ASSESSMENT LITERACY CONCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF EFL TEACHERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ASSESSMENT LITERACY CONCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF EFL TEACHERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Approval of the Graduate School of Educational Sciences

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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ABSTRACT

ASSESSMENT LITERACY CONCEPTIONS AND PRACTICES OF EFL TEACHERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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The present study aimed to investigate language assessment literacy needs of tertiary level English as foreign language (EFL) teachers at a state university in Turkey. Also, their assessment beliefs, assessment practices and discrepancies between their conceptions and assessment applications were explored. The current study used mixed-methods research design in which both quantitative (questionnaire) and qualitative (interview) data were collected. First, quantitative data were collected from 32 participants. Second, qualitative data were collected by conducting semi-structured individual interviews with 7 voluntary interviewees from the same sample. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as percentages, frequencies and means. Qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews were analysed using open coding. The results showed that despite the fact that the participating EFL teachers' had received pre-service training in different domains of language testing and assessment, their professional knowledge was not seen to be sufficient and they reported that they needed further training in these domains. The findings of the qualitative data revealed that participants' assessment beliefs and real practices may not overlap and participants believed that aviation students' assessment should focus on listening and speaking.

Keywords: Assessment, ELT, Assessment Literacy, Assessment Practices, Testing English for Aviation, Aviation English

ÖZ

YÜKSEK ÖĞRETİMDE YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN DEĞERLENDİRME FİKİR VE UYGULAMALARI

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Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'de bir devlet üniversitesindeki yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretmenlerinin dil okuryazarlığı ihtiyaçlarını araştırmaktır. Ayrıca, değerlendirme düşünceleri, değerlendirme uygulamaları ile düşünceleri ve uygulamaları arasındaki farklılıklar araştırılmıştır. Bu çalışmada hem nicel (anket) hem de nitel (görüşme) verilerin toplandığı karma yöntemler araştırma tasarımı kullanılmıştır. İlk olarak, 32 katılımcıdan nicel veriler toplanmıştır. İkinci olarak, aynı örneklemden 7 gönüllü görüşmeci ile yarı yapılandırılmış bireysel görüşmeler yapılarak nitel veriler toplanmıştır. Nicel veriler, yüzdeler, frekanslar ve ortalamalar gibi tanımlayıcı istatistikler kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yoluyla toplanan nitel veriler açık kodlama kullanılarak analiz edilmiştir. Sonuçlar, çalışmaya katılan yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretmenlerinin farklı dil testleri ve değerlendirme alanlarında hizmet öncesi eğitim almış olmalarına rağmen, mesleki bilgilerinin yeterli olmadığını ve bu alanlarda daha fazla eğitime ihtiyaç duyduklarını göstermiştir. Nitel verilerin bulguları, katılımcıların değerlendirme inançlarının ve gerçek uygulamalarının örtüşmeyebileceğini ve katılımcıların havacılık öğrencilerinin dinleme ve konuşma becerilerine odaklanması gerektiğini düşündüğünü göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Değerlendirme, Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce, Değerlendirme Okur Yazarlığı, Değerlendirme Uygulamaları, Havacılık İçin İngilizce Testi, Havacılık İngilizcesi



To my family

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ICAO	The International Civil Aviation Organization
ESL	English as a Second Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
ENLTA	European Network for Language Testing and Assessment
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
L2	Second Language
AERA	American Educational Research Association
APA:	American Psychological Association
NCME	The National Council on Measurement in Education
LPR	Language Proficiency Requirements
ELPAC	English Language Proficiency for Aeronautical Communication
CXELT	Cathay English Language Test – Pilots
EALT	English for Aviation Language Test
ELSA	Expert Level 6 Speaker Assessment
EPTA	English Proficiency Test for Aviation
TEA	Test of English for Aviation
TELLCAPR	Test of English Language Level for Controllers and Pilots
VAET	Versant Aviation English Test

FCAA	Finnish Civil Aviation Authority
BA	Bachelor's Degree
MA	Master's Degree
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

In today's developing world, English is the most popular language (Balteiro, 2011) and used in different parts of life such as education, workplace, internet etc. around the world; hence people somehow have to learn this language. Since the English language has become so popular, it is important to come to a conclusion if a person knows or not. Thus, assessment and testing of English has turned into one of the crucial parts of English Language Teaching. In teaching and learning process, assessment's role is significant (Lam, 2014). With the results of the assessment, not only teachers can see their students' progress but also they can revise their pedagogy, classroom activities, and pacing according to the results. Also, students are able to see their own performances and development in learning a new language.

Also, with the demand of learning English, EFL teachers' responsibilities and the need of their self-improvement have increased. For quality learning and teaching, EFL teachers now have to keep pace with the changes and be well equipped to monitor and evaluate learning/teaching. In this vein, professional knowledge in assessment gains prominence.

O'Loughlin (2013) defines literacy of assessment as the knowledge, abilities, test preparing rules, test usage and interpretation, evaluation of the test, classroom-based assessments with the improvement of a critical attitude about the roles of assessment in an educational setting. Some researchers (e.g., Kiomrs, Abdolmehdi & Rashidi, 2011; Xu & Brown, 2017; Büyükkarci, 2016) have found out that foreign language teachers did not have high language assessment literacy levels. When the total time foreign language teachers spend on assessment, analysing and the influence of language assessment on language teaching is considered, language teachers' role in language assessment is central (Yastıbaş & Takkaç, 2018).

Furthermore, teachers' beliefs have had a strong influence on the teaching and learning process. In terms of assessment conceptions, assessment has lots of purposes

according to Brown (2004). He grouped the aims of assessment under four main titles which are school and student accountability, improvement, and irrelevance. In other words, assessment is used to make learning quality better in improvement conception; school accountability argues that assessment may be used to make sure of school's quality; student accountability presents that assessment is used to see students' learning development and the last one, irrelevance conception states that assessment is useless and aimless.

In brief, research on teacher perceptions into the purpose of assessment is important since this may provide valuable insights for teachers' practice. However, while exploring the teachers' assessment conceptions, the studies have not focused on English language teaching programs in the aviation context. Thus, there is a need for further research in this area.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Assessment cannot be thought separately from teaching and learning. So, EFL teachers have one of the most outstanding roles in assessment and testing (Vogt & Tsagari, 2014). Thus, their knowledge of assessment is the essential strand in establishing the quality of assessment and testing. Previous studies reported a deficiency in language teachers' level of language assessment literacy (Razavipour, Riazi & Rashidi, 2011; Volante & Fazia, 2007) which may lead to difficulties in designing and implementing appropriate classroom-based assessment tasks to monitor learners' progress. There are some causes of deficiency in teachers' assessment literacy knowledge such as not having adequate education in language testing and assessment (Taylor, 2009). Moreover, some of them did not have any education in the testing and assessment area. Thereby, it is too important to search for EFL teachers' assessment knowledge and assessment training needs.

Moreover, it is often observed that teachers (especially novice teachers who have fresh knowledge about assessment and teaching) cannot always use their assessment conceptions into their classroom practices because of some administrative rules. In other words, even if the teachers have their ideal assessment practices in their minds, they may not have a chance to apply these practices due to several other factors including testing and assessment principles enforced by their

schools. Therefore, exploring teacher perceptions towards assessment is of vital importance for raising awareness about and increasing motivation towards assessment literacy among teachers, and for finding a middle ground between teachers and administrators to plan and operationalize effective assessment practices.

Furthermore, this study's context is aviation and teaching English for aviation purposes is gaining importance around the world. Internationally, the academic aviation courses carried out around the world prefer the English language because the accepted and standardized aviation communication language is English and the majority of aircraft and airlines checklists, flight plans, documents of pilots, and airports traffic directions are written in the English language (Karimi, Lotfi & Biria, 2019). Hence, the assessment literacy of teachers working in the aviation context warrants further research.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to explore the assessment beliefs and practices of EFL teachers working at an Aviation School by using a perception questionnaire which is adapted from Brown's (2002) inventory of Teachers' Conceptions of Assessment. This study also aims to determine tertiary EFL teachers' assessment beliefs and practices by eliciting their opinions on testing and assessment with the help of individual interviews. In addition, exploring EFL teachers' assessment literacy needs comprises another center of this study, as teachers' assessment knowledge is one of the essential sides of teaching and learning. Besides, EFL teachers' applications of language testing and assessment issues are given particular attention in this study so as to understand if there is any inconsistency between them. Also, the study aims to investigate what should assessment practices focus on for aviation students according to EFL teachers.

1.4 Research Questions

The present study is designed to explore the following research questions:

1. What are perceived language assessment literacy needs of EFL teachers teaching EAP at the tertiary level?

2. What are EFL teachers' assessment conceptions?
3. Are there any discrepancies between EFL teachers' assessment beliefs and assessment practices?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Assessment applications are so widely used at tertiary education level; nevertheless, research is still needed since different educational contexts may necessitate a different set of assessment knowledge and applications. Teachers' beliefs in language assessment and their roles have not been discovered adequately (Mohd Saad, Abbasnasab Sardareh & Ambarwati, 2013). Thus, this present study aims at providing new insight into assessment conceptions of EFL teachers in the literature.

The current study is expected to fill the gap in the conception of very limited literature of assessment in Turkey by investigating tertiary level of English teachers' assessment conceptions in Turkish aviation context and focusing on EFL teachers' testing and assessment training levels, needs, assessment practices in their classes, and discrepancies between their beliefs and practices. In this sense, any contribution to teachers' assessment knowledge, beliefs, and finding their familiarity with testing English for aviation purposes will help them to raise awareness in aviation and so learners fulfill the English language criteria set by International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) as well. The findings of the study may offer valuable insights to ELT teachers in university programs in terms of considering the role of assessment in the quality of language education and motivate them to take precautions to advance the current situation in their own educational context(s).

It is essential to search about what teachers comprehend, feel and expect so as to understand their assessment perceptions, since it is in line with their instructional practices. Yet, language teachers' assessment beliefs and the association of these to their instruction have not been studied extensively in English language programs in the Turkish higher education context. Hence, the present study aims at filling this research gap.

1.6 Definitions

Assessment: a process for revealing test and nontest for the aim of making presumptions (Purpura, 2016)

Formative Assessment: measuring learners in the process of forming their capabilities and skills aiming of supporting them to go on that growth process (Brown, 2001)

Summative Assessment: summative assessments are accretive assessments aiming to catch students' knowledge or the quality of learning to make judgments of the performance against a benchmark (Atkin, Black & Coffey, 2001)

Language assessment literacy: language teachers' awareness of testing statements and the practices of this knowledge to classroom applications in general and specifically to issues relating to assessing language (Malone, 2013)

EFL: Abbreviation for English as a Foreign Language

Classroom-based Assessment: teachers and learners reflections on the qualities of a student's work and the use of that knowledge by teachers and learners for teaching, learning (feedback), reporting, and management or socialization purposes (Hill & McNamara, 2012)

Aviation English: a subgroup of English for Specific Purposes with a focus on aviation including both plain language and the phraseology (Aiguo, 2008)

Chapter 2
Literature Review

2.1 Teachers' Assessment Beliefs

Beliefs are important for different aspects of life including teaching. Belief might be held intentionally or without realizing and people agree that their beliefs are correct. With the help of beliefs, individuals understand the world and they influence how new data is discovered and if it is approved or rejected (Borg, 2001). These beliefs turn into the point of view affecting goals, and goals that are the foundations for decisions guiding to action (Bauch, 1984).

Teachers' beliefs have been an important part of their teaching. Researchers have defined assessment beliefs and conceptions in different ways. Theories that teachers have in relation to teaching, nature of learning, assessment shape their assessments of student performance and behavior. So, an important focus point identified for professional development is framed as examining teachers' assessment beliefs and the way they influence teaching (Borko, Mayfield, Marion, Flexer, & Cumbo, 1997). Moreover, Barnes, Fives and Dacey (2014) conceptualised teachers' assessment beliefs into different categories such as the different purposes of assessment, assessment structures, assessment procedures, formative assessment usage methods, and intercultural dissimilarities in low and high stakes accountability contexts. For instance, Moiinvaziri (2015) carried out a research study to investigate higher education teachers' assessment conceptions using a short form of Teachers' Conceptions of Assessment Inventory (Brown, 2016). After implementing the questionnaire, it was concluded that most of the teachers use assessment with the purpose of improving learning and teaching. Likewise, Pishghadam and Shayesteh (2012) investigated EFL teachers' assessment conceptions by using the same inventory and in the end; it was revealed that teachers framed assessment as student accountability.

Brown and Gao (2015) defined teacher conception on assessment as the ideas and attitudes which teachers have about the assessment and what assessment is used for. In their study, interviews and a survey were used to analyse how different

teachers in China identified the purpose and nature of assessment. The teachers stated assessment has both positive effects on students and negative effects on schools. It lets policymakers have better insights into the challenges to reduce negative results related to examination systems.

Teaching includes the assessment. Teachers have to determine the good aspects as well as the points to modify lesson subject, ordering, materials, and learning details, considering their learners' profiles and needs. They need to select the best classroom materials establishing their experience, their understanding of learning as well as their students' language development, and language proficiency. At the same time, teachers always need to observe their learners get information about their development and judge about particular learning results and whole performance (Rea-Dickins, 2004). Therefore, one of the teaching-related duties entails designing and using formative assessment tasks.

Assessment design and implementation issues have gained importance in language education. Zheng (2015) stated that certain studies that were conducted in the past twenty years showed that language conceptions of teachers are altering, mixed, context-related and organised relating to the topic, their experience, and the context in which they are teaching in. Also, Munoz, Palacio, and Escobar (2011) defend teachers' beliefs on teaching and learning have an effect on how they teach and evaluate students' learning, and what students learn. Therefore, their perceptions are mainly focused on. As a result of interviews, surveys and written reports, researchers found a contrast between what teachers say and what they do and believe and they suggest teachers need chances for consideration, more guidance, and self-assessment.

There have been many studies that explored EFL teachers' assessment beliefs in the Turkish context (Zaimoğlu, 2013; Önalan & Karagül, 2018). Zaimoğlu (2013) aimed to explore teachers' and students' assessment conceptions at the English Preparatory School context in a university. Surveys were designed for teachers and students to elicit their assessment conceptions. An adapted form of teacher conceptions of assessment scale (Brown, 2002) and student conceptions of assessment scale were used to collect data. The results showed that there were four factors affected teachers' assessment conceptions and these factors are student and

school accountability, improvement, and irrelevance of assessment which means assessment is not related to learning and teaching. Also, it was found that years of teaching experience was not an important factor in teachers' assessment conceptions. But teachers' gender and education level showed a remarkable difference in the conception of school accountability. The undergraduate school which teachers graduated from had an important distinction in their conception of improvement of assessment, improvement of teaching and improvement learning. When students' assessment conceptions were taken into consideration, it was observed that the type of school they graduated from did not have a significant contrast in their conceptions of assessment. But, there were differences among students' assessment conceptions relating to their gender.

According to Elshawa, Abdullah and Rashid (2017) surveying ESL teachers' assessment beliefs at higher education levels is crucial because it may develop assessment practices quality. So, they conducted a study to investigate English language instructors' assessment perceptions in Malaysia. 83 English language instructors joined the study. According to the results, the purpose of the assessment was to make teaching and learning better. Also, giving information about learners' development and providing feedback to the students as they learn are the results of the analyses as well. Moreover, English language teachers depended on paper and pencil assessment whereas they give more importance to formative assessment. They stated that they use various kinds of assessments for each language skill that they thought in their classes.

There is a new trend interest in assessment based on teachers, especially to see the language development in English. Davison (2004) conducted a study by comparing Australia and Hong Kong ESL teachers' assessment of students' written works, in other words, their opinions about certain topics in the last times of secondary school. The study found separate assessment attitudes, beliefs, and applications of teachers who are working with Cantonese-speaking students having English as a second language. As a result of this study, Australian teachers had different kinds of approaches to assess their students. Assessors were two groups, one of them was the teachers assessing according to the published assessment guidelines and another group was the teachers relying much more on professional judgment. Likewise, Remesal (2007) found out that even teachers from the same

school context and exposed to the same socio-political effects and assumptions showed different and mixed beliefs about the aim of the assessment.

There is a relationship between teachers' beliefs and their applications. Othman (2018) investigated the link between teachers' beliefs about school-based assessment and classroom practice. A questionnaire which measures teachers' school based assessment practices and beliefs was sent to 174 teachers working at government-funded schools in the Malaysian context. The results showed that teachers have a good understanding of assessment rules about school-based assessment and there is a positive link between their beliefs and their classroom practices. According to Yin (2010) teachers' tactical knowledge, for example, their opinions about language learning and their interactive cognitions such as students' performance affect how they organize and implement assessment practices.

In his study, Cumming (2001) used an interview and administered it to 48 experienced ESL-EFL teachers who are practising for writing assessment in programs in higher education programs or newcomer community programs. The teachers worked in different places such as Canada, New Zealand, Japan, Hong Kong, etc. According to the results, the conceptualization of assessment was different based on if the courses they lectured were explained as general or specific objectives for learning English.

Some studies tried to find teachers' beliefs on different types of assessment. Giraldo (2019) studied with the Colombian teachers about their assessment literacy. After some interviews and journals, he found out that teachers used different types of alternative and traditional assessment instruments, they assessed language and constructs which neither are nor related to the language to make teaching and learning better, they examined assessment results, students participated in quantitative peer assessment. Findings show that students' failure or success in assessment is related to their past experiences. Furthermore, Guadu and Boersma (2018) conducted a study to assess EFL instructor's formative assessment beliefs and practices in writing teaching and to discover the link between their formative assessment beliefs and applications. They studied with 25 instructors and the findings revealed that teachers tend to have positive opinions about the significance of formative assessment and they practice it at a moderate level. There is also a

relation between their beliefs and practices. In addition, Chang (2006) made a study to learn teachers' oral language assessment beliefs in the classrooms of Taiwan's colleges and universities. The researcher used classroom observation, interview, and documentation. The results show that teachers believe they can better capture a holistic view of student oral language ability through the varied use of oral language assessment. Teachers' decision making is highly affected by thinking about how assessments will enhance student learning because most of the teachers perceive assessment as instruction addition and a major factor for student motivation and engagement.

In Turkey, a number of studies have investigated the relationship between teacher perceptions and classroom-based assessment (Buyukkarci, 2014; Onalan & Karagul, 2018). Buyukkarci (2014) aimed to reveal the conceptions of primary school teachers about formative assessment. Thanks to this study, the researcher could also see their real-life assessment applications in the primary education context. Buyukkarcı concluded that although teachers had positive beliefs and attitudes about assessment, they reported that they were not able to apply formative assessment practices since these were not endorsed in the national curriculum. Consequently, there was generally a desire to implement assessment for summative purposes as an alternative for formative purposes.

Önalan and Karagül (2018) categorized the purpose of assessment in English as a foreign language under four main statements which are formative, summative, self-assessment of students and assessment to improve teachers' instructions. In their work, the researchers tried to explore EFL teachers' beliefs about the assessment usage in English teaching and how they described their beliefs related to their teaching experience and graduate departments. Findings indicated that participants tended to use assessment for formative purposes and for self-assessment procedures. Data analysis revealed that their experience and undergraduate departments did not have an effect on their assessment preferences.

A line of research focusing on what teachers believe, think and know is essential so as to perceive teachers' perceptual structure because it is related to their instructional practices. However, language teachers' assessment beliefs and the association of these to their instruction have not been studied extensively in English

language programs in Turkish higher education context. Thus, this study aims at filling this research gap.

2.2 Assessment Literacy

Assessment literacy means knowing the difference between sound and unsound assessment. Teachers, administrators or other stakeholders described as assessment-literate people are aware of what they are assessing, why they do it, how to assess in the best way, how to generate the good samples, and what problems may occur while assessing and prevent it (Stiggins, 1995). Furthermore, for Fullan (2001) assessment literacy is the teacher's ability to explore learner production evidence and detect good work with the help of the analysis of accomplishment scores and sortation of data, whereas O'Loughlin (2013) defines assessment literacy as many expertise in designing test instruments, test result explanation and make use of it and test judgments with an understanding of the roles and mission of assessment in the classroom. Similarly, according to Webb (2002) assessment literacy does not solely mean being familiar with the assessment tools and commenting on them, it also means utilizing these tools so as to boost learners' progress, enhance teaching, and raise the courses' effectiveness or programs that help students have more opportunities to be successful.

Assessment literacy has been the main point for teachers' professional development for the past few years. The assessment literacy term refers to the understanding of instructors, teachers, and stakeholders on measurement principles that are conducted in a classroom environment (Popham, 2009). Siegel and Wissehr (2011) stated that teachers have to know the theoretical rules of assessment and classroom practices. What is more, practice and theory both interact and intersect. The researchers asserted that theory grows from practice and practice grows from the theory. According to Hay and Penney (2013) defined assessment literacy as teachers' understanding of assessment process and also their abilities to create assessment tasks, improve suitable criteria to judge students' performances, and behave according to what was learned.

Assessment literacy is the knowledge in general education assessment and language-related issues and perceived as the potential that foreign language teachers

should have so as to get assessment data, analyse it and then use it to enhance learning and instructions (Inbar-Lourie, 2008; Taylor, 2009). Language assessment literacy is a composition of three basic elements that are skills which means having a basic testing skill; facts which are the information about language and assessment; and fundamentals (Davies, 2008). Taylor (2009) states that all of these three parts are essential for understanding the assessment literacy.

Several teacher training programs do not serve preservice teachers an assessment course although there has been a rise of expectations for teachers' assessment skills and in-service teachers state that they were not prepared enough to evaluate student learning. (Mertler, 2004). Volante and Fazio (2007) made a research to examine the assessment literacy of primary teachers and future teachers. They completed a questionnaire each year about assessment. For teachers, self-efficacy was not high. Whereas a big part of them stated summative purposes, only a few of them suggested formative purposes for assessment.

Thus, it is often argued that the foreign language teachers' understanding of principles and activities of assessment, which is framed as "assessment literacy", must be developed. Therefore, teachers and administrators require the fundamental tools for analysing and reflecting assessment data so as to decide about program design and instructional practice (Boyles, 2005). According to Boyles (2005), foreign language teachers should be able to decide on convenient assessments for specific aims, such as placement of students of evaluation of the program, and also be able to analyse the data to enhance their instruction. In addition, Malone (2013) declared if an assessment is implemented in a correct way, it helps all testing stakeholders, such as teachers and students, get important information related to students' performance and learning objectives in the classroom. It should relate teaching and forming a relationship in which assessment improves teaching and the other way around. But, when foreign language teachers own limited background or education in assessment, problems with choosing and interpreting the results, this relationship would be useless.

There are some standards for assessment literacy which are choosing assessment techniques related to instructional purposes, developing assessment tools, conducting, scoring and evaluating the assessment, using this result while deciding

the instruction, improving grading procedures, sharing assessment outcomes with learners and administrators and detecting unethical and unfair assessment applications (American Federation of Teachers, 1990).

Xu and Brown (2017) conducted a study to investigate the assessment literacy level of Chinese university English teachers and if their demographic characteristics affect their performance or not by adapting the Teacher Assessment Literacy Questionnaire. As a result, they found out that a basic level of assessment literacy has little effect from demographic characteristics which means their educational background and familiarity with the assessment.

Jannati (2015) aimed to examine ELT teachers' assessment-related conceptions and applications in Iran. There were male and female attendees having experiences from different language institutions. According to their teaching experience, they were separated into three groups which were low, mid and high levels. From the analysis, it can be concluded that each group knew the primary theories and terms in assessment and teachers' teaching experience did not have an important difference in the way they see assessment. Also, these teachers had a good knowledge of assessment; however, in this study they did not reflect their practices.

To examine teachers' assessment applications through levels and content, Zhang and Burry-Stock (2003) conducted a study. They also tried to explore teachers' self-perception of assessment skills. Data showed that when the level of grade increases, teachers tend to count on objective tests more in classroom assessment and their concern for assessment quality increased. In this study, the involvement of teachers' assessment activities shows the significance of the subjects they teach. Also, in normal tests, performance assessment, revision of tests and instructional development, teachers who were trained on assessment perceived themselves as assessment literate in assessment skills in contrast to the teachers who did not have assessment training.

Fulcher (2012) aimed to describe a research project and he developed a survey instrument to obtain the information of language teachers' assessment training needs as there is a growing requirement for the language testing area and what it means. This project contributed to the area by providing new derived content for the

assessment literacy concept and covered methodological problems and suggested some solutions.

The research aiming to explore the character and usefulness of language assessment literacy among English teachers was conducted by Sultana (2019) in Bangladesh. In this study, the researcher tried to reach the information if the English teachers are professionally ready to apply different testing tasks and how they recognise language assessment literacy in their teaching applications. The results show that although it was small-scale research, participants lacked language assessment, their thoughts and practices of language assessment raise some questions about the status of their knowledge and abilities of language assessment.

Kavaklı and Arslan (2019) aimed to investigate EFL teachers' levels of assessment literacy. They used an assessment literacy questionnaire which was created by Volante and Fazio (2007) and a student survey (ENLTA) which was created in 2004 to collect views of the participants. Results show that EFL teachers know the concepts of assessment literacy; on the contrary, they do not see themselves qualified. Also, the practical courses they register do not fulfill their expectations. Similarly, Mede and Atay (2017) explored EFL teachers' conceptions to in-class language assessment and its relation with their classroom practices. They found that even if they know some basic terms related to the assessment, teachers have difficulties while trying to use them in their classes.

Han and Kaya (2014) aimed to explore the English language teachers' assessment practices and habits in Turkey. Also, they tried to find teachers' choices, opinions, beliefs, and feelings about assessment. According to the results, for teachers listening and writing skills were less important and speaking is the most difficult language skill to get. Also, there are no gender differences in teaching preferences. Class size is an important factor for this. Moreover, teachers do not change their selections no matter whether they received assessment education or not, they rely on their assessment preferences.

Some studies have shown that language tests that are prepared by teachers do not have much quality and language teachers have limited knowledge about assessment (Alderson, 2005; Hasselgreen, Carlsen & Helness, 2004). The assessment instruments prepared by teachers are not good enough due to various reasons such as

their educational background and familiarity with testing, teaching experience, students' level of grade, having a testing course before.

2.3 Assessment

Language assessment refers to a structured process for obtaining test and non-test data such as teachers' checklists of their students' performance. In this way, they interfere or claim about certain features of the students. So, the term assessment does not solely mean formal tests or evaluation after finishing the chapters but also means other information obtaining techniques such as observation L2 performance while they are working with students' pairs or asking them to declare their perceptions and unclearness. All L2 assessments' aim is to get the knowledge of L2 performance of individuals under certain conditions; thus, performances help to produce records such as scores, verbal descriptions, or mental notes. These judgments from these results used as proof for making decisions later (Purpura, 2016). Alderson (2005) described the assessment as a basic section of an instructional procedure. It helps teachers see where students are at and which level learners succeeded, also assessment gives feedback to learners about their learning, detects their needs to develop and curricula, materials and activities can be adjusted with the help of it. Moreover, Harris, Irving, and Peterson (2008) define assessment as a crucial part on the procedure of teaching and learning because it helps teachers to grade student learning and get data to adjust their instructional practices. Brown and Smith (1997) stated that assessment must allow evaluation of what students get and to manifest their learning.

One of the important factors which affect language learning context is language assessment because it gives information about students' and teachers' performance in the classroom and forms how foreign languages are learned and used. There are some leading factors in language assessment such as technology, dissimilar student profiles, troubles with the devices which are currently used, students' and teachers' needs and different educational settings (Uzun & Kılıçkaya, 2017). In addition, assessment is an important interactional area for the struggle for strength in the learning area (Torrance & Pryor, 1998) and one essential part of the teaching-learning process is assessment. It has an impact on learners' objectives, motivation, identity and the learning outcome (Bell & Cowie, 2001).

Assessment influences the procedures of teaching and learning. According to Plake (1993), one of the most crucial responsibilities of teachers is assessing their learners' performance. The assessment determines their educational success and it shows the differences of students relating to their learning and put them places among other learners according to their achievement level. The crucial thing that we are able to do in order to help our students' learning is assessment. Students have to join in the assessment process which we set and apply if they want to get a qualification. (Brown, S., 2005) She also argued that learners should be at the center in assessment and reflect the syllabus. There should be less focus on traditional written exams, especially time-limited exams, and more focus on assessment tools that measure not just remember the facts, also the learners' ability to use the materials they have got in real situations. Thus, assessment should focus on what is intended to teach.

Popham (2009) stated that the assessment term does not solely mean a traditional paper and pencil test or any other types of formal tests. In contrast, it involves many kinds of techniques such as interviewing orally with a single student or with a group of students, or while having a classroom discussion asking learners to reply to questions which are asked by teachers. Moreover, self-report inventories, elaborate performance tests then describing it in writing are among those other techniques.

Assessment is for sure one of the most important and complicated tasks. Most of the educational systems are trying to upgrade and modernize their assessment procedures in order to reach new methods. So, the important things that determine the education's quality are assessment and assessment literacy (Malone, 2011). Several studies have investigated teachers' assessment conceptions and assessment literacy. Zolfaghari and Ashraf (2015) conducted a study to find the link between Iranian EFL teachers' assessment literacy, age and teaching experience. According to the data that were obtained from the inventory, their assessment literacy and teaching experience and age are highly related to each other. Similarly, Sahinkarakas (2012) conducted a study to see how language teachers conceptualize language assessment and if these conceptions are different from their teaching experience. So, different levels of experienced teachers were asked to define language assessment. As a result,

in general, teachers see assessment as a way of providing evidence of teaching and learning.

In order to examine secondary teachers' opinions and applications in assessment, Sikka, Nath, and Cohen (2007) conducted a study focusing on investigating the difficulties of assessment-related topics by using the methodology of a case study. The main finding of this study was the concern which was expressed by all participants the assessment pressure.

McMillan (2007) made a distinction between formative and summative assessment. Whereas summative assessment comes to mean the usage of assessment-based evidence when teachers try to decide about instructional activities and aims to help teachers to reach stopping or going decisions based on the results of any program, on the other hand, formative assessment refers to a process that teachers regulate their ongoing instructional tasks or their ways of teaching. Formative assessment includes collecting data for developing student learning, on the other hand, summative assessment uses information to assess how much a learner knows or has kept at the completion of a learning time (American Educational Research Association, American Psychological Association, & the National Council on Measurement in Education [AERA, APA & NCME], 2014).

2.3.1 Formative assessment. According to Frunza (2013), formative assessment is a process that is used by designers so as to get information that can be utilized to revise the instruction, to make it more helpful and more productive.

Formative assessment improves learning. The acquirements are considerable in accomplishment (Black & William, 1998). They also define formative assessment as all tasks that are done by teachers or learners and it gives information that can be used as feedback to revise the teaching and learning tasks that they are in. It can be used in order to enable the learning procedure and helps the students in their learning. Formative testing is a plan that is designed to point learners' learning problems to provide improving procedures to increase the majority of the students' performance (Marsh, 2007). Formative assessment is judgments about students' answers' quality can form and develop the learner's competence by avoiding randomness and empirical learning inefficiency (Sadler, 1989).

Students should be the center during the process since the information from the learners is collected and analysed to have particular aims. Teachers use this information in planning and improving the next procedure. It is focused that data collection should be through learners' participation and interaction (Harlen, 2007).

Finally, according to Harlen and James (1997), formative assessment is a section of teaching that promotes learning, it pays attention to the improvement of each student, it is not solely criterion-referenced; whereas evaluating summatively errors may occur, and formative evaluation is diagnostic information. Also, students are the center and they have to be active in their own learning.

2.3.2 Summative assessment. Leung and Mohan (2004) define summative assessment as an assessment of learning that is implemented in the last part of a unit, stage when a learner is leaving the school in order to get data about the student's performance related to national standards. Shepard (2006) stated that a summative assessment should complete documenting what students know and can do and also successfully support for learning.

Summative assessment is contrary to formative assessment because it is about summing up or summarizes the learner's success, it is implemented at the end of the course of study particularly for certification purposes. It is not active and generally has a slow impact on learning. The key distinction between summative and formative assessment is purpose and effect, not the timing (Sadler, 1989). In addition, Harlen and James (1997) mentioned about the characteristics of summative assessment as when achievement needs to be reported, it happens at certain times; it is about improvement in learning contrary to public standards; since different students are based on the familiar criteria, the outcomes for them can be combined for different types of purposes; some techniques that are reliable by not endangering validity are needed; summative assessment has some procedures related to quality and it must be related to the evidence from the performance suitable to the criteria which are being used. Summative assessment's aim is describing learning achieved at a time when being reported to the parents, other teachers, students themselves and other interested groups such as school administrators (Harlen & James, 1997). Taras (2005) stated that summative assessment includes all the evidence up to a given point which is the

final point of the judgment. It may have many functions that do not have any effect on the process.

2.3.3 Formal and Informal Assessment

People have not defined uniformly formal and informal assessments because these terms are not technical terms. Informal assessment aiming to identify the strengths and needs of students refers to techniques that can be utilised into classroom tasks and learning activities and they can be used anytime. Also, its findings show students' performance but this type of assessment does not provide a comparison between students and a wider group. Journals, student homework, observations, checklists, debates, brainstorming, cloze-tests are among informal assessment types (Navarete, Wilde, Nelson, Martinez, Hargett, 1990).

However, formal assessment has one type of expectations for all learners and come up with criteria for grading and explanation. In order to explore learning success, formal assessment is the official way (Brown, 2004).

2.4 Teachers' Needs Analysis of Assessment

There have been made several definitions of needs analysis (Nunan, 1988; Brindley, 1989; Williams, 2014). According to Kaila (2005), the difference between the current and desired situation is called a need. Nunan defines needs analysis as methods and procedures for getting information that is used in designing a syllabus. Needs analysis is a gathering and analyse of all information (Brown, 1995).

In ESP/EAP context, one of the important issues is needs analysis since instrument writers and practitioners can figure out about the needs of real learners in this way (Ali & Salih 2013).

Tsagari & Vogt (2017) tried to find perceived language assessment literacy levels of foreign language teachers and teachers' training needs in assessment and testing. The researchers used a mixed-methods study to get teachers' assessment perceptions. Findings of the study show teachers feel themselves as not having enough assessment knowledge and they need to develop their assessment practices, abilities and knowledge. Especially they needed to improve themselves in oral

assessment practices and criterion oriented assessment. As a result, teachers have some problems of determining their assessment needs and foreign language teachers are thinking about where they are in assessment; they are also ready to take further assessment training to broaden their knowledge. Teachers do not feel confident about their assessment applications which need development.

Similarly, Firoozi, Razavipour, and Ahmadi (2019) investigated the assessment needs of Iranian EFL teachers. Data showed that teachers' present language assessment perceptions need to change and they need more training in assessment knowledge and skills. In other words, teachers need to improve themselves in rubric developing to evaluate students' speaking and writing performances.

Likewise in Turkey, Öztürk and Aydın (2019) studied to get EFL teachers' opinions about their assessment knowledge and determine their assessment literacy needs. Data findings showed Turkish language teachers wanted to take assessment training on all language skills from the professionals in the field. They also needed to learn analysing reliability and validity of tests.

2.5 Language Testing in Aviation

ICAO is the abbreviation of The International Civil Aviation Organization and it is an organization belongs to the United Nations. It was found in 1944 by the United States in order to administer and govern the Convention on International Civil Aviation. This organisation is also creating worldwide plans to help multinational airlines about security and navigation, showing and reporting air transport performance metrics, and examining airline organizations to enlarge safety and security. Furthermore, ICAO determines language standards to control English usage as a worldwide air language by setting the language essentials that are called "ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements" (Estival, Farris & Molesworth, 2016).

The ICAO formed and offered airline security standards and applications that need flight crew staff, air traffic controllers, and air experts so as to communicate effectively using both ICAO phraseology and plain English called the ICAO language proficiency requirements (LPRs). ICAO developed six parts of language

competency that aviation members should be proficient including comprehension, structure, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and interactions (ICAO, 2004).

These required skills are separated into six levels of proficiency, Level 1 (pre-elementary), Level 2 (elementary), Level 3 (pre-operational), Level 4 (operational), Level 5 (extended), and Level 6 (expert). If a person wants to work in the aviation industry, it is compulsory for flight members including flight attendants to pass the Operational level 4 of the requirements. Although the fact that the ICAO language proficiency test is developed for and implemented specifically with solely pilots, flight attendants are still needed to meet the specification (ICAO, 2008). The definitions of Level 4 in each of these criteria are: Pronunciation, rhythm, stress, and intonation are influenced by the first language or regional variation but only sometimes interfere with ease of understanding. For structure, primary grammatical structures and sentence designs are used reasonably and are usually controlled well. There may occur some errors, particularly in unusual or unexpected situations, but rarely interfere with meaning. Vocabulary scope and accuracy are usually enough to communicate effectively on common, real, and job-related topics. They can paraphrase successfully when they do not know the vocabulary in unusual or unexpected situations. For fluency, it produces stretches of language at a suitable pace. There may be fluency loss on the transition from prepared or formulaic speech to spontaneous interaction, but this does not stop effective communication. They may use discourse markers or connectors in a limited way. Fillers are not distracting. Comprehension is generally accurate on common, real, and job-related topics when the accent or variety used is sufficiently intelligible for an international community of users. When the speaker is confronted with a linguistic or situational complication or unexpected events, comprehension may be slower or need clarification strategies. For interactions, answers are generally fast, suitable, and informative. Initiates and maintains exchange even when dealing with unexpected events. Deals are adequately with apparent misunderstandings by checking, confirming, or clarifying.

Alderson (2009) stated that two years before the ICAO LPRs were implemented, in 2006, the European Organization for the Safety of Air Navigation (Eurocontrol) commissioned the Lancaster Language Testing Research Group to research a validation study of the developments of a test called ELPAC which stands for English Language Proficiency for Aeronautical Communication, tried to assess

the language proficiency of air traffic controllers. The tests used for licensure identified in his study are 1-a) Level 6 Proficiency Demonstration b) Formal Language Evaluation 2-ALITE 3-Altec Benchmark Evaluation 4-Aviation English Proficiency Assessment 5-CXELT (Cathay English Language Test - Pilots) 6-ELP Test V1 (obsolete); ELP Test V2 (operational); ELP Test V3 (in development) 7-ELPAC (English Language Proficiency for Aeronautical Communication) 8-Aviation Language Proficiency Test (available for both English and French) 9-English for Aviation Language Test (EALT); Expert Level 6 Speaker Assessment (ELSA) 10-English Proficiency Exam for Aviators (Chile) 11-English Proficiency Test for Airline Pilots (in Japanese) 12-English Proficiency Test for Aviation (EPTA) 13-ICAO English Proficiency Exam for Aviators 14-IELTS 15-Ilmailuhallinnon kielitaitotesti (The language proficiency test of the [Finnish] Civil Aviation Authority) 16-LANG TECH Aviation English Oral Competence Assessment 17-RELTA 18-TEA (Test of English for Aviation) 19-TELLCAPR (Test of English Language Level for Controllers and Pilots) 20-Test of English for Aviation Purposes (the name may have changed after the development period) 21-Thai DCA aviation test 22-Versant Aviation English Test (VAET).

Moere, Suzuki, Downey, and Cheng (2009) conducted a study to discuss the development of an assessment to satisfy the ICAO Language Proficiency Requirements. The Versant Aviation English Test uses speech identification technology and a computerized testing platform. They worked with the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration. The first thing they discuss was assessing examinees in each of six separate parts of spoken proficiency: pronunciation, structure, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension, and interactions. An automated scoring system objectively sorts out these skills, but they questioned if human raters have the capacity to succeed in oral interviews. The second thing they discussed was how an automated test can provide a valid assessment of spoken interactions.

According to ELPAC (2017), reliability and integrity are the two most important things for language testing in aviation. An air traffic controller or pilot failing to show compliance with the ICAO and EU language proficiency requirements might have their license withdrawn with serious implications on the professional improvement of the person but also on the air traffic services' or the aircraft operator providers. So, language testing in aviation is the whole aeronautical

community's common responsibility. Therefore, the providers of air traffic services and air operators must be sure that the language proficiency tests they work are reliable, appropriate and effective for the aviation industry and the speakers who they want to test. Since aeronautical communication is characteristic, a language proficiency test for aviation professionals should reflect the aviation context.

Huhta (2009) tried to describe and analyse the improvement of a new test of aviation English by FCAA (The Finnish Civil Aviation Authority) and the general condition in Finland regarding the testing of aviation English. In this study, the researcher describes the FCAA development project and evaluates the weaknesses and strengths of the new test and the whole testing system with the reference of the framework of test usefulness proposed by Bachman and Palmer (1996). According to this study, the system in Finland is based on the principle of decentralization, the FCAA evaluates different tests to be used for certifying the English language skills of aviation staff.

In brief, because the context of this research is aviation, EFL teachers who are working in this context should be aware of general aviation testing and assessment rules and requirements around the world, what kind of tests are being implemented globally, in other words, what kind of skills their students need to improve in terms of communicating in English in their career after graduation and teachers should associate these findings into their classroom practices.

Chapter 3
Methodology

This chapter respectively presents the methodology of the study, research design, setting and participants, data collection procedure and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

Quantitative research means statistical analysis whereas qualitative research means interpretative analysis of the data (Mackey & Gass, 2005). According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) rather than using solely one approach, the focus is in mixed-method studies is on getting together, analysing and combining quantitative and qualitative data in one research to understand research problems better. According to Haase and Myers (1988), there are many reasons why qualitative and quantitative methods can be used together such as aiming to understand the world.

The distinction between qualitative and quantitative methods is that while there is a researcher who is describing types of people and situations but the amounts or measurements are not compared in qualitative methods, in quantitative methods measurements and the amounts are compared carefully by using words such as less, more, often, seldom (Thomas, 2003). A researcher can gather and evaluate data in mixed methods while combining the results and making inferences through employing quantitative and qualitative approaches (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2007).

Adopting a mixed-method approach, this study uses both qualitative and quantitative data. In other words, a questionnaire for getting quantitative data and an interview for obtaining qualitative data aiming to explore EFL teachers working at a tertiary level school were implemented. The findings of the questionnaire were compared to the participants' responses in the interview for triangulation purposes. According to Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), mixed methods research design is divided into three types which are sequential explanatory, sequential exploratory, and convergent. In this study, the sequential explanatory design was applied. Hence, after implementing the online questionnaire, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the EFL teachers to make a better interpretation of the findings.

3.2 Setting and Participants

The present study was conducted at the English language department of an aviation school at the tertiary level in Turkey during the fall semester of the 2019-2020 academic year. This study was carried out with 32 EFL teachers who are working at the same state university. The majority of the participating teachers have been teaching for 3 to 5 years. Some of the participants (*n*=10) have taken the training in Aviation English for teachers before but most of them (*n*= 22) have not taken the training in Aviation English.

Table 1

Profile of the Participants

		f	%
Gender	Male	12	37.5
	Female	20	62.5
Graduate Department	English Language Teaching	21	65.6
	English Language and Literature	5	15.6
	American Culture and Literature	3	9.4
	Translation and Interpreting	3	9.4
Recent Graduation Degree	BA	16	50
	MA	16	50
Teaching Experience	Less than 1 year	1	3.1
	1-2 years	7	21.9
	3-5 years	19	59.4
	6-10 years	1	3.1
	More than 10 years	4	12.5
Any Training in Aviation English	Yes	10	31.3
	No	22	68.8

With regard to the gender distribution of these participants, 20 of them were female and 12 were male. While most of the respondents (*n*=21) graduated from English Language Teaching Department, 5 of them graduated from English Language and Literature Department, 3 of them graduated from American Culture and Literature Department and 3 of them graduated from Translation and Interpreting Department. Half of the participants' graduate degree is BA; on the other hand, the rest of the participants' graduate degree is MA. The range of teaching experience differed among the participants since there were novice teachers with teaching experience of less than one year, in comparison to experienced participants with more than 10 years.

In the background part of the questionnaire, participants were asked whether they have taken any courses into "testing" at university.

Table 2

EFL Teachers' exposure to formal testing courses

Exposure to formal testing courses during pre-service training	f	%
Received formal training in pre-service training	27	84.4
Lack of formal training in pre-service training	5	15.6

As seen in Table 2, the majority of the teachers (*n*=27) stated they had taken language testing related courses at university, on the contrary, only a few of the teachers (*n*=5) stated that they had not taken any testing training before. Data analysis revealed that most of the teachers are familiar with testing.

Furthermore, there is a testing office in the institution where the participants work. Four teachers are currently working at this office while they are lecturing at the same time but they have fewer class teaching hours than other teachers. In this way, they can easily concentrate on preparing assessment instruments. These teachers were assigned randomly among all teachers for this semester which means the next semester other teachers would be assigned to work at this testing office. The teachers working at the testing office took testing and assessment training at their universities before. The testing office is responsible for preparing mid-terms, quizzes, and final exams. While preparing assessment instruments, they have to create questions or they need to check written exam/question sources to find good quality questions.

Thirty-two participants responded to the perception questionnaire and among this group, seven participants attended the semi-structured one-to-one interviews which garnered their assessment conceptions and applications in-depth. There were no criteria like gender, and graduate department to select the participants for the study, the volunteer teachers were recruited based on convenience sampling. During data collection, through the use of informed consent, the participants were informed about the aim of the study and were assured that their responses would be kept confidential. Lastly, their permission was taken to record the interview.

3.3 Procedures

In this section, data collection instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, reliability and validity of the study are discussed.

3.3.1 Data Collection Instruments. As data collection means, a questionnaire and semi-structured individual interviews were instrumented to survey EFL teachers' assessment beliefs and practices.

3.3.1.1 Questionnaire. In order to collect data, an online questionnaire is used in this study; the questionnaire (See Appendix 1) consists of seven parts. The first part is the consent form for participants and asks if they are willing to attend the study or not. The second part is background information part which includes questions about their gender, their educational background, their years of teaching experience, their teaching hours per week, the average number of students they have and if they have taken any training in aviation English for teachers or not. The third part attempts at eliciting teachers' conceptions of assessment literacy by asking if they have taken any testing course at university and how they would rate the content of these courses. After asking if they had any opportunities to enhance their assessment literacy, they are asked to rate themselves in terms of their assessment literacy knowledge. Then, a short answer question is asked to learn if they would like to improve themselves with regards to assessment literacy and which aspects of language assessment they would like to learn. The last question of this section is the participants' opinions about what can enhance the quality of assessment. The fourth part of the questionnaire is in the format of a Likert-scale and comprises of teachers' conceptions of assessment inventory adapted from Brown's (2002) four major conceptions of assessment purposes. Some items were modified in accordance with the purposes of this study and nineteen items in total are included ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Each participant was expected to mark the most proper answer for each item on a four-point Likert scale. In this part, items address four main issues in language assessment and these are the accountability of schools, improvement of teaching and learning, certification of students' learning, irrelevance to the work of teachers and students' learning. The fifth part of the questionnaire is in the format of a Likert-scale as well and includes how the

participants like to assess and seventeen items are asked to be selected how often they use. These items are multiple-choice questions, matching questions, open-ended questions, yes-no questions, transformation questions, gap-filling questions, cloze-test questions, true-false questions, ordering sentences questions, completing sentences questions, wh-questions, short answer questions, translation questions, portfolio, performance evaluation, and observation. In the sixth part, the teachers are asked to rate the importance of some skills and micro-skills which are grammar, vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading and writing from the most important one to the least important one. Finally, the last part of the questionnaire includes open-ended questions and some assessment practices that teachers use in classes to see how well their students learned and if they use technology in classes, what they are.

To rule out the potential negative outcomes in the questionnaire before administering them to the real participants to collect the data, the questionnaire was sent to the English instructors who are working in EFL programs at different universities for piloting purposes. The questionnaire was sent more than 25 teachers but in total but 20 participants took part in this piloting stage. After each section, they were asked if they had any comments or there were any items or questions that they did not understand. Based on their comments, some changes were done on questions and items. Decisions made at this stage included changing the Likert scale. First, it included five degrees in "teachers' assessment concepts". It started from "strongly disagree" and ended up "strongly agree" but they accumulated in the third degree which is a safe zone. So the scale was changed into four degrees which are strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. The second decision about the questions was background information and an explanation was added in parenthesis. Another decision was one of the items in part three. There was an item as "assessment results are consistent". Since there were some misunderstandings about the meaning of "consistent" word and it duplicated another item which is "assessment results are trustworthy", this item was removed from the questionnaire. Also in part two, extra items were added for the third question which is "Would you like to improve yourself in terms of your assessment literacy knowledge? Which aspect of language assessment would you like to learn about more?"

Based on piloting outcomes, the questionnaire of the study was modified. The estimated time for answering the items on the questionnaire was determined as 20-25

minutes. The questionnaire was given on Google Forms and the link was sent to 35 teachers but in total 32 participants completed the questionnaire. It took nearly one month to send the questionnaire and get the participants' responses.

3.3.1.2 Semi-structured interviews. Because of time constraints and incompatibility of schedules, seven participants accepted the invitation. A semi-structured interview including eleven questions (See Appendix 2) was used to crosscheck the information from teachers about the statements provided in the questionnaire and the reason for choosing a semi-structured interview method is it enables the researcher to write the list of questions to follow (Mackey & Gass, 2005). In this regard, interviewees were free to explain themselves and the researcher had a chance to follow them in order.

After piloting the questions with a teacher who did not participate in the present study, some prompts were modified in order to prevent some misunderstandings. The questions in the interviews were in the form of open-ended questions since these enable the participants to express themselves freely.

The teachers were asked questions about their perceptions about the need of assessment, its role in teaching and learning, assessment types they use in classes, if they design any instruments how they do it, their favourite item type and its consistency with real practices, the ordering of skills, the difference between English assessment in their aviation context and other contexts and the last thing was the participants' self-opinions about assessment literacy.

Table 3

Interview Questions Themes

Themes	Example interview questions
1.Role of assessment	What is the role of assessment in teaching? Does assessment have any effect on your teaching practice in class?
2.Application of Assessment	What kinds of assessment do you use in your teaching process to see how well your students learned?

Table 3 cont'd

Themes	Example interview questions
3.Opinions and Beliefs about Assessment	Do you think assessing students is necessary? In what ways? Please explain.
4.Possible suggestions	What can improve the quality of summative and formative assessment in your institution and class?
5.Teachers' Self-Perception of Assessment	What is assessment literacy for you? Do you think it is important for a teacher's professional development?

The participants were interviewed and their answers were audio-taped. All of the questions were opinion questions. The aim was in semi-structured interviews to understand participants' perceptions of assessment, their opinions about different assessment types and roles what types of assessment they use, assessment implementation and their self-perceptions. The one-to-one interviews were conducted in English. Each interview was recorded. They lasted between 15 to 20 minutes. All the interviews were conducted approximately a week.

In order to enhance the reliability of the results, the themes inferred by the researcher were further discussed with the participants through member checking. In other words, as the researcher, I shared the responses and emerging trends with the participating teachers in order to check the accuracy of conceptual understanding.

3.3.2 Data collection procedures.

3.3.2.1 Questionnaire. Since this study seeks information from EFL teachers who are working in an aviation context, the participants were chosen from an aviation university's instructors. Because of the limited context, 40 EFL teachers were sent an online questionnaire on *Google Forms* but only 32 EFL teachers filled it. The researcher gave information about the importance of the study and stated that the data from the questionnaire would stay confidential. The researcher asked the participants to be honest while giving answers to the questions. Before starting, the participants were asked to fill a consent form. The participants were given enough time to fill the questionnaire because it is an online questionnaire.

3.3.2.2 Interview. The interviews were carried out with 7 EFL teachers. Before interviews, the researcher asked for a suitable time according to their schedule and in the decided time, the interviewees were visited in their offices one by one in a relaxing atmosphere. The interviews were in the English language because there are some terms in the interview which would be meaningless to translate in Turkish.

In the beginning, the participants were informed about the interview questions and the researcher made clear that the responses would be kept confidential while reporting the results. Rather than stating the names, the researcher called them teacher 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Their responses were recorded. During the interview, the participants were not interrupted even if they stated some unrelated issues. The interviews lasted approximately 10-15 minutes and later, all recordings were transcribed by the researcher.

3.3.3 Data Analysis Procedures. In the present study, both quantitative and qualitative data analysis were implemented to answer the research questions.

3.3.3.1 Analysis of Questionnaire Data. The questionnaire was analysed through qualitative and quantitative measures. Items in the Likert scale was analysed by descriptive statistics on Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and the open-ended items were examined through a process of open-coding. Frequency, percentages, means of items and standard deviation were analysed and reported in order to see teachers' self-perception in terms of assessment literacy knowledge and language assessment aspects determined for further professional development in the second part of the questionnaire, teachers' assessment conceptions in the third part of the questionnaire, teachers' choice of assessment and teachers' order of skills' significance in the fourth part of the questionnaire. Reliability statistics (Cronbach's alpha) are calculated for the items regarding 'Assessment Preference of the Teachers' ($\alpha = .83$) and 'Teachers' Assessment Conceptions' ($\alpha = .67$). Since a score of over .7 is considered as high internal consistency, the results of reliability analysis of the questionnaire can be considered as reliable.

In the coding process, researchers read and reread the data to deduce categories and common themes (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). Similarly, data was evaluated through multiple readings and condensing meaning repeatedly. The researcher of the study re-coded the findings few weeks after initial coding to ensure intra-rater reliability. According to Gwet (2008), intra-rater reliability is a benchmark for rater's self-consistency in the grading of issues.

3.3.3.2 Analysis of Interview Data. In the second phase of the data analysis, quantitative data were supported by qualitative data in order to obtain a broader understanding. To this end, the responses of the participants to interview questions were examined through open-coding. In open coding, transcripts are analysed and responses are classified into codes, categories, and themes (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998). So the responses of the teachers were transcribed. After taking notes based on interviews, observation, and gathering documents there is an analysis step when researchers examine the data and generally mark the important parts and describe them as "codes" and this first step is called open coding (Khandkar, 2009). In this open coding process, the concepts which are obtained from the raw data providing validity are grouped into categories. Moreover, the aim of this process is to build a descriptive framework. Then, themes of the responses were determined through color-coding because colors are visually attractive. These themes were the recurring words and phrases of the opinions of teachers. Next, the most voiced issues were specified. Data were organised again and the codes were grouped under categories. To support the findings, the researcher picked up some excerpts under the findings part of each research question.

3.3.4 Reliability and Validity. To enrich the findings of the study, data was collected from different kinds of instruments. To achieve triangulation, data generated by these different data sources were analysed. Patterns determined by findings were compared and contrasted in order to examine not only similarities but also inconsistencies. Besides, to ensure intra-rater reliability, 20% of the interview transcriptions and teacher response to open-ended questions of the perception questionnaire were re-coded several weeks after the initial coding. Results were compared to test for reliability, and as a result, some revisions were made through

qualitative data to determine and fine-tune overlapping categories. Also, to ensure the reliability of the results, the themes were later discussed with the participants through member checking.

3.4 Limitations

There are some limitations in this study. Firstly, although the present study offers a significant insight about EFL teachers' assessment literacy needs, their assessment conceptions and applications for literature, the profile of the participants which is not evenly distributed and most of the participants are not experienced enough in teaching could be a limitation to generalization. Another limitation is that since the present study is related to aviation and the context is aviation, the results of this study are hard to generalize around Turkey.

Chapter 4

Findings

4.1 Overview

The first research question in this study aimed to figure out EFL teachers' perceived language assessment literacy needs while the second question investigated the assessment conceptions of EFL teachers in terms of formative and summative assessment. The main purpose of the third research question was to examine these EFL teachers' applications of language testing and assessment by determining whether there are any discrepancies between their beliefs and assessment practices. In order to unveil opinions of the participants, questionnaire and one-to-one interviews were conducted. The remainder of this section discusses findings from teacher response surveyed through these data collection instruments.

4.2 Questionnaire Findings

In this part, each research question is investigated separately with the questionnaire results.

4.2.1 EFL teachers' perceived language assessment literacy needs. The first research question in this study aimed to figure out perceived language assessment literacy needs of EFL teachers (*N*=32). Fullan (2001) defines assessment literacy as teachers' capacity to examine learner performance evidence. This ability is of vital importance for effective teaching and learning and it is closely associated with the teacher's background, experience and professional knowledge in assessment.

The teachers who took a language testing course as a part of their formal teacher training were asked to rate the content of these courses on 4-points Likert scale items ranging from "not beneficial" to "extremely beneficial". Table 4 below summarizes teacher response (*n*=27).

Table 4

Teachers' evaluation of the content of the testing courses in their pre-service training

	1		2		3		4		M	SD
Evaluation of testing courses	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
	1	3.7	10	37	9	33.3	7	25.9	2.81	.87

According to the results, most of the teacher response (M= 2.81) was on the positive end. Respondents suggested that these courses were beneficial for them in their instruction. The rest of the participants who had not taken testing course as a part of their pre-service training at university were asked if they had any other opportunities to enhance their assessment literacy. While two participants reported lack of training into testing and assessment, remaining participants (*n*=3) stated they had some on- and off-site, short term workshops, as well as some testing and assessment courses which consisted of short modules of two to three forty minute sessions at a private teacher training institute. Then, the participants were asked to rate themselves in terms of their assessment literacy knowledge and indicate the level of their perceived professional knowledge on 4-points Likert scale ranging from "not knowledgeable (1)" to "very knowledgeable (4)".

Table 5

Teachers' self-perception of themselves in terms of assessment literacy knowledge

	1		2		3		4		M	SD
Teachers' self-perception in assessment literacy	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
	0	0	11	34.4	18	56.3	3	9.4	2.75	.62

Although an overwhelming majority of the teachers reported having taken testing and assessment related courses during their formal training, as shown in the table above, only 3 teachers (9.4%) rated themselves as "very knowledgeable". This finding may imply that the majority of the teachers need further assessment literacy knowledge to improve their confidence in this area. More than 56% of the responses indicated that teachers considered themselves 'knowledgeable' in the testing and assessment domain.

Additionally, the participants were asked if they would like to improve themselves in terms of their assessment literacy knowledge and which aspects of language assessment they would like to learn about further.

Table 6

Language assessment aspects determined for further professional development

Aspects of language assessment	f	%
I do not need to learn more since I feel myself knowledgeable enough about assessment literacy	1	3.1
Designing appropriate items or tasks for particular assessment purpose	19	59.4
Developing suitable rating scales to evaluate oral and written performances	15	46.9
Using assessment to determine students' learning progress in learning English	15	46.9
Using techniques to analyse the quality of questions/items on a test	14	43.8
Using educational technology (web tools) for classroom-based assessment	14	43.8
Using assessment to determine students' achievement in learning English	13	40.6
Using techniques to analyse the overall quality of a language assessment task	13	40.6
Giving feedback to motivate students' learning	11	34.4
Scoring open-ended questions	11	34.4
How to use peer-assessment	10	31.3
How to use self-assessment	9	28.1
Alternative assessment forms (e.g. portfolio assessment)	9	28.1
Evaluating progress in language learning by using assessment	8	25
Effects of assessment (e.g. on teaching, on learning, on design of materials)	5	15.6

Given the results of the descriptive analysis regarding participants' responses, it was found that they would like to improve themselves in terms of their assessment literacy knowledge and especially 59,4% of them indicated that they want to learn more about designing appropriate items or tasks for particular assessment purpose. Participants also expressed that they would want to have more training in using assessment to determine students' learning progress in learning English and develop suitable rating scales to evaluate oral and written performances.

The last question which was in short answer form in this part surveyed teacher opinions regarding what could enhance the quality of assessment in their schools/classes. The emerging themes in teacher response were the need for an experienced professional team to prepare the questions and some extra written

sources that have questions or show how to prepare an assessment instrument. In this vein one participant stated:

> We need a better system in our assessment practices. There should be a variety of resources to pick the questions from and the working conditions of the testing office should be developed. (Online questionnaire, September, 2019)

This comment is significant since it points out that some teachers think that in the testing office of their school, the teachers work hard to prepare assessment instruments and because of the lack of enough sources such as written manuals or test books having different types of questions, and experience in preparing assessment instrument, teachers working at testing office have some difficulties.

Another participant remarked the following comment:

> *"When it comes to assessment practices on a school level, I think more effort is in order to ensure all four language skills are duly assessed and students should not be exempt from assessment of certain skills through fear of legal backlash"* (Online questionnaire, September, 2019)

It can be inferred from this comment that teachers conceive that all kinds of assessments, including formative and summative, fulfill students' learning and teaching practices in the classroom and in schools, all four skills which are reading, writing, listening and speaking should be assessed without preceding another.

4.2.2 EFL teachers' assessment conceptions. The second research question in this study seeks to find out teachers' assessment conceptions. In the third part of the questionnaire, the teachers were asked to rate nineteen 4-point Likert scale items which were adapted from Brown's (2002) study. The scale ranged from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (4).

Table 7

Teachers' Assessment Conceptions

	1		2		3		4		M	SD
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
1.Assessment provides information on how well my school is doing	1	3.1	7	21.9	16	50	8	25	2.97	0.78
2.Assessment is an accurate indicator of my schools' quality	2	6.3	10	31.3	12	37.5	8	25	2.81	0.90
3.Assessment determines if the students meet qualifications standards for passing or failing the course	0	0	3	9.4	23	71.9	6	18.8	3.09	0.53
4.Assessment helps my students improve their learning	0	0	11	34.4	14	43.8	7	21.9	2.87	0.75
5.Assessment provides effective feedback to the students about their learning needs	3	9.4	11	34.4	12	37.5	6	18.8	2.65	0.90
6.Assessment provides feedback to the students in my school about their performance	1	3.1	8	25	16	50	7	21.9	2.90	0.78
7.Assessment is integrated with teaching practice	2	6.3	6	18.8	15	46.9	9	28.1	2.97	0.86
8.Assessment information modifies ongoing teaching of the students	1	3.1	7	21.9	16	50	8	25	2.97	0.78
9.Assessment is a way to determine how much my students have learned	0	0	8	25	16	50	8	25	3.00	0.72
10.Assessment measures the students' higher order thinking skills	6	18.8	12	37.5	11	34.4	3	9.4	2.34	0.90
11.Assessment establishes what my students have learned	0	0	9	28.1	17	53.1	6	18.8	2.90	0.69
12.Assessment results are trustworthy	1	3.1	14	43.8	12	37.5	5	15.6	2.65	0.79
13. Assessment forces teachers to teach in a way against their beliefs	3	9.4	11	34.4	11	34.4	7	21.9	2.69	0.93
14. Assessment interferes with teaching	5	15.6	9	28.1	14	43.8	4	12.5	2.53	0.91
15. Assessment is unfair to my students	11	34.4	10	31.3	7	21.9	4	12.5	2.12	1.03
16. Teachers conduct assessment but make little use of the results in their teaching	4	12.5	8	25	13	40.6	7	21.9	2.71	0.95

Table 7 cont'd

	1 f	%	2 f	%	3 f	%	4 f	%	M	SD
17. Assessment results should be treated cautiously because of measurement error	0	0	5	15.6	14	43.8	13	40.6	3.25	0.71
18.Assessment has little impact on teaching	11	34.4	14	43.8	7	21.9	0	0	1.87	0.75
19.Assessment has little impact on learning	8	29.6	12	44.4	2	7.4	5	18.5	2.03	1.03

Among these nineteen items, some of them have quite higher frequencies than others. One of them is teachers have slightly more positive perceptions that assessment results should be treated cautiously because of measurement error (M= 3.25) which implies the results of assessment are crucial in their teaching; assessment determines if the students meet qualifications standards for passing or failing the course (M= 3.09) which highlights assessment is a key to understanding whether students reach the course objectives, in other words, teachers rely on assessment to decide if a student should pass or fail the course and assessment is a way to determine how much my students have learned (M= 3.00). Although 8 participants (25%) disagree that assessment is integrated with teaching practice, 24 participants (75%) agree on that idea. Munoz, Palacio, and Escobar (2011) stated that teachers' beliefs on teaching and learning affect the way they teach and assess learning. Although only 8 participants (24%) disagreed that assessment information modifies ongoing teaching of the students, according to 24 teachers (75%), assessment results change ongoing students' teaching which means teachers adjust their teaching practices according to the findings and most of the teachers (75%) agreed that with the help of assessment, they can understand how much their students have learned. Thus, assessment is related to the teaching practice and it has an impact on the modification of teaching. According to Rea-Dickins (2004) teachers must determine the good and the bad sides about lesson content and they choose the most suitable ones according to their understanding of learning, language development, and proficiency.

There are also some items showing moderate frequency. These following items are among moderate frequent ones. Findings displayed that 22 participant teachers (75%) agreed that the assessment gives information about how well their

school is doing. Similarly, 8 teachers (25%) stated that they strongly agree with the idea that assessment is an accurate indicator of their school's quality whereas only 2 of them (6.3 %) did not believe that assessment shows their school's quality. Thus, it was found that most teachers expressed their belief that assessment shows their school's quality. According to Malone (2011), assessment and assessment literacy determine the education's quality. So, participants' responses confirmed Malone's point of view. Most of the teachers (65.7%) agreed the idea that assessment helps their students improve their learning. Besides, 18 participants (56.3%) considered assessment as an effective means of feedback to the students about their learning needs which refers to teachers believe that students can improve their learning with the help of assessment feedback. Besides, 23 teachers (71.9%) agreed that the assessment provides feedback to the students in their school about students' performance. 23 (71.9%) participant teachers agreed assessment establishes what their students have learned. While 15 (45.9%) teachers do not count on assessment results, 17 (54.1%) of them rely on the assessment results which means nearly half of them do not trust the results. Moreover, 18 (56.2%) participants state that they have to teach in a different way from their beliefs because of assessment issues, 14 (43.8%) participants do not feel be forced to teach differently, that is, assessment affect their teaching style. Some teachers (56.3%) agree with the idea that assessment interferes in teaching. Interestingly, more than half of the teachers (62.5%) think that teachers do not use the results of the assessment in their teaching that much because most of the participants adjust their teaching style according to assessment results.

Additionally, there were some items that had low frequency. Most of the teachers (56.3 %) state that assessment does not measure the students' higher-order thinking skills which means assessment is mechanic and students do not have a chance to reflect their thoughts. On the other hand, most participants (65.7%) believe that assessment is fair to their students. According to 25 participants (78.2%) assessment has much impact on teaching which means, like in previous questions, they can change their teaching practice according to the results. Also, 20 teachers (74%) indicated that they believe assessment has an impact on learning.

4.2.3. EFL teachers' applications of language testing and assessment. In this study, EFL teachers' applications of language testing and assessment are investigated. In the fourth section of the questionnaire, the participants were asked

about their preferred assessment tasks and in the fifth part, they were asked to order the skills according to their importance. In the sixth part of the questionnaire, they were asked to give answers for two open-ended questions which are about their assessment practices in class and the technology use in assessment.

In the fourth section, they were asked to rate seventeen types of assessment from "never" (1) to "always" (5) to learn if the teachers use these assessment types or not, and if so, how frequently they use these tasks in their classroom practices.

Table 8

Teachers' choice of assessment tools

	1		2		3		4		5		M	SD
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
1. Multiple choice questions	0	0	3	9.4	9	28.1	13	40.6	7	21.9	3.75	0.92
2.Matching questions	0	0	2	6.3	11	34.4	9	28.1	10	31.3	3.84	0.95
3.Open-ended questions	0	0	7	21.9	8	25	7	21.9	10	31.3	3.62	1.16
4.Yes-no questions	8	25	6	18.8	4	12.5	8	25	6	18.8	2.93	1.50
5.Transformation questions	6	18.8	6	18.8	9	28.1	8	25	3	9.4	2.87	1.26
6.Gap-filling questions	0	0	2	6.3	7	21.9	9	28.1	14	43.8	4.9	0.96
7.Cloze-test questions	0	0	2	6.3	9	28.1	14	43.8	7	21.9	3.81	0.86
8.True-False questions	1	3.1	10	31.3	8	25	7	21.9	6	18.8	3.21	1.20
9.Error correction questions	4	12.5	5	15.6	6	18.8	14	43.8	3	9.4	3.21	1.21
10.Orderding sentences questions	0	0	6	18.8	13	40.6	11	34.4	2	6.3	3.28	0.85
11.Completing sentences questions	1	3.1	1	3.1	7	21.9	19	59.4	4	12.5	3.75	0.84
12.Wh questions	0	0	1	3.1	6	18.8	12	37.5	13	40.6	4.16	0.84
13.Short answer questions	5	15.6	9	28.1	8	25	4	12.5	6	18.8	2.9	1.35
14.Translation questions	20	62.5	4	12.5	6	18.8	2	6.3	0	0	1.68	0.98
15.Portfolio	5	15.6	6	18.8	9	28.1	10	31.3	2	6.3	2.93	1.18
16.Performance evaluation	2	6.3	6	18.8	6	18.8	10	31.3	8	25	3.50	1.24
17.Observation	6	18.8	4	12.5	6	18.8	9	28.1	7	21.9	3.21	1.43

As presented in table 8, their favorite assessment tasks were gap-filling questions (M= 4.9), wh-questions (M= 4.16), matching questions (M= 3.84), cloze-test questions (M= 3.81) and after that completing sentence question types (M= 3.75) and multiple-choice question types (M= 3.75) were rated as their other favorite types. However, the least favorite assessment task for teachers is translation questions (M=1.68).

In the fifth section of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to order some skills and subskills, which are grammar, vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading and writing, from the most important one to the least important one according to their experiences.

Table 9

Teachers' order of skills' significance

	1		2		3		4		5		6		M	SD
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Grammar	2	6.3	6	18.8	14	43.8	0	0	6	18.8	4	12.5	3.43	1.47
Vocabulary	3	9.4	1	3.1	9	28.1	7	21.9	2	6.3	10	31.3	4.06	1.62
Listening	4	12.5	1	3.1	6	18.8	5	15.6	5	15.6	11	34.4	4.21	1.73
Speaking	1	3.1	5	15.6	3	9.4	8	25	3	9.4	12	37.5	4.34	1.59
Reading	1	3.1	4	12.5	9	28.1	7	21.9	5	15.6	6	18.8	3.90	1.42
Writing	4	12.5	3	9.4	8	25	11	34.4	5	15.6	1	3.1	3.4	1.31

(1= the most important 6=the least important)

As presented in Table 9, listening (M=4.1) and speaking (M=4.34) skills are perceived as the most important skills whereas grammar and reading are deemed among the least important ones.

The last section of the questionnaire consisted of two open-ended questions. The first question surveyed the assessment practices are that the participants use in their classes to determine how well their students have learned.

Table 10

Teachers' assessment practices in their teaching

Assessment practices	f	%
Quizzes	18	56.3

Table 10 cont'd

Assessment practices	f	%
Homework	15	46.7
Portfolios	8	25
Online tools	4	12.5
Observation	5	15.6
Comprehension questions	5	15.6

As presented in Table 10, the popular assessment practices among teachers were quizzes, homework, portfolios.

The second open-ended question in the questionnaire aimed to find if the participants make use of technology to assess their students formatively in their classroom. Except for two participants, all of them stated that they use web tools to assess the students such as online quizzes, Kahoot, Google Classroom, Quizlet, Google Docs, Edpuzzle, Padlet, Nearpod, Fectile, Lahor, blogs, and online jeopardy. Previous research showed that teachers' attitudes and believes in ICTs adoption in teaching are positive (Goktas, Yildirim Z. & Yildirim S., 2009; Belland, 2009).

4.3. Interview Findings

So as to explore EFL teachers' assessment beliefs on their school experience in-depth, semi-structured interviews were held on a voluntary basis with 7 participants who had previously filled the perception questionnaire. The participants were recruited based on convenience sampling. All data from the interviews were analysed through open-coding. The main themes that emerged from the interview data for the first research question are; (1) the desire for professional development, (2) needs for professional help in testing and assessment domain, (3) motivation, (4) critical reflections and (5) importance of feedback. As for the second research question, teacher response was grouped under the assessment preferences and expectations. Data analysis for the third research question highlighted indicated the theme which was conceptualised as the discrepancies between assessment beliefs and applications. The findings of the qualitative data analysis are presented below.

4.3.1 Interview findings regarding EFL teachers' perceived language assessment literacy needs. During the interviews, within the scope of the first research question in this study which aimed to figure out EFL teachers' perceived language assessment literacy needs, the teachers were asked about how they see themselves in terms of assessment literacy and in what areas they would like to improve themselves (Q11). According to Hatch (2002), a pattern can be categorized by similarities, differences, frequency, sequence, correspondence, and causation. There were similar ideas that come from teachers' responses. The findings of EFL teachers' perceived language assessment literacy needs were displayed under two major themes, desire for professional development and needs for professional help.

Desire for Professional Development

Teachers considered assessment literacy knowledge as a means to help professional development in teaching. They expressed that they wanted to learn more about, especially how to create questions and what types of questions would be suitable to ask in different assessment and testing tasks. Similarly, in the questionnaire, they concurred that they would like to improve themselves, especially in terms of designing appropriate items. In terms of question type preference, one of the respondents voiced the following comment:

> *I would like to learn how to create questions I think. I would like to learn what I should use in which step of teaching for instance what kinds of questions types are better when you assess vocabulary learning. What kinds of questions are better when you assess speaking in terms of that it would be beneficial for teachers to learn"* (T5, individual interview, September 24, 2019)

This comment is significant since the respondent stated his or her lack of knowledge in terms of assessment tasks and items while deciding which kinds of questions are better when assessing different skills. Similarly, another respondent stated:

> *"I think I would like to learn how to create questions instead of selecting from everywhere and gathering questions, I would like to learn how to create questions."* (T3, individual interview, September 22, 2019)

This means instead of resorting to language books, and the internet to model comprehension questions, the participant would prefer to improve his/her assessment knowledge to write relevant items on a variety of tasks ranging from multiple-choice test to comprehension questions for reading passages and listening tracks.

Furthermore, teachers claimed that they would like to improve their assessment knowledge in determining the validity and reliability of assessment means. Popham (2009) stated that a large amount of teachers do not have enough knowledge of assessment literacy and some concepts related to assessment. One respondent confirmed that:

> "*For example, right now I can prepare a quiz but I really do not know reliability or validity of it. I can't measure that actually. I would like to learn this if I prepare a quiz, of course, it can't be one hundred percent reliable but I want to learn more about that.*" (T6, individual interview, September 25, 2019)

The teacher here explained while preparing an assessment instrument, s/he is not sure about its reliability or validity which means he or she is not sure if this instrument can really assess if a student can pass or fail the course or student score shows how much learning has happened. In addition to these, teachers tended to learn more about ways of identifying students' needs and preparing assessment instruments according to their needs. One teacher asserted that:

> *I really would like to learn about assessment. Because I think that if you want to redesign or design the curriculum for the first time you should first be aware of your students need and if you want to learn your students' needs, you should be able to learn how to assess your students because, without any prior knowledge of your students'*

performance, you cannot design an effective curriculum for the needs of students. (T4, individual interview, September 24, 2019)

In this response, the participant explained the necessity of learning students' needs and focused on the importance of working on the instructional design accordingly.

Needs for professional help

In the interview, they were asked what can improve the quality of summative and formative assessment in their schools (Q8). There are common topics understood from their answers which are the need for a professional team because preparing items is a profession and needs experience and knowledge. Also, there should be workshops and more facilities to reach better sources. These interview findings correlate with questionnaire findings as well because in the questionnaire, they stated to improve the quality of assessment, there is a need for an experienced professional team, good sources.

In terms of the need for sources, one of the teachers declared his/her belief that the institution should provide its teachers with better sources by saying:

If we would do it according to the book, according to their current level with the test, it would definitely be better maybe if we had better sources because sources give a lot of opportunities for us to create better questions or maybe the institution would buy just readymade exams this would be better in my opinion. (T3, individual interview, September 22, 2019)

Similarly, the teachers reiterated that they do not feel able to prepare assessment instruments, one respondent made clear s/he needs institutional documents which brief and aid teachers during designing assessment tasks and writing items to better assessment by making a comment like the following:

Actually, there are really a bunch of things to do, I think we need to talk, have a conversation or maybe something like a workshop with

> *experienced colleagues and I think we really need come workshops or lessons, doesn't matter something that needs to show us how to properly prepare like assessment types.* (T6, individual interview, September 25, 2019)

In this response, the teacher stated workshops, communicating with experienced colleagues, testing courses would be helpful. Likewise, another respondent stated the need for consultancy from external testing and assessment experts by saying: *"There should be like a professional staff for assessment like people who studied assessment in MA or Ph.D. or focused on those areas."* (T7)

Moreover, one participant stated the assessment instrument must be related to students' needs and goals they want to reach at the end of their academic life by concurring:

> *I think we should give more attention to assessing students based on their real needs. We are just assessing the students in terms of their language proficiency, of course, we have some speaking sessions in an exam but we should pay more attention to what they can produce rather than what they know. So, productive skills should be the focus of our assessment tools.* (T4, individual interview, September 24, 2019)

The participant declared productive skills should be the focus of the assessment tools because in an aviation context, students need productive skills, especially speaking. According to Brown (2005) assessment should reflect the curriculum and focus on what is meant to teach. Confirming Brown's assertion, the majority of the teachers acknowledged that the content of the assessment should be closely related to teaching and learning as well.

4.3.2 Interview findings regarding EFL teachers' assessment conceptions. The second research question in this study seeks to find out teachers' assessment conceptions. In the interview, the participants were asked about the role of assessment in learning (Q7) and the participants articulated their perceptions. As a

result of the analysis, the findings of EFL teachers' assessment conceptions were categorised under three major themes which are motivation, critical reflections, and the importance of feedback.

Motivation

Teachers stated that they deemed assessment as beneficial for students' internal and external motivation. One participant conceived assessment results as a motivation by reciting: "*I think it gives students external motivation and sometimes it encourages internal motivation when they see other students and when they see they are behind the class, so maybe it also encourages inner motivation"* (T3 individual interview, September 22, 2019).

Also, in order to discover teachers' conceptions of assessment deeper, in the interview the participants were asked whether they think assessing students is necessary and in what ways (Q1). While coding teacher response repeated categorizing and re-categorizing of the data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996) unveiled several themes summing why teachers believe that assessment is necessary for teaching and learning.

In terms of the association between assessment and its potential to bring about intrinsic motivation one participant claimed:

> *Because students need some motivation, positive or negative, in order to keep their minds in the lesson and unfortunately not all of the students have the motivation intensively they needed. I need to learn this because I will use it in the future or my job requires, unfortunately, they don't have this perception about learning. So they need some force to push to make them or have them focus on the lesson so it is necessary.* (T1, individual interview, September 21, 2019)

From this comment, it can be concluded that students need motivation for their future career and assessment is a kind of motivation for them.

Critical Reflections

Also, teachers see assessment as a means of critical reflection one's own learning. Students need to see their own progress and assessment is a guideline for them in demonstrating what they learned, and what the missing points are. This finding is in accordance with the outcomes of the questionnaire. Similarly, the participants stated that with the help of assessment results they can understand how much they learn and improve their learning. One participant said: "*It shows you what you are learning or you haven't learned. What you learned, what is missing in your learning process, what you need to focus on more"* (T6 individual interview, September 25, 2019).

To obtain more information about teachers' conceptions of assessment, in the interview they were asked (Q2) about the role of assessment in teaching and whether the assessment has any effect on their teaching practice in class. There were frequently suggested responses from the participants in the interview. According to the teachers, the assessment shows students' language learning progress, academic situations to what extent the course objectives have been acquired by the students. Hence, teachers suggested that they could have remedial actions if there was a point to consider. Similarly, in the questionnaire, they declared assessment is integrated with teaching and the teachers may modify their ongoing teaching methodology according to the results. It was argued that "*it (assessment) shows the students' situation, where she or he is or what the missing points of their learning are" (T1* individual interview, September 21, 2019*).* Thus, it was believed that teachers gain insights regarding what they need to modify in their teaching practices based on the assessment results of their learners. Another participant proposed: "*According to their results we have remedial works, remedial actions. We try to improve what they learned. If there is a problem with their learning, we do remedial actions to improve their learning"* (T2 individual interview, September 21, 2019).

Teachers react after getting the assessment results if there is a problem with the teaching. Moreover, the teachers see assessment as a guideline and route map for teachers, they need to know what to teach and how to teach, furthermore, they can revise the lesson plan and with the help of assessment results teachers can evaluate

themselves, they can compare themselves with the other classes. In terms of the effect of assessment, one participant claimed that:

> *I also believe that assessment is quite important in teaching because it affects the students either positively or negatively. If you imagine a student who is falling behind the classroom, it helps the students see he needs to do more, he needs to work harder and in terms of the teachers' performance, the teacher can evaluate himself or herself based on the class average and it is also good for the teachers to see whether his or her class is doing better than the other classes or not. It definitely affects teaching.* (T4 individual interview, September 24, 2019)

It can be understood from this response that teachers can evaluate themselves and compare his or her class to other classes. Likewise, another respondent indicated:

> *The role of is kind of a guideline for me it shows us where are we, what is our process and have we been successful or is there anything missing. So that's why of course it affects my teaching practice in class. Let's say I have studied something and I just assessed it in the quiz and if I see the students are not just able to answer those kinds of questions, I need to go back and revise this lesson so of course, it affects my teaching practice in the classroom.* (T6 individual interview, September 25, 2019)

Like in the previous responses, it is understood that teachers revise their practice after implementing the assessment.

Also, it was claimed that assessment facilitates the teacher's critical reflection with the help of assessment results. In this vein, one teacher indicated:

> *I think that assessing students is important because when we assess students. First of all, we can see how their progress and we can understand what is their mistake, what are the missing points and they can also reflect on their learning after an exam or it should not be noted, we don't need to give mark but when they see their points they*

can also reflect on their own learning. (T3, individual interview, September 22, 2019)

So it does not matter if it is summative or formative assessment; assessment is necessary since students can see their level and mistakes. Similarly, another participant responded:

If you teach either aviation English or general English because both the students and the teachers want to see the progress of the students and of course their own performances in terms of the teacher's performance. When it comes to the ways of assessing the students, I think the students should be assessed based on their expected skills. For example, if an aviation English learner is expected to communicate effectively in the target situation, then the assessment should be more on the speaking skill. (T4, individual interview, September 24, 2019)

Importance of Feedback

Furthermore, the participants expressed that feedback is an important part of the learning process, one respondent commented:

I am practicing writing extensively with my students. We focus on writing more and we prefer both peer feedback and teacher feedback together. After they see what they get, what scores they get or what feedback they get, they can improve their learning. Assessment is so important for learning. They should know what they are doing right and what they are doing wrong. (T7 individual interview, September 25, 2019)

In both the questionnaire and the interviews, teachers stated that they give importance to feedback because they believe that students need to see their progress in learning and improve themselves according to the feedback they receive.

4.3.3 Interview findings regarding EFL teachers' applications of language testing and assessment. Within the scope of this study, EFL teachers' applications of language testing and assessment are investigated. The findings of EFL teachers' testing and assessment applications were displayed under themes, assessment preferences/expectations and the discrepancy between assessment beliefs and applications.

Assessment preferences and expectations

To this end, in the interview, participants were asked if they have any favorite item type when they design an assessment instrument and whether their ideal item type matches with their classroom practices (Q5). The participants' mostly preferred item types were open-ended questions that generally look for long, deep sentences and short-answer item types which generally seek a simple answer like a phrase or word. Short-answer questions demand very limited cognitive responses by asking students to create specific knowledge or facts. On the other hand, open-ended assessments are used to test more complicated reasoning, such as logical thinking, interpretation, or analysis (Stecher & Herman, 1997). Also, teachers further claimed that the students are more creative when they respond to these items and remarked that students use their critical thinking skills more while giving answers. However, it was also noted that these items were hard to assess since the assessors would be subjective while grading and these items are time-consuming to assess since there could be more than one standard correct response. Also, teachers can see their students' language performance like if the students can express their thoughts by writing. It was argued that in open-ended or short answer questions, students are free to express their ideas; they can answer the questions only if they know but in other types of tasks like multiple choice questions, even if they do not know the answer, they have a chance to choose the correct answer. Findings from the interview and questionnaire match since in the latter; teachers indicated that their favourite item types were wh-questions and gap-filling types. Furthermore, the participants generally stated that their favourite item types do not match with their real practices in their institution since the institution requires them to include more standardized items such as true-false or multiple choices during the design of assessment tasks for classroom use. Multiple-choice tests have some problems and disadvantages while

designing (Airasian, 1994; Bluedorn, 1986, Miller & Imrie & Cox, 1998). Similarly, in the questionnaire, the multiple-choice question types (M= 3.75) were rated as teachers' favourite types.

In terms of teachers' unwillingness to use multiple-choice item tasks one respondent pointed out:

> *Actually, I like asking students questions that do not have a proper answer. I mean students can give different answers and I can decide which ones are good. This would be hard in practice because it would not be fair first of all. Because it is not objective, it would be totally subjective that's why of course it does not match with the classroom, I mean my institution practices, and in my institution, we prefer to use multiple choice exams. I don't hate it but I don't like it also.* (T3, individual interview, September 22, 2019)

By saying "proper answer", the participant referred to the questions which do not have options and from students' answers, teachers can compare the students' learning level to each other. Thus, teachers want students to construct their answers on their own rather than choosing the correct answer from the options. However, teachers concurred their institution prioritized objective marking to avoid rater bias and as a result, they tended to include more multiple-choice items in their assessment tasks. Likewise, another teacher commented:

> *Actually, my favorite assessment type is the open-ended questions because I believe that open-ended questions do not only evaluate what the student knows but also it helps the teachers see what the students can perform, whether the student can outperform the other students. It enables the student to see beyond the question. So rather than just writing the correct answer, I think the open-ended questions are more useful. But I can say that it does not match what the institution requires from us.* (T4, individual interview, September 24, 2019)

It can be concluded from this comment that because of its usefulness to foster critical thinking and obtain students' thoughts, open-ended questions can do well but

it was again perceived to be against the institution's preference. In terms of its difficulty to assess one participant expressed that:

> *My favorite is open-ended questions but they are not suitable for my institution I think because open-ended questions are difficult to assess, difficult to grade actually and by grading you spend much more time than multiple-choice, true-false or matching questions. So we try to use it in a less way so open-ended is my favorite.* (T7, individual interview, September 25, 2019)

Even if their ideal type is open-ended items, they have to use other types such as multiple-choice, true-false or matching questions because of their easiness to assess.

In order to learn teachers' opinions, the participants were asked in what question types students get higher scores according to their experiences (Q6). The most voiced answers from the teachers were multiple choice questions and true-false questions. They generally stated that students get higher scores from these types of questions because students have a chance to find the correct answer even if they do not know the answer.

So as to get more opinions about teachers' assessment and testing applications, in the interview they were asked among grammar, vocabulary, listening, reading, speaking and writing if one skill precedes another. If they think so, which one are the most important and the least important one (Q9). The common answer according to their answer is the most important skills, especially in our aviation context, are listening and speaking. Some of the participants stated that all of them are equally important but when they are asked to choose one, they tend to choose listening and speaking. The findings of the interview match with questionnaire findings because they stated the most important skills for them are listening and speaking skills. In terms of the importance of expressing themselves one participant commented on the importance of listening and speaking skill which are crucial to have in aviation where communication is the most important ability but in real four language skills cannot be separated from each other:

> *It depends on the goal the learner will reach in the end; I mean which one is he or she is going to use that's the question that I cannot separate one from another if you ask me. I mean practical language is more important because you cannot say that I know this language without speaking it, I mean you can be perfect on grammar, you can learn a variety of vocabulary but if you cannot express what you want to say, it is just if you ask me useless, so listening and speaking I would put to the first part and then it comes vocabulary and then the others.* (T1, individual interview, September 21, 2019)

Hence, the aim students want to reach at the end of their academic life or in the future career is the key factor of determining the importance of language skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, grammar or vocabulary. In their aviation context, the most important thing for students to express themselves orally so speaking is seen as the most important skill. In a similar vein, another teacher remarked the importance of aviators' communication abilities especially speaking:

> *If we only consider students dealing with aviation, speaking is the most important one I think. Because they have to use this language orally, that's what they should really be intelligible while they are speaking, that's why they have to focus on speaking I think. And the least important one maybe grammar. I'm not sure but you know you do not have to use the right grammar, make right grammar sentences to be intelligible. I think at some points they can understand you, you do not have to make grammatically correct sentences that's why I think it's the least important to me.* (T5, individual interview, September 24, 2019)

Similar to the other participants' responses, this participant also made clear that because of the aviation context needs people who can speak correctly and fluently, the most important skill is speaking whereas grammar is the least important because while speaking, grammar is not that much important.

To get a deeper understanding of teachers' assessment and testing applications, in interview participants were asked about the kinds of assessments they use in their

teaching process to see how well their students have learned (Q3). Like in the questionnaire, in the interview most of them indicated they use homework because in this way the students stay disciplined and follow the lessons regularly. The next frequently voiced answer was that they made of use quizzes in their teaching process to see if they have learned. Teachers further commented that quizzes were utilized because they are easy to check. The teachers also indicated that they used portfolios. Additionally, midterms and finals were frequently used.

In terms of being able to follow students' improvement in learning English, one respondent explained:

> *"I make use of homework. I can say I mean sometimes it can have some unwanted effects on students, I agree with that, but it is again necessary for students to stay disciplined and regularly following the lesson because we are teaching a language, so they should always be interacting and they should always be, you know, familiar with the points we talked about in the lesson. So in class or outside the class, they need to be in touch with the things we talked so I make use of homework and pop quiz."* (T1, individual interview, September 21, 2019)

So students have to interact with what they learn because they should not forget the things so homework and quizzes are good ways. Similarly, another participant remarked:

> *I prefer giving them homework so that they can understand. I can check if they could do it. Sometimes I give them harder homework just to see if they can go just beyond their current level on their own. We have quizzes, book quizzes also to encourage them to read more. We have midterm exams and we have yearly exams where students are eliminated if they fail or not to finish the year we have a finishing exam.* (T3, individual interview, September 22, 2019)

As can be understood from the response, homework's level can be beyond their level to check their limit. In order to see the progress of students one teacher commented that

> *I always give homework since I'm an integrated skills teacher, I give them writing homework each week, every week and we also do pop quizzes in prep classes and we also have portfolios. We want them to keep their homework in a file. We also use some online quizzes like Kahoot, Quizlet. For example, we start a unit, we learn some vocabulary. After learning them, we have quizzes to do in classes and we also have some discussion classes as well in that kind of activity you see your students speaking progress.* (T5, individual interview, September 24, 2019)

That means especially to check if target vocabulary is understood or not, quizzes are implemented.

For more information, in the interview, the teachers were asked if there was an instrument that they designed to use in or out of the class to be able to determine their students' learning (Q4). After categorizing the participants' responses, it was concluded that the teachers prepare assessment instruments focusing on especially listening and speaking skills which means teachers perceive listening and speaking as more important and they believe these skills should be practiced more. They preferred multiple-choice items and open-ended questions and as for content, they focussed on topics from the curriculum. Participants tended to consider students' current levels when designing assessment tasks and writing the items for a test. They aimed to see the learning progress. Also, they concurred while preparing for tests they were inclined to analyse the items of the previous exams. Moreover, while preparing instruments, the previous exams may guide as stated in the following comment:

> *I look at the previous exams of my experienced colleagues actually. I just kind of copy what they have done before and you know it's like the classical exam type true-false questions, multiple-choice, etc. And I actually stick to what we have taught before because they are kind of*

achievement tests so I just care about focusing on what we teach in the classroom. (T6, individual interview, September 25, 2019)

As understood from the response, teachers still do not feel comfortable to prepare testing instruments. Thus when they have to write an exam, they feel the need to review the previous exams which were conducted in the past to model and to copy similar items.

The discrepancy between assessment beliefs and applications

Since the studied context is aviation, in the interview the participants were asked how the assessment of English for aviation students might differ from the assessment of English for other university students in different content areas (Q10). According to their responses emerged ideas are English is a must to survive in aviation, limited context, limited sources (materials must be related to the aviation context and terminology) and the focus is on listening and speaking skills (because of the importance of communication). In the sense that the English language's importance in aviation one respondent said:

In order to survive in this field, you need to you have to know this language so in this sense we try to face our students with English as much as possible. Because other than knowing English, we cannot say English will help you in your profession, you cannot survive in your field without English. I mean other content areas, of course, they can need, knowing English is a must these days but for aviation, it is just as important as knowing flying if you ask me so it has a major role. (T1, individual interview, September 21, 2019)

The comment displays that the respondent equates knowing English to know flying for an aviation student. Another participant stated assessment of English for aviation has limitations by saying:

When we specify a topic like aviation, then we are limited with the context and everything, when we prepare the questions so I think it limits. Aviation would be limited when you try to do something but

> *when we talk about general English we have all the material and everything but when we say aviation of course, listening is more important and while preparing the questions, I think you would be limited with the sources and the content.* (T3, individual interview, September 22, 2019)

Thus, in the aviation context, there are limited sources and they are not good enough to use in assessment. As well as having limited sources, English assessment in aviation context should include aviation terminology and one respondent said: "*We should first of all talk about our specific context because we are not only talking about general English, we are talking about aviation terminology so any assessment tool for aviation English learners should also include the use of aviation English terminology as well"* (T4, individual interview, September 24, 2019). Especially for aviation students, some teachers declared that communicating English is the most important thing for them to survive:

> *In that kind of school, you have to assess your students speaking skills as well. You have to focus on assessing speaking levels you have to be sure that they can speak well you know. It does not mean anything if they understand every word they listen to, what matters is to be sure they can speak well and they can be intelligible in every context I think. So assessing their speaking skill is more important to us.* (T3, individual interview, September 22, 2019)

In a similar vein, this comment is significant since the respondent highlighted the importance of speaking skills for aviation students because oral communication is the key for aviation students in their future professional life.

Chapter 5
Discussion

5.1 Overview

In this part of the study, the findings of each research question are analysed in a detailed way and commented together with the findings of other related studies.

5. 2 Discussion of Findings for Research Questions

5.2.1 Discussion of Results for Perceived Language Assessment Literacy Needs of EFL Teachers. The results pertaining to EFL teachers' perceived language assessment literacy in the target situation indicated that even if most of the teachers received a testing course, either at university or outside before, and also think those courses were beneficial, only three of the teachers see themselves as very knowledgeable in terms of assessment literacy. What is more, language teachers would like to improve themselves in particular areas related to assessment such as designing appropriate items/questions for certain assessment purposes, using assessment to determine students' learning process in English, using techniques to analyse the quality of question items and using web-tools for classroom-based assessment, developing suitable rubrics, creating question items which parallels to the work of Brookhart (2013). In Brookhart's study, it was discovered that three sections of assessment literacy, which are rubric development and use, item writing and subject matter knowledge, need special attention. Hence, both studies show that EFL teachers mostly lack the knowledge of how to create rubrics for assessing students' written or oral performances in English, item writing while preparing assessment instruments. Moreover, the participants stated that they need a professional team to prepare questions and some extra written sources. These findings in the questionnaire were also supported by the interviews which included data stating that EFL teachers would like to improve themselves in terms of assessment literacy especially how to create questions, what types of questions would be suitable to ask in different tasks, determine the validity and reliability of

assessment instruments. Moreover, teachers want to learn about their students' needs in learning English. In other words, they considered students' academic aims, in what areas students want to improve themselves and what English skills they have to learn for their career. Also, in interviews, teachers concluded they need help from a professional team which is paralleled to questionnaire findings.

Similarly, in the interviews, the participants were asked what can improve the quality of questions and they declared since preparing is a profession and needs experience and knowledge, there should be professionals to prepare assessment tasks or there may be some workshops and facilities for teachers to improve themselves in terms of assessment knowledge. They again highlighted the importance of students' aim they want to reach at the end of their academic life which is generally listening and speaking practices for aviation students. Additionally, the content should closely be related to teaching and learning.

Considering that teachers' answers in the questionnaire and interviews about their assessment literacy constitute a vital part of EFL teachers' knowledge of assessment and it can be asserted that EFL teachers need further training of assessment although the fact that they received a testing course until now. Because they do not feel knowledgeable enough in assessment with the current needs of learners. This finding parallels those from earlier studies (e.g., Razavipour & Rezagah 2018; Atai & Mazlum 2013; Stiggins & Chappuis 2006, Brookhart 2013; Mertler 2001; DeLuca & Klinger 2010; Inbar-Lourie & Levi 2015). For example, Popham (2014) found that teachers regarded themselves as not having enough training in testing and not having sufficient skills to make decisions related to assessment. Likewise, Hatipoğlu (2015) declared that although having four years of training in testing, students still have limited knowledge about testing. Thus, the finding of this study reveals that the training in testing the teachers receive is not enough for EFL teachers to be able to design assessment instruments and teachers still want to improve themselves.

5.2.2 Discussion of Results for Teachers' Assessment Conceptions. The second research question aimed at discovering EFL teachers' assessment conceptions. This question tried to unveil EFL teachers' aims of using assessment in their teaching practices. In Brown's teachers' conception of assessment inventory

(Brown, 2002), there are four subcategories and the researcher used an adapted version of this inventory and the first subcategory which is being examined in this study is school accountability.

The researcher came to the conclusion that the percentages of the teachers' agreement about the School Accountability subgroup revealed that most teachers support that assessment provides information about how well schools do. Similarly, most of the teachers think that assessment is an accurate indicator of their school's quality. This indicated that most of the teachers see assessment as a valuable tool to recognize the role of the school. In a similar vein, in his thesis, Ludwig (2013) studies with the teachers and more than half of the participants had a strong belief that assessment provides information about their schools' quality in a good way and teachers could evaluate the school with the help of assessment.

Another subcategory worked in this study is Student Accountability which argued that the teachers use assessment in their classes to decide if the students meet qualification standards for passing or failing the course. In other words, teachers use assessment in their classes to assign a level about their students' work. This result is contrary to the findings of Brown`s (2004a) study in which Student accountability was not much important to New Zealand teachers.

On the report of findings related to Improvement, most of the participant teachers affirmed that with the help of assessment, students improve their learning and assessment is a kind of response for students about their performance and learning. Similarly, Elshawa *et* al. (2017) concluded that the aim of the assessment was to improve teaching and learning and provide information about students' learning. Assessment is also integrated with teaching practice. Although most of the teachers believe that assessment results are trustworthy, it does not measure students' higher-order thinking skills such as analysing. These results are matching with the study of Yüce (2015) who found that assessment does not support cognitive thinking but with the help of assessment, students can see their learning progress. Also, these findings from the questionnaire are close to the findings of the interviews. The role of assessment in terms of teaching is important because teachers can modify ongoing teaching, it is a kind of map or route for teachers since it shows students' learning process, academic situations, if the course objectives have been acquired, teachers

need to know what to teach, how to teach and can compare own class with other classes and teachers can take remedial actions; in terms of learning, assessment is a kind of internal and external motivation for students and they can see their own progress, where they are, what missing points are, they can understand how much they have learned. Furthermore, feedback is so important in the learning process according to teachers.

The final subgroup of teachers' conceptions is Irrelevance and clearly, the majority of teachers are of the opinion that they have to teach in a different way from their beliefs. Although most of the teachers agree that assessment interferes in the teaching process and it is fair for their students, they do not use of assessment in their teaching. The reason for not using assessment results in their classes may be their lack of knowledge of how to use them in their teaching. This finding relates to the findings of Ateş and Büyükkarcı (2019).

Lastly, teachers give importance to assessment and agree that it is necessary for teachers' critical reflection to modify their instructions. With the help of assessment results, teachers can see how their teaching is going on, if there are any subjects that are not understood by the students. Also, thanks to assessment result students can reflect into the identification of remedial strategies for learning. In other words, students can see their current academic situation and if there are any problems they can immediately recognize the problem and take cautions to remove it. Assessment also fosters intrinsic motivation to learn and feeds students forward for their future professions.

5.2.3 Discussion of Results for Teachers' Assessment Applications. The purpose of the third research question was to determine EFL teachers' applications of language testing and assessment. The findings of the third research question after the analysis of the relevant data shed light on the fact that teachers generally prefer to use gap filling question types, wh-question types, matching question, cloze test and completing types the most according to the questionnaire findings. However, they make use of translation question type rarely. The reason for this issue might be due to that teachers find translation questions inefficient and not useful to determine students' learning and also teachers do not know how to make use of the results of it.

In a similar vein, when teachers were interviewed, they stated their favorite item types were the short answer and open-ended question types. From these findings, it is crystal clear that teachers' choice of question types depends on the students' answers' quality for that question. In other words, teachers prefer asking questions that need explanation rather than a simple answer and teachers want students to think deeply, critically and express themselves in a broader way. From the findings of the research it has been concluded that according to teachers, students get higher grades in certain types of questions especially multiple and true false types because they have a chance to give the correct answer even if they do not really know the answer.

Another finding of this present study is listening and speaking skills are perceived as the most important skills whereas grammar and reading are among the least important ones for teachers. Moreover, from the view of teachers, especially for aviation students the focus should be on listening and speaking skills because of the importance of communication. Similarly, according to Downey, Suzuki, and Moere (2010), communication is crucial and might result in fatal incidents in aviation, in this way spoken language skills assessment is too important. This finding is in line with previous literature in teachers' perceptions of assessment.

When teachers' preference of assessment practices they use in classes is taken into consideration; quizzes, homework, portfolios, online tools, observation, and complete question types are the most popular practices among the real practices in the classroom. These choices are paralleled with the conclusions of Vardar's (2010) research. In her study, the statistics revealed that fill-in-the-blank, matching, portfolios, and short answer questions were the assessment tools generally preferred by teachers. Likewise, Moiinvaziri (2015) who asked questions to teachers about their assessment applications in the classroom found that the most frequent answers were final and midterms, in-class questions and answers, quizzes, homework.

Also, it was concluded that the participants make use of technology to assess their students formatively in their classrooms. Most of the teachers revealed they use web tools to assess the students which means technology affects teachers' classroom assessment applications; so, in teacher training courses the focus should also be on how to integrate technology into the classroom for formative assessment purposes.

Moreover, teachers think that assessment of English for aviation is different from other assessment types because there is a limited context, it includes aviation terminology and the focus should be on listening and speaking. Likewise, when they design an assessment instrument, they prefer to focus on listening and speaking skills in a multiple-choice or open-ended format. ICAO requirements confirm this finding by focusing on speaking and listening for assessment of English for aviation. Still, when teachers try to prepare any type of assessment, they tend to check previous exams which shows they still need to have some skills to prepare instruments by themselves.

Finally, teachers' assessment conceptions on some practices are different from their real applications, for instance, teachers would like to ask wh-questions and gap-filling questions the most but they are asked to prepare exams based on generally selective response questions such as multiple choice or true-false question types. The reason is probably the institution asks teachers to implement that kind of assessment even if they do not want to.

5.3 Implications

Based on the findings of this study, even though teachers had testing courses before, they are still not competent enough about how to prepare or grade exams especially in the aviation context and they need help from written outside sources or experienced teachers; so, the first implication is for test designers. The content of assessment and testing courses in language departments at higher education institutions should be revised. Institutions, where teachers are working, should provide better and more guiding written sources for test designers and item writers. The second implication is for teacher educators. Teacher educators can provide opportunities for collaboration with an expert and experienced teachers in order to raise teachers' language assessment literacy and improve classroom practice. Also, testing and assessment courses at universities should provide real assessment and testing practices more because when students graduate and start to work, they are not able to prepare assessment instruments because of the lack of experience. Since teachers' assessment beliefs affect the way they teach, their teaching quality; and in this study teachers' conceptions about test design and their real assessment practices

are different due to some official rules. Consequently, the third implication is for school administration. The institution should collaborate with teachers and come to a common idea to make the quality of teaching better. They can talk about the assessment problems, students' expectations, students' future career needs, etc. Moreover, since the context is aviation, assessment practices should focus on the ICAO requirements of aviation assessment that focuses on speaking and listening to be able to communicate for all aviators around the world.

There are several implications of this research study in terms of teachers' lack of knowledge of testing and assessment so they need further help from outside. Also, some of their assessment practices are different from what they have in mind. Moreover, EFL teachers working in an aviation context give importance to listening and speaking skills the most.

Finally, teachers make use of technology for assessment in their classrooms. The findings of this study may provide new insights for teacher trainers and for decision-makers because teacher response pointed out that they need further training in testing and assessment, they should improve their technology usage skills and what types of students need what language skills in their careers. The importance given to assessment literacy should be highlighted. Also, language teacher training programs may be improved by integrating assessment, in other words, how to create items or tasks for particular assessment purposes, how to design a rubric for evaluating written or oral performances and how to make use of the results of assessment to have an opinion about students' progress in learning English to this end. To meet the teachers' needs assessment workshops may be designed, experienced teacher talks may be arranged, and conferences may be held in this area. This study was done to raise awareness among ELT teachers working at higher education programs about re-thinking their responsibilities, needed qualifications on testing and assessment.

5.4 Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to determine tertiary level EFL teachers' assessment training need, conceptions and their applications in the aviation context. To achieve this aim, a questionnaire including Brown's (2002) teachers' conceptions

of assessment inventory's adapted version and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. 32 tertiary level EFL teachers participated in the study and 7 of them accepted to take part in the semi-structured interviews. The results of the questionnaires and the interviews were analysed and the overall findings revealed that participants have low levels of assessment literacy and they need further training in this area, especially how to create question items or tasks for particular assessment purposes and develop suitable rubrics to evaluate oral and written performances, using assessment to determine students' learning progress in learning English, to analyse the quality of assessment items and use technology for classroom-based assessment. Moreover, teachers voiced that they need further help, assessment experts and extra workshops or courses related to assessment. Also, according to teachers, assessment has a role both in teaching/learning process and it is necessary for teachers' critical reflections to modify their instructions, students' critical reflections into the identification of remedial strategies for learning, fostering intrinsic motivation to learn and feeding students forward for their future professions. Another finding of this study was that teachers' assessment beliefs and their real practices in classrooms are not paralleled. It was reported that they have to act against their assessment beliefs at times to comply with the expectations of their school in testing and assessment. Moreover, teachers revealed that the focus should be on listening and speaking because it was commonly believed that the most necessary skills in the aviation context are these and in their career as aviators, they will have to communicate in English. Thus, other skills such as reading, writing or grammar are not prioritised as listening and speaking.

However, this study is limited to the aviation context because the EFL teachers from other universities did not attend the study and the demographic profile of the participants was not evenly distributed since most of the teachers were novice teachers. Yet, the findings of this research are hoped to contribute to literature since there is still a need to explore teachers' assessment beliefs in the aviation context.

The present study is not without limitations due to the small number of participants in the local educational context. Findings may not be generalized to higher education contexts elsewhere. However, there could be resemblances between English language programs at the tertiary level regarding assessment conceptions, applications, and assessment literacy needs. Thus, research outcomes may provide

insights for educators, instructional designers (curriculum and testing experts) as well as teacher trainers. Also, some limitations were observed regarding the demographic profile of the participants since most of the participants were novice teachers with teaching experience between three to five years. Although different lines of data collection means are used in this study, findings rely on teachers' self-reported data. Further research could integrate classroom observations to examine how teacher perceptions are operationalized in the classroom.

5.5 Recommendation

In the present study, the researcher used Teachers' Conception of Assessment inventory to collect data. In future studies, the original scale can be applied to investigate participants' opinions completely. Also, the original language which is English was used in this study so in the future adapted version of Turkish with the original one can be used to avoid misunderstandings.

In a further study, students' perceptions of assessment could be investigated because this study only searches for teachers' opinions.

Moreover, this study included both quantitative and qualitative research design with a questionnaire and interviews. To support the findings, further research could integrate classroom observations to examine how teacher perceptions are operationalized in the classroom. Because observation is a good way to see teachers' real-life practices naturally, classroom atmosphere, reactions and interactions between teachers and students in an insightful way.

Future studies can examine whether there are any associations between teaching experience and teacher perceptions towards assessment as well as assessment literacy needs because in the present study, most of the teachers were novice and inexperienced teachers.

Furthermore, this study did not pay attention to the participants' educational background, in further studies, researchers can focus on if having an ELT department graduation has an effect on EFL teachers' assessment literacy or not.

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APPENDICES

A. Assessment Beliefs of Tertiary Level EFL Teachers Survey

I give consent to the uses of my data described above
YES

Part I. Background Information

1. **Your gender:** Female Male

1. **Which department did you graduate from? (BA degree)**

*English Language Teaching
*English Language and Literature
*American Culture and Literature
*Linguistics
*Translation and Interpreting
Other

3. Do you have a master's degree (MA)? What is your most recent graduation degree?

_____

4. **How long have you been teaching English?**

*less than 1 year
*1-2 years 3-5 years
*6-10 years
*more than 10 years

5. **How many hours of teaching do you have per week?**

_____

6. **The average number of students in each class which you are teaching this year:**

*15 or below
*5-20
*20-25
*more than 25

7. **Have you taken any training in aviation English for teachers?** YES/ NO

Part II. Teachers' Conceptions of Assessment Literacy: For question 1, in scale number 1 refers to "not beneficial" and number 4 refers to "extremely beneficial" For question 2, in scale number 1 refers to "not knowledgeable" and number 4 refers to "very knowledgeable"

1. **Did you take any course related to "testing" at university?** Yes/No

If yes, how would you rate the content of these courses?

not beneficial(1) (2)(3)(4) extremely beneficial

If no, did you have any opportunities to enhance your assessment literacy? (e.g. in-service training, teacher development courses...etc.)

_____

2. **How do you perceive yourself in terms of your assessment literacy knowledge?**

1 2 3 4

not knowledgeable very knowledgeable

Would you like to improve yourself in terms of your assessment literacy knowledge? Which aspect of language assessment would you like to learn about more?

I do not need to learn more since I feel myself knowledgeable enough about assessment literacy

Using assessment to determine students' learning progress in learning English
Using assessment to determine students' achievement in learning English
Designing appropriate items or tasks for particular assessment purpose (e.g. proficiency, achievement, diagnostic)
Developing suitable rating scales (rubrics) to evaluate oral and written performances
Using techniques to analyze the overall quality of a language assessment task
Giving effective feedback to motivate students' learning
Effects of assessment (e.g. on teaching, on learning, on design of materials)
Evaluating progress in language learning by using assessment
Alternative assessment forms (e.g. portfolio assessment)
Scoring open-ended questions using techniques to analyze the quality of questions/items on a test (difficulty level, how well an item differentiates performance)
Using educational technology (web tools) for classroom-based assessment
How to use self-assessment How to use peer-assessment
Other

3. **Think about the assessment practices in your class/at your school. What can enhance the quality of assessment?**

_____

Part III. Teachers' Assessment Conceptions

Please give a rating for each nineteen items according to your own perception. The scale starts with strongly disagree (1) and goes on strongly agree (4)

1. Assessment provides information on how well my school is doing

2. Assessment is an accurate indicator of my school's quality

3. Assessment determines if the students meet qualifications standards for passing or failing the course

4. Assessment helps my students improve their learning

5. Assessment provides effective feedback to the students about their learning needs

6. Assessment provides feedback to the students in my school about their performance

7. Assessment is integrated with teaching practice

8. Assessment information modifies ongoing teaching of the students

9. Assessment is a way to determine how much my students have

10. Assessment measures the students' higher order thinking skills

11. Assessment establishes what my students have learned

12. Assessment results are trustworthy

13. Assessment forces teachers to teach in a way against their beliefs

14. Assessment interferes with teaching

15. Assessment is unfair to my students

16. Teachers conduct assessment but make little use of the results in their teaching

17. Assessment results should be treated cautiously because of measurement

18. Assessment has little impact on teaching

19. Assessment has little impact on learning

Part IV. How do you like to assess?

Please give a rating for each of the following seventeen types of task how often you use them based on your opinion about assessment practices. The scale starts with never (1) and goes on always (4)

1. **Multiple Choice**
2. **Matching Questions**

3. **Open-ended Questions**
4. **Yes-No Questions**
5. **Transformation Questions (e.g. from passive to active or vice versa)**
6. **Gap-filling Questions**
7. **Cloze-test Questions**
8. **True-False Questions**
9. **Error Correction Questions**
10. **Ordering Sentences Questions**
11. **Completing Sentences Questions**
12. **Wh-Questions**
13. **Short Answer Questions**
14. **Translation Questions**
15. **Portfolio (Keeping file of homework)**
16. **Performance Evaluation**
17. **Observation**

Part V. Order of Significance

Can you order these skills and micro-skills according to your students' need? Which one is the most important one (6) for your group of learners, and which one is the least important one (1)?

Grammar

Vocabulary

Listening

Speaking

Reading

Writing

PART VI. Assessment Practices

1. What are some assessment practices that you use in your classes to evaluate how well your students learned? Consider different aspects of assessment such as diagnostic (self pre-test assessment etc.), formative (observation, homework, pop-quizzes, in-class activities etc.,) summative (term-papers, projects, portfolios, pen and paper tests etc.)

2. Do you make use of technology to assess your students formatively in your classroom? Which ones? Please explain. (e.g. Kahoot, quizlet, online blogs..)

_____

B. Interview Questions

Q1: Do you think assessing students is necessary? In what ways? Please explain.

Q2: What is the role of assessment in teaching? Does assessment have any effect on your teaching practice in class?

Q3: What kinds of assessment do you use in your teaching process to see how well your students learned? What are they?

Q4: Are there any other assessment instruments that you design? If so, which ones and how do you design them?

Q5: When you design an assessment instrument do you have a favorite item type? Does your ideal item type match with your real assessment practices at your school?

Q6: In what question type students get higher score according to your experience? Why?

Q7: What is the role of assessment in learning?

Q8: What can improve the quality of summative and formative assessment in your institution and class?

Q9: Do you think among grammar, vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading and writing, one skill precedes another? If you say so, which skills are the most important and least important?

Q10: How might assessment of English for aviation students differ from assessment of English for other university students in different content areas?

Q11: What is assessment literacy for you? Do you think it is important for a teacher's professional development? How do you see yourself with regards to your assessment literacy knowledge? Would you like to learn more about assessment literacy? What do you want to learn more about assessment literacy?

C. Consent Form

Dear Respondent,

I am Dilay Dogru, a master student in the Department of English Language Education at Bahçesehir University and conducting a study to complete my master's degree. You are kindly invited to participate in my research study. Purpose of the Questions: The purpose of this study to determine EFL teachers' assessment beliefs, examine classroom practices and explore language assessment literacy needs in tertiary education. Data protection: I want to stress that your participation in this study is voluntary and all measures to protect your identity will be taken. Data collected in this survey will be treated confidentially and will not be used except for the purposes mentioned above. When reported, your responses will be made anonymous so that you cannot be identified. Informed Consent: By filling out and submitting this survey you indicate your acceptance of the uses of your data. If you feel unable to accept these uses and conditions, you can withdraw from the study at any time. I have enclosed an online questionnaire which asks you to respond to a series of questions. The items in the questionnaire focus on your assessment background, knowledge, practices and beliefs. It consists of six sections and should take no longer than 20 minutes of your time. If you have any questions about this study, feel free to contact. email: dilaydogru@gmail.com

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Doğru, Dilay

Nationality: Turkish (T.C.)

Date and Place of Birth: 11 June 1993, Manisa

Marital Status: Single

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EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
BS	Hacettepe University	2016
High School	Manisa Anadolu Öğretmen Lisesi	2011

WORK EXPERIENCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2017-…	National Defence University	English Instructor

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Advanced English, Elementary German

HOBBIES

Movies, Fitness, Photography, Languages