formative assessment?

#### 5.3. Conclusions

According to the responses to the open-ended question it is clearly understood that most of the EFL teachers think that formative assessment should be used in language teaching believing that formative assessment practices help student learning

while some of the sampled teachers perceive assessment as the examinations and the tests which means only grading students' work with marks.

Findings from the quantitative data can be summarized as in the following: most of the sampled EFL teachers believe that they do not influence their colleagues' attitudes towards assessment, students need to know why they are being assessed, learning is enhanced by making mistakes and formative assessment promotes learning. However, less than half of the EFL teachers think that students cannot often say why their work is good or why they do not understand, parents do not have much to contribute to the formative assessment process and students are not mature enough to understand their learning goals. Moreover, the findings revealed that EFL teachers do not teach their students how to assess their peers' work against the agreed criteria, National Curriculum test results are not useful to inform new learning targets and teachers rarely share formative assessment practices with their staff at their schools. In his study, Adediwura (2012) reports that teachers failed to see the effectiveness of formative assessment on both their teaching skills and students learning.

According to the findings emerged here, with a level of more than 50%, public school EFL teachers clearly state that they are aware of the value of formative assessment that promotes learning, claiming to benefit from more training in the use of formative assessment techniques and to use evidence from formative assessment to develop their teaching. Also, they believe that every student can make progress in learning and all of them need to know why they are being assessed, and the mistakes they make during the teaching and learning process could help them improve their learning. For the public school EFL teachers what is essential to the monitoring of progress in learning is baseline assessment. On the other hand, they believe parents have a limited role in the completion of formative assessment tasks. The teachers also point out that the students are not aware of the importance of peer work, as they are not trained to conduct peer assessment. Moreover, they believe students are mature enough to grasp their learning targets if they are provided with such opportunities. However, they do not think that National Curriculum test results give them a chance to set up new learning targets. The teachers also state that they are not able to influence their colleagues' assessment practices, as they do not share their experiences of formative assessment practices with their colleagues.

With a similar percentage, private school EFL teachers, express that the aim of the formative assessment is to promote learning and all children can progress in their learning; they agree with the perception that children should know the aim of the assessment and children can enhance their learning by making mistakes; and they believe that they improve their teaching by using formative assessment techniques and state that baseline assessment is essential to the monitoring of progress in learning as well as the public school EFL teachers. Contrary to the public school EFL teachers, they express the belief that all children have the maturity to understand their learning goals and can say whether their work is good or not and recognize that parents contributes much to the formative assessment process. Moreover, they are able to influence their colleagues' attitudes in schools. However, they do not give importance to peer assessment, do not believe the usefulness of National Curriculum test results, and they do not share formative assessment practices with the staff at their schools as well as the public school EFL teachers.

Findings from the quantitative data also signal the fact that the EFL teachers in private schools use formative assessment practices more effectively and frequently than the ones working at state schools. Overall, the findings of this study reveal that the most commonly used assessment practice in state schools are summative assessment. And this might be one of the reasons why the students are not able to manage deep learning.

Qualitative findings reveal that the meanings most of the EFL teachers attach to assessment are similar. That is no matter which school type they work at, the teachers perceive assessment as an activity that is done to measure students' achievement at the end of a teaching and learning process. However, qualitative findings show that EFL teachers working in public and private school differ in their classroom practice.

It is clear that there exists a disparity between how EFL teachers working in public schools perceive assessment and what they do in their classroom practices. In other words, they come into conflict with their beliefs in terms of classroom practices. Supporting this finding Maclellan (2001) states "Staff declared a commitment to the formative purposes of assessment but engaged in practices that militated against formative assessment being fully realized" (p. 317). Similarly, Black & Wiliam (1998b)



discuss this issue by stating that the teachers see the functions of formative assessment practices enhance learning but the current classroom practices are insufficient.

The findings of this study bring out the question that “There is something wrong with the EFL teachers’ perception of formative assessment that must be overcome immediately in especially public schools and what must be done for that?”. This present study reveals that formative assessment does not gain favor when the teachers are not well aware of formative assessment methods and techniques or do not believe the effectiveness of formative assessment and, as long as the National Curriculum requires teaching for high-stake tests and examinations in which students are often graded by their teachers. Having the same view of point, Samkange (2012) states that “as long as students are passing examinations, it would not matter much how they are being taught and how they are learning. Teachers may teach for examination purposes, ignoring the pedagogical needs of the students” (p. 285).

If the teachers are aware of the assessment methods and practices then they are able to choose the most appropriate ones for their classrooms, if not, they will keep believing that the practices they use for assessment are the only and the best ones (Pongi, 2004). Moreover, Pongi (2004) states that “Assessment for learning is suitable for situations where external examinations are not the main focus of the assessment” (p. 24).

#### **5.4. Suggestions for Further Research**

As earlier noted in the limitation part (see Section 1.5.) the number of the participants was not enough to put forth the whole picture about EFL teachers’ perception of formative assessment, therefore, more and detailed studies are needed to be done to confirm the conclusions.

This study also reveals that those whose assessment theory in mind and assessment practices in their classrooms are more close to each other are the EFL teachers working in private schools. On the other hand, the gap between the theory and practice is larger in terms of the teachers working in public schools.

One clear message that emerges from this study is that “teachers’ perceptions of assessment are important to the understanding and implementation of formative

assessment” (Sach, 2011, p. 274). Finally, for an effective teaching and learning assessment should be seen as *assessment for learning* not be seen as *assessment of learning* and on this issue House of Commons (2008) suggests that:

The government should accord a much greater prominence to teacher assessment, which is capable of covering the full curriculum and the full range of children’s knowledge, skills and competences in a way which can never be achieved by a written, externally marked test (pp.87-88).

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## 7. APPENDICES

### 7.1. APPENDIX 1: Permisson Letter from MoNE



T.C.  
AMASYA VALİLİĞİ  
İl Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğü

Sayı : 47613789/903.99/4043914

27/12/2013

Konu: Anket

#### VALİLİK MAKAMINA

İlgi: Amasya And. Sağlık Mes. Lis. Müdürlüğünün 26/12/2013 tarih ve 609 sayılı yazısı.

İlgi yazı ile Amasya Anadolu Sağlık Meslek Lisesi İngilizce öğretmeni Ömer Faruk GÖKÇE'nin, Yüksek Lisans tez çalışması olarak Amasya Merkez okullarında çalışan İngilizce öğretmenlerine anket uygulaması Müdürlüğümüzce uygun görülmektedir.

Makamlarınızca da uygun görüldüğü takdirde olurlarınızı arz ederim.

Ali BAHÇIVAN  
İl Millî Eğitim Şube Müdürü V.

OLUR  
27/12/2013

Gıyasettin TAŞ  
Vali a.  
İl Millî Eğitim Müdürü

Güvenli Elektronik İmza  
Aslı ile Aynıdır  
27.12.2013

N. Kürşad KARAKÖSE  
Amasya Millî Eğitim Müdürlüğü  
Strateji Geliştirme Birimi-Öğretmen

Ekler:

- 1- Amasya And. Sağlık Mes. Lis. Müd. Yazısı (1 Ad. 1 Sayfa)
- 2- Öğrt. Ömer Faruk GÖKÇE'nin Dilekçesi (1Ad. 1 Sayfa)

Bu belge, 5070 sayılı Elektronik İmza Kanununun 5 inci maddesi gereğince güvenli elektronik imza ile imzalanmıştır. Evrak teyidi <http://evraksorgu.meb.gov.tr> adresinden 70e6-072f-3a22-a118-2fd2 kodu ile yapılabilir.

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## 7.2. APPENDIX 2: Sample of Data Gathering Scale

Perception of Assessment		Disagree	Neutral	Agree
1	All children can make progress in learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I use evidence from formative assessment to develop my teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	The aim of formative assessment is to promote learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Making mistakes enhances learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Baseline assessment is essential to the monitoring of progress in learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Children need to know why they are being assessed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Formative assessment practices are frequently shared among staff at my school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	National Curriculum test results can be useful to inform new learning targets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	I teach children how to assess the work of their peers against agreed criteria	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Parents have much to contribute to the formative assessment process	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	I would benefit from more training in the use of formative assessment techniques	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	I feel able to influence attitudes among my colleagues in school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Children have the maturity to understand their learning goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Children can often say why their work is good or why they don't understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Gender:

Age:

Years of teaching:

Educational Background:

15- What is assessment for you? Please, give a brief definition.