Research Article

JIRTE JOURNAL OF INNOVATIVE RESEARCH IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Journal of Innovative Research in Teacher Education, 4(2), 201-221,
ISSN: 2757-6116
http://www.jirte.org
DOI: 10.29329/jirte.2023.572.3
Received: 08/03/2023
Revised: 18/07/2023
Accepted: 14/08/2023

Turkish high school EFL teachers' AfL practices: Reported vs. actual classroom practices*[1]

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Abstract

There has been a recognition of Assessment for Learning (*AfL*) in language teaching around the world. However, it is questionable how and to what extent EFL teachers can benefit from *AfL* in Türkiye. This study set out to examine English language teachers' reported and actual classroom teaching practices and to detect whether there was any variation between these practices. A checklist, semi-structured interviews, and tasks prepared for each *AfL* strategy were employed within an explanatory sequential design. The participants of the study were divided into three groups: checklist respondents (N=111), interview respondents (N=10), and task respondents (N=115). Descriptive statistics were used for the quantitative data analysis, and deductive coding was utilised for the qualitative data. The quantitative data analysis yielded relatively high scores on EFL high school teachers' *AfL* implementations demonstrating their reported practices. Still, a group among them stated to learn further on different issues about all these *AfL* strategies such as "how to assess students' attainment of the objectives without exams", "how to increase classroom participation", "different ways to provide feedback", "objectivity in self-assessment", and "determining the success of peers in homework". Interestingly, qualitative results provided somewhat different insights into their actual classroom practices. Although teachers were informed of *AfL* strategies and even carried out them to a certain extent, these implementations did not completely correspond to the basic principles and, thus, their reported practices. These findings can contribute to a better understanding of the complexity of *AfL* practices in the EFL context.

Keywords: EFL teachers, assessment for learning (*AfL*), reported practices, actual classroom practices, EFL high school context.

Cite: Tunçer, M., & Merç, A. (2023). Turkish high school EFL teachers' AfL practices: Reported vs. actual classroom practices. *Journal of Innovative Research in Teacher Education, 4*(2), 201-221. https://doi.org/10.29329/jirte.2023.572.3

[1]This study was produced from the doctoral dissertation titled "Developing an In-Service Training Program on 'Assessment for Learning' for English Language Teachers" of the first author supervised by the second author. A data set which was gathered in the scope of this dissertation but omitted from the analysis of the thesis due to lack of post-test responses was also included in this article.

*This study was carried out after being approved by the decision of Anadolu University Ethics Committee dated 24.06.2020 and numbered 34139.

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INTRODUCTION

The last two decades have seen a growing trend towards *Assessment for Learning* (*AfL*) in English language teaching. *AfL* could be considered as the improved form of Formative Assessment (FA) (Assessment Reform Group, 2002; DeLuca, Chapman-Chin, & Klinger, 2019; Wiliam, 2011a), and it has the promise of enhancing students' success (Black & Wiliam, 2006; Stiggins, 2005). A prominent explanation has been suggested by Broadfoot (2014) for revealing the relationship between FA and *AfL*:

> Building on the relatively well-established foundations of 'formative assessment', the tidal wave of interest in 'assessment for learning' (AfL) has become a global phenomenon. The clear message of empirical research that, used skilfully, such assessment can significantly enhance student learning and performance, has elevated AfL into something of a 'holy grail' for governments desperate to raise student achievement across the board in an increasingly competitive world (Broadfoot, 2014, p. v).

It is essential that *AfL* literacy of teachers be crucial for promoting teaching and learning (Alonzo, 2016). *AfL* enhances the active participation of students in assessment as an element of continuous teaching practices (Laveault & Allal, 2016). The goals are to determine their achievement levels up to the present and their strong and weak sides in learning and to predict the points they will probably achieve (James et al., 2006). Thus, *AfL* should become a part of language teaching.

The key strategies of *AfL* are listed as follows:

1. Clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success: It is about giving information about learning intentions and criteria for success and enabling students to comprehend them (Wiliam, 2010). It should be paid attention to the difference between the strategy of "clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and success criteria" and "wallpaper objectives". "Wallpaper objectives" can be defined as teachers' explanation of the aim only with a note on the board. However, improvement is needed to do with the involvement of students; thus, students have a chance to comment on the intentions and criteria (Wiliam, 2011b).

2. Engineering effective classroom discussions and other learning tasks that elicit evidence of student understanding: This strategy is related to picking up the achievement hints, namely questions (Wiliam, 2010). There can be differences between what teachers aim to teach and that students learn; therefore, revealing students' ideas is critical, and it can be helpful to use questions called "window into thinking" (Wiliam, 2005, p.22). These questions mostly have different properties from test questions. Forming the questions that help teachers detect students' learning could be challenging (Wiliam, 2011b).

3. Providing feedback that moves learners forward: Hattie and Timperley (2007) point out three important questions: "Where am I going?", "How am I going?", and "Where to next?" (p.102). For maintaining descriptive feedback for students' strengths and weaknesses, teachers are required to evaluate the performances of their students. It is also necessary to find out and select the most appropriate ways for feedback (Popham, 2011). For giving effective feedback, teachers need to identify the interest areas of students and the points possibly causing them difficulty (Marshall & Wiliam, 2006).

4. Activating students as the owner of their own learning: It is appropriate to describe self-assessment as a process in which students concentrate on their works or performances, evaluate the degree to which these works/performances fulfil the criteria, and make alterations consistently (Andrade, 2010). In this respect, it is essential that students be aware of learning goals and requirements to attain the objectives (Black et al., 2003). Students are themselves able to achieve learning (Wiliam, 2011b).

5. Activating students as instructional resources for one another: The purpose here in this strategy is to develop students' works/performances with the help of assessing their performances (Wiliam, 2018), and this is carried out on the works of students in the same class (Topping & Ehly, 1998). Accordingly, they can control their works, and they have a chance to make modifications on these works (Harrison, 2010).

FA implementation is not an easy task, and the elements bringing difficulty are examined in two groups "personal factors" and "contextual factors" (Yan et al., 2021). From the focus of the present study, personal factors are of vital importance that consist of teachers' ideas, attitudes, abilities, and knowledge serving a function in the achievement of FA (Heitink et al., 2016; Yan, 2014; Yan et al., 2021).

Teachers have a vital role, and their perception and classroom practices can make a difference in FA implementation (Yan et al., 2021). A significant differentiation appears in the related literature between the terms "reported practice" and "actual practice". "Reported practice" refers to "what they claimed to have done"; on the other hand, "actual practice" means "what they actually enacted in the classroom" (Danh & Quan, 2021, p. 20).

The concept of "teacher cognition" has been defined as "the unobservable dimension of teachers' professional lives" (Borg, 2019, p. 1149) or "what teachers know, think, and believe and how these relate to what teachers do" (Borg & Burns, 2008, p. 457). The relationship between teacher cognition and practices can be explained as instructive together with the significant contribution of contextual elements for understanding to what extent teachers could practice instruction in agreement with their cognition (Borg, 2003). Borg (2006) examines the cognitions of in-service language teachers with reference to "reported practice" and "actual practice". In this scope, Borg (2006) examines some studies, and questionnaires were used as the data collection tool in relation to the in-service language teachers' cognitions and their reported practices, while interviews and observations were the instruments detected in the studies based on teachers' actual classroom practices.

In recent years, there has been an interest in the relationship between teachers' reported and actual practices (Zheng, 2013). While inconsistencies have been detected between teachers' classroom implementations and their ideas in relation to the utilisation of these practices (Al-Bakri, 2016; Al-Daoud & Bataineh, 2022; Crusan, Plakans, & Gebril, 2016; Farag, 2014; Karavas-Doukas, 1996; Li, 2013; Thibodeaux, 2013; Wu, Zhang, & Dixon, 2021), mixed results have also been available between actual practices and reported practices (Danh & Quan, 2021).

In the related literature, *AfL* has been studied in English language teaching settings by several researchers (Cindrić & Pavić, 2017; Ghaffar, Khairallah, & Salloum, 2020; Huang, 2015; Lee, 2007; Lee, 2011; Lee & Coniam, 2013; Lu & Mustapha, 2020; Mak & Lee, 2014; Nasr et al., 2018; Nasr et al., 2019; Nasr, Bagheri, & Sadighi, 2020; Retnaningsih, 2013; Sardareh & Saad, 2013; Sardareh et al., 2014; Umar, 2018; Vattøy, 2020; Xu & Harfitt, 2019). Some progress has been made to comprehend the relationship between real classroom implementations and reported practices in English language teaching settings around the world (Alvarez Llerena & Ha, 2022; Mamad & Vigh, 2021; Xu & Qiu, 2022). In the Turkish context, there have also been some studies conducted to examine this association in the EFL contexts. In the study of Öz (2014), the results shed light on a differentiation between teachers' ideas and implementations related to *AfL*. Büyükkarcı (2014) detected teachers' positive opinions on FA in agreement with the curriculum necessities, however, summative assessment was mostly preferred by those teachers. Kır (2020) also identified a variation between teachers' beliefs and implementations regarding oral corrective feedback. The present paper aimed to contribute to the field by investigating the case of actual and reported practices of EFL high school teachers in terms of their *AfL* implementations in Türkiye. The study sought to answer the following specific research questions:

1. What are the EFL high school teachers' reported *AfL* practices? What are the EFL high school teachers' wants for further learning on *AfL*?
2. What are the EFL high school teachers' actual classroom teaching *AfL* practices?
3. Is there any variation between these two practices?

METHOD

Research Design

This study used an explanatory sequential design. In this design, the researchers, at the first stage, gather quantitative data, and this gives a general idea about the issue (Figure 1). Following this, qualitative data are also collected for the purpose of having a more comprehensive understanding of the problem (Creswell, 2012).

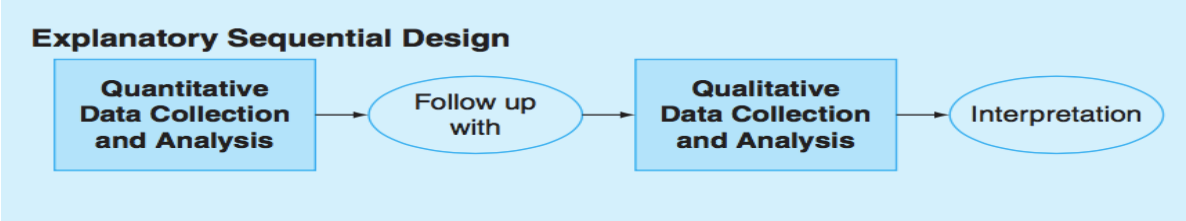

Figure 1. Explanatory Sequential Design (Creswell, 2012, p. 541).

As seen in Figure 1, the present study utilised both quantitative (a checklist first) and qualitative data (then interview questions and task questions) to reveal what *AfL* practices EFL high school teachers reported using, what *AfL* practices they carried out in their classes, and whether there was any difference between them. This study was conducted after the required permissions were obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of Anadolu University and the Directorate of National Education in Afyonkarahisar and the Governorship of the city.

Participants

Convenience sampling was used in this study since participants were accessible to the researchers and they were willing to take part in the study (Creswell, 2012). Participants were English language teachers working in state high schools in Afyonkarahisar. A total of 111 Turkish high school English language teachers responded to the checklist items. Table 1 shows the participants' years of experience, their experience in in-service training related to assessment, and their educational background.

Table 1. Participants' Teaching and In-Service Training Experiences and Educational Background

Years of Teaching Experience	**N**	**%**
0-5	22	19.9
6-10	45	40.5
11-15	23	20.7
16-20	16	14.4
21-25	5	4.5
Total	111	100
Experience in Participating in In-service Training related to Assessment	**N**	**%**
Yes	13	11.7
No	98	88.3
Total	111	100
Departments of Graduation	**N**	**%**
ELT	81	73
English Literature	19	17.1
American Literature	5	4.5
Translation & Interpretation-English	2	1.8
Linguistics	1	0.9

Others	3	2.7
Total	111	100
Levels of Education	**N**	**%**
BA	97	87.4
MA	14	12.6
Total	111	100
Number of BA/MA Courses related to Assessment	**N**	**%**
0	1	0.9
1	38	34.2
2	35	31.5
3	14	12.6
4	23	20.8
Total	111	100

Table 1 demonstrates that most of the teachers responding to the checklist items had teaching experience between 6 and 10 years (40.5%), and a great number of teachers (88.3%) stated not attending in-service training on assessment. Many of these respondents (73%) graduated from the Department of English Language Teaching, and most of these teachers (87.4%) had undergraduate degrees. The highest number (34.2%) was specified by a group who took only one course on assessment during their BA or MA studies.

As the second step in the data collection procedure, 10 teachers who had answered the checklist items were volunteers in the interviews. The subjects worked in different types of schools to have a broader perspective on the assessment implementations, and the numbers of teachers according to school types are seen in Table 2.

Table 2. Teachers Taking Part in the Interview

School Types	**N**	**%**
Anatolian High School	3	30
Vocational and Technical Anatolian High School	2	20
Social Science High School	2	20
Science High School	1	10
Multi-Program Anatolian High School	1	10
Anatolian Vocational High School	1	10
Total	10	100

In the second half, the participants were also expected to answer tasks prepared for each strategy. Participation was voluntary, and the number of teachers providing replies for these tasks is seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Teachers Responding to Tasks

Strategies	**N**	**%**
Clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success	27	23.5
Engineering effective classroom discussions and other learning tasks that elicit evidence of student understanding	33	28.7
Providing feedback that moves learners forward	34	29.5
Activating students as the owner of their own learning	11	9.6
Activating students as instructional resources for one another	10	8.7
Total	115	100

A total of 115 answers were gathered for all these tasks. The highest percentage was detected in the strategy related to feedback (29.5%), and the second highest percentage slightly below this was seen in the category of classroom discussion (28.7%).

Data Collection Instruments and the Procedures

In the scope of the study, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected in order to identify the reported and actual practices of participant teachers. The first instrument was a checklist that was formed by the researchers grounded on the other available questionnaires (Deneen et al., 2019; James & Pedder, 2006; Jonsson, Lundahl, & Holmgren, 2015; Pat-El et al., 2013). The checklist had two parts including items related to educational background and teaching experiences in the first part and yes-no questions and open-ended items to reveal their ideas about whether they used *AfL* strategies and what topics they would like to learn further related to *AfL*.

Following the quantitative data, qualitative data were gathered in two stages. First, open-ended questions were posed to the teachers who agreed to take part in the interview. The questions were about whether they performed *AfL* strategies in their foreign language classes. When they replied in the affirmative way, they were also asked how they implemented these strategies addressing all these strategies with specific examples from their own teaching settings. The purpose here was to detect how they practised the techniques in their courses in detail. Second, tasks were prepared for each strategy in accordance with the high school English language course curricula of the Ministry of Education. As for the first task on the strategy of feedback, a sample of a student work was given to the participants, and they were expected to provide feedback for the work. For the second task related to classroom discussion and questioning strategy, teachers were asked to pose three questions in line with a topic taken from the English language curriculum. They were invited to explain how to clarify learning intentions and success criteria about a topic on another item of the curricula concerning the third task. The teachers were requested to prepare two tasks one on self-assessment and the other on peer assessment for the last two tasks in agreement with the high school English language course curricula. All these tasks were sent to the participants online due to the pandemic conditions.

Data Analysis

For the quantitative data analysis, descriptive statistics were used to demonstrate the checklist results. The answers obtained by the EFL teachers were grouped and presented in a table showing the topics they would like to learn further.

In qualitative data analysis, first, the interview data were transcribed verbatim, and a "start list" of codes already created in a previous study of the related area was used, called "*deductive coding*" (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p.81). A deductive analysis was carried out based on the predetermined categories (Patton, 2002), and the categories were taken from the study of Heitink et al. (2016). For the inter-rater reliability, five steps were followed. The first step was to inform the co-rater about the study including *AfL* basic principles, research questions, data collection instruments, and procedure in the first meeting. The second step was to explain how one of the researchers analysed data according to the categories determined by Heitink et al. (2016) and to provide training for the co-rater on how to analyse data including an analysis of a sample by the researcher and the co-rater together in the second meeting. The third step was to analyse the 30% of the same data set by the co-rater. The fourth step was to calculate the inter-rater reliability based on Tawney and Gast's formula (1984) which was found to be 86%. The last one was that the researcher and the co-rater had a discussion on the differences between the codes, arrived at an agreement on all these codes (14% variations), and consequently, established inter-rater reliability in the third and last meeting.

Second, from the answers collected through the tasks, 47.8 % were analysed by one of the researchers which were cross-checked by two experts in the field of ELT. A checklist was formed for analysing the data depending on the lists prepared by Andersson and Palm (2017) and Andersson, Boström, and Palm (2017). All the answers were read, and it was decided whether they met the items or not; accordingly, scores were calculated for these responses.

Ethical Considerations

Before the data collection procedure, the ethics committee approval was received from the Scientific Research and Ethical Review Board of Anadolu University (approval number: 34139 and date: 24.06.2020). In line with this, approvals were also obtained from the Directorate of National Education in Afyonkarahisar and the Governorship of the city.

FINDINGS

RQ1. What are the EFL high school teachers' reported *AfL* practices? What are the EFL high school teachers' wants for further learning on *AfL*?

The descriptive statistics have revealed the participants' reported practices which are explained in keeping with each *AfL* strategy in the following part.

Table 4. Quantitative Results for *AfL* Strategies

	N	%
Strategy 1		
I explain the course objectives to the students.	110	99.1
I enable the students to be aware of what they can learn from the classroom activities.	110	99.1
I enable the students to be aware of what they can learn from homework.	108	97.3
I share my success criteria with the students in a way that they can understand them.	107	96.4
I show some examples of tasks having different qualities.	106	95.5
I inform the students about my expectations for the tasks they will carry out.	105	94.6
The results of determining the students' success that I assess during the course play a crucial role in my planning for the next class.	104	93.7
I ask what students expect from the course when I decide the course objectives.	77	69.4
Strategy 2		
I notice when the students reach the objectives.	110	99.1
I enable the students to speak in class in order to learn their ideas about the issue emphasised during the course.	109	98.2
I pay attention to the performance of the students in classroom activities in order to understand the levels they have achieved.	109	98.2
I ask questions to the students in order to understand the difficulties they have in learning the issue emphasised during the course.	109	98.2
I provide feedback to erroneous statements that the students use during the course.	109	98.2
I enable the students to speak in class in order to understand the levels they have achieved.	108	97.3
I check the homework and tasks that I assign to the student at regular intervals in order to understand the levels they have achieved.	108	97.3
I enable the students to speak in class in order to understand the difficulties they have in learning the issue emphasised during the course.	107	96.4
I consider students' progress when I prepare my instructional plan.	105	94.6
I ask questions to the students in order to learn their ideas about the issue emphasised during the course.	105	94.6
I prepare my instructional plan according to the difficulties they have in learning the issue emphasised during the course.	105	94.6
Strategy 3		
I talk with the students about their progress.	110	99.1
I advise the students on how to develop their weaknesses in using English.	109	98.2
I inform the students about their strengths in using English.	109	98.2
I inform the students about their weaknesses in using English.	108	97.3

I inform the students about what they are doing well on their homework/performance/activities.	107	96.4
I advise the students on how to develop their strengths to a greater degree in using English.	107	96.4
I inform the students about what they are not doing well on their homework/performance/activities.	107	96.4
Strategy 4		
I encourage/support the students to ask questions at the point where they need further explanation.	110	99.1
I enable the students to think about how they can learn best.	108	97.3
I want the students to think about how they are doing on homework/performance/activities they are carrying out.	107	96.4
I create opportunities for the students to think about how they can learn better.	107	96.4
I want my students to show points/sides that they are good in and that they can improve further on homework/performance/activities they are carrying out.	104	93.7
I help the students to plan what the next step in their learning will be.	104	93.7
Strategy 5		
I encourage/support the students to ask questions to each other during the course.	106	95.5
I want the students to indicate good points/sides and points that can be developed more by their peers who are carrying out their tasks/performance/activities.	95	85.6
I teach the students to determine the success of each other in classroom activities.	86	77.5
I support the students to determine the success of each other in their homework/performance/activities.	86	77.5
I teach the students to determine the success of each other in their homework.	73	65.8

Table 4 displays the results of *AfL* implementations teachers expressed to carry out in their foreign language classrooms for all these five strategies. As for Strategy 1, except for one teacher, all teachers considered fulfiling the explanation of course objectives and becoming students aware of their learning from the activities during the course. In a similar vein, most of the teachers responding to the checklist questions thought to get students conscious of their learning from homework (97.3%). In relation to the success criteria, a great part of the teachers stated to make explanations for students to be able to comprehend these criteria (96.4%) and claimed to demonstrate sample tasks in different qualities (95.5 %). A relative decrease was detected in the item related to asking students' expectations from the course in determining course objectives (69.4%) compared to the other items in this strategy. What stands out in this table is the high rate of teachers' reported practices for explaining learning intentions and success criteria.

It is apparent from Table 4 that the participants had relatively high opinions of the second strategy related to classroom discussion and tasks. With the exception of only one teacher, all the participants stated that they became aware when students attained the objectives. The second highest rates that nearly all these teachers (98.2%) reported were on the items related to this strategy on giving chances for students to share their ideas, following their performance for determining their success levels, posing questions for revealing problematic issues for students, and maintaining feedback on students' erroneous statements. Even the lowest rates were quite high which was 94.6% for the last three items of this checklist as seen in Table 4.

The outcomes of the third strategy revealed in Table 4 are quite high similar to the findings of the first and second strategies. The highest three scores were detected in the items on expressing ideas about students' development (99.1%), telling them their strengths, and providing suggestions for improving their weaknesses (98.2%), and telling them their weaknesses (97.3%). The rest of the items related to this strategy were also rated by 107 participants. It can be concluded that many of these teachers thought to carry out duties identified in the checklist to a large extent.

The answers provided for the items in the fourth strategy are also high; however, a slight decrease is observed in the last two items as shown in Table 4. These participants most reported providing support for raising questions when clarification was necessary (99.1%). Following this, they also stated to allow students to focus on the best way to learn (97.3%). Among the same group, seven teachers acknowledged that they did not expect students to focus on their strengths in tasks and how to develop them further and did not assist students in arranging the next steps in their learning (93.7%).

The results obtained from the last strategy on peer assessment are distinct from the ones in the other categories. The highest score (95.5%) was seen on the item indicating their efforts for students to address questions to their pairs. The second item rated most was about teachers' expectation that students could show strong and weak sides of their peers' tasks or performances; however, 16 teachers reported not doing this as a checklist response. Although a huge group expressed teaching students to find out their peers' success in the activities (77.5%) and in their homework (65.8%), other teachers still responded negatively to these two items. In this group, 25 teachers said "no" to the item on providing support for students in identifying the success of their pairs.

To sum up, it is clearly understood from Table 4 that Turkish EFL high school teachers who answered the checklist items considered to perform most of these items in their classes. In this checklist, teachers were also asked to share their ideas about their demands for learning further on these issues and their ideas for both reported practices and demands are demonstrated in Figure 2.

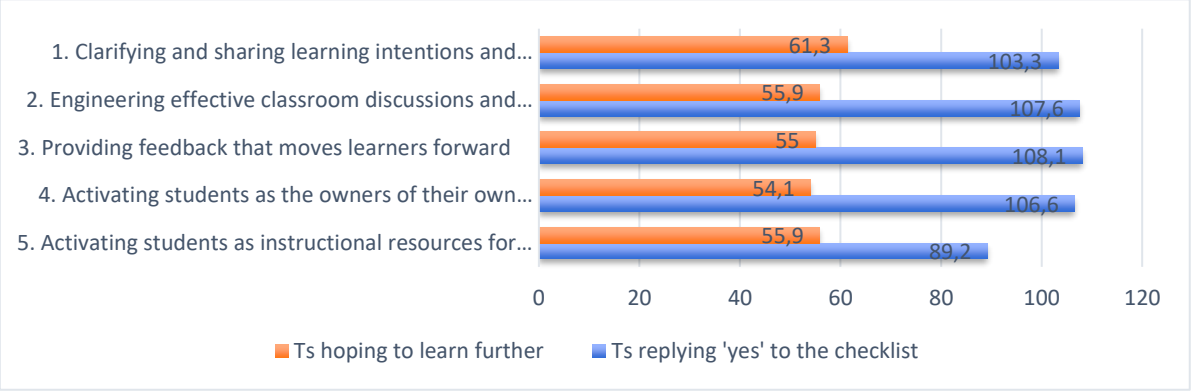

Figure 2. A Summary of Teachers' Reported *AfL* Practices and Demands for Further Learning

Figure 2 reveals an interesting summary of what the teachers stated to perform in terms of their *AfL* implementations and what they would like to learn further about *AfL* practices. Although the rates of their reported practices were quite high, more than half of these participants underlined their wants to learn more about the strategies of *AfL*. The following table demonstrates the issues they expressed for learning further.

Table 5. The Rates and Issues Reported for Further Learning

Rates to learn further	Issues teachers would like to learn more
Strategy 1 (61.3%)	▪ assessment and evaluation ▪ objectives ▪ determining the success level of students ▪ exam evaluation ▪ students' motivation ▪ students know how to use information appropriately
Strategy 2 (55.9%)	▪ how to assess students' attainment of the objectives without exams ▪ how to teach according to students' success level

	▪ how to detect their needs better
	▪ how to increase classroom participation
Strategy 3 (55%)	▪ feedback techniques in performance assessment
	▪ different ways to provide feedback to students
	▪ performance tasks scales
Strategy 4 (54.1%)	▪ objectivity in self-assessment
	▪ ways to provide feedback on self-assessment
	▪ self-assessment techniques
Strategy 5 (55.9%)	▪ developing peer assessment techniques
	▪ peer assessment with classroom practice examples
	▪ techniques for maintaining objectivity in peer assessment
	▪ determining the success of peers in homework

As seen in Table 5, the teachers wrote about a list of topics they hoped to learn about *AfL*. These responses shed light on that they may need to have further information related to implementing these five *AfL* strategies. Their suggestions towards future directions indicated critical points: "objectives" in Strategy 1, "how to assess students' attainment of the objectives without exams", "how to teach according to students' success levels", "how to detect their needs better", "how to increase classroom participation" in Strategy 2, "feedback techniques in performance assessment", "different ways to provide feedback to students" in Strategy 3, "objectivity in self-assessment", "ways to provide feedback on self-assessment", "self-assessment techniques" in Strategy 4, and "developing peer assessment techniques", "peer assessment with classroom practice examples", "techniques for maintaining objectivity in peer assessment", and "determining success of peers in homework" in Strategy 5.

All these points they stated could be interpreted as they need help to enhance their information about assessment further. Thus, it can be deduced that there was a difference between what English language teachers stated to carry out on *AfL* and what their actual *AfL* classroom practices were. Interviews were conducted to examine this in detail with teachers working in different types of high schools, and tasks were prepared for all these strategies. The next part includes the outcomes of these interviews and tasks.

RQ2. What are the EFL high school teachers' actual classroom teaching *AfL* practices?

In this part, the results of the qualitative data have been demonstrated. Table 6 reveals the outcomes obtained from the task responses. Following this, the results of the interview have also been reviewed together with the task responses. The table below illustrates the task responses provided by those teachers for the *AfL* strategies.

Table 6. Results of the Task Responses for the Strategies

***AfL* Activities**	**N**
Strategy 1	
1. The teacher identifies general learning intentions.	25
2. The teacher makes the learning goals clear by explaining the topic, referring the goals, sharing keywords, and examining these words in the context.	1
3. The teacher provides samples for getting students to observe strong and weak properties in the texts.	0
4. The teacher clarifies the success criteria in general.	20
5. The teacher enables students to be involved in comprehending these criteria step by step by identifying these criteria.	1
Strategy 2	
6. The teacher provides opportunities for students to express their opinions.	9
7. The teacher provides opportunities for students to think further on specific points.	1
8. The teacher gives chances for students to share their ideas before the whole class discussion.	0
Strategy 3	

9. The teacher points out the strong sides of the student's work.	6
10. The teacher demonstrates sides to be developed more.	9
11. The teacher indicates the weak sides of the student's work.	7
12. The teacher's comments are clear and intelligible.	6
13. The teacher prefers suggestions as feedback instead of giving the correct answers directly.	4
Strategy 4	
14. The teacher proposes various self-assessment techniques	2
Strategy 5	
15. The teacher suggests various peer assessment techniques	0

It is clearly seen in Table 6 that 25 teachers responding to the task used general expressions for defining learning intentions. Except for one teacher, there was no response including the crucial elements such as topic, referring to the goals, sharing keywords, or examining these words in the context. A total of 20 teachers used general phrases to explain success criteria. Only one teacher included students to comprehend the success criteria step by step making clear the criteria. There was no one referring to looking over the strong and weak properties of the related texts. All in all, these results did not match the ideal *AfL* implementations.

According to the interview results for Strategy 1, all the teachers with whom interviews were conducted expressed to use several ways in terms of clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success, other than only one participant (P3). The teachers also explained how to use different strong and weak task samples which were not associated with these samples much, and some of these replies are as follows:

> Your assignment today is to record a video about "what can you explain with the structure we have learnt today" or "how can you express yourself with this structure" (P9).

> While assigning project tasks, I choose the topic according to students' interests and skills, and I also accept the topics that they would like to choose themselves. There are assessment criteria for these tasks. For the total 100 points, the criteria include, for instance, 20 points for content, 5 points for having communication with the teacher, and so on. They know what they should care about in doing these tasks, and I hang these criteria on the classroom wall (P2).

> We have learned "past simple" tense; your homework is to write what you did last week (P5).

> For performance assignments, I want students to show me what they have done. I would like to check their work before they hand in their assignments (P7).

It can be understood how these teachers conducted assignments and tasks in their classes from the statements above. Thus, it could be concluded that no teachers employed sample tasks in different qualities as a part of their actual classroom implementations. Two teachers described how to handle project assignments, and both emphasised the point of staying in communication with the students in composing their assignments. One of them (P2) determined 'communication with teacher' as the assessment criteria graded as 5 points which did not correspond to a large portion of the total score. However, it was found that the other teacher (P7) was more decisive in checking the students' assignments at different intervals as compared with P2. Therefore, it can be interpreted as varying levels of teachers' commitment to *AfL*.

Table 6 displays the participants' responses to the task of maintaining effective classroom discussion. Accordingly, only nine questions could give a chance for students to illustrate their opinions, but this does not represent a big group since 99 questions were formed by 33 participants for this task. Thus, it could be concluded that only a small number of the questions aimed to reveal students' opinions. In the

questions prepared for the task, none of them, except one, were posed to enable students to think further on an issue. Moreover, no question was detected to provide opportunities for the students to tell their opinions to a pair before explaining them to the rest of the class. These outcomes mean that these activities did not correspond to *AfL* implementations properly.

According to the interview results of Strategy 2, the 'question and answer' activity was revealed as frequently used at the opening of the lessons technique. One of the teachers (P2) stated to use questions to detect whether they learned the topic of the previous course. To solve this problem, P2 expressed to explain the same issue again in a less challenging way; otherwise, the other solution was to change that issue. Another teacher (P4) accepted the silence in the class as a response to a question and posed the same question differently. One another participant (P7) reported using questions such as "are you sure", "think again", "should it be in this way", and "when it is used in that way, will it be correct" with the purpose of calling their attention to the errors. These teachers used these questions to reveal whether the students could give the correct responses rather than to enable students to think further on that issue. Only one of these teachers (P6) said to practice a freeze-frame activity to motivate students as peers for speaking activities. However, the teacher (P6) admitted not to use it effectively despite reporting to prefer peer work. The teacher (P6) strived to carry out pair works but had difficulties in implementing them. Thus, it can be inferred that further information is required for performing pair and group assessment activities in an efficient way.

Table 6 shows the results of feedback techniques obtained from 34 participants, and each participant provided three comments for a student's work in this task. Looking at Table 6, it is apparent that nine of these comments which is the highest number are feedback about the points that should be improved further. Following this, seven comments are for students' weak points. It is clearly seen in Table 6 that only four comments indicate teachers' preferences for suggestions as feedback rather than saying the correct answer which is the lowest number of this strategy. An interesting result was that there were several vague statements detected in their comments for student work; however, only six comments could be easily understood. Hence, these results were equivalent to a small sample of the answers provided by 34 teachers for this strategy.

When the interview results were examined for Strategy 3, one teacher (P1) underscored to reveal the areas students had difficulty in. However, P1 suggested an open-ended question as a reaction "why did not you understand here?" which might be challenging and ambiguous for students. Although P1 used to slow the speech for finding a solution for their problem in listening, it could be better to explain to students a way to solve this problem. One more teacher (P3) reported maintaining feedback for students' right answers which had an impact on their grades. P3 also acknowledged that exam results were the only indicators for those who did not have active participation during the lesson. Thus, it can be deduced that teachers' attitude is decisive in the implementation of *AfL* strategies in an effective way.

The results of Strategy 4 gathered from 11 teachers demonstrate that only two of these responses could be applicable in a language class as can be seen in Table 6. This number is also quite low which may be evaluated as the low level of implementation of this strategy.

Findings of the interview results related to Strategy 4 indicated that although looking over the questions with learners was a common type of implementation that three teachers (P1, P8, and P10) expressed to carry out, it is controversial to what extent these practices worked effectively. Another teacher (P9) pointed out the guided questions in the book for conducting self-assessment practices with an admission that it would not be possible to perform it with all learners in the class. This example indicates that P9 hoped to practice some ways of self-assessment but ran into difficulties in implementing them. Thus, the possible explanation could be teachers' lack of knowledge in implementing these techniques in a well-organised way.

According to the results of Strategy 5 as shown in Table 6, no appropriate answer is suggested by these teachers towards practising peer assessment activities in the scope of *AfL*. The answers provided by the teachers during the interview also supported this result.

For Strategy 5, the interviews were performed with a total of 10 teachers, but four of them admitted not to utilise peer assessment as a part of their lessons. Among these four teachers, P2 reported having positive ideas about peer assessment; however, at the same time, P2 stated not to benefit from peer assessment in his/her foreign language classes. P2 justified this situation with higher level students' unwillingness to share other students' responsibilities and other students' lower level of contribution.

RQ3. Is there any variation between these two practices?

The results of the study have pointed out the differences between English language teachers' reported and actual practices of *AfL* strategies. Table 7 provides a summary of this comparison according to each strategy separately.

Table 7. A Summary of the Comparison between Reported and Actual Classroom Practices

	Reported Practices and Wants for Further Learning	**Actual Classroom Practices**	
		Interview Responses	**Task Responses**
Clarifying and sharing learning intentions and criteria for success	"Yes, I do …" Mean: 103.3 "I would like to learn further on this strategy" 61.3%	I inform the students about what the course is about at the beginning by saying what they are going to learn in that class. Our learning objectives provided under the title of learning outcomes are shared with the students for each unit in their books. We also share the aims of exercises performed in the class and talk with our students about learning outcomes.	Essay writing task Let's write an essay on disadvantaged people. Give the topic and explain the main points. Let's write an essay. It must be argumentative. Write an essay including solutions for disadvantaged people's problems. You will write the essay in at least three paragraphs. You can search on the net about the subject.
Engineering effective classroom discussions and learning tasks that elicit evidence of student understanding	"Yes, I do …" Mean: 107.6 "I would like to learn further on this strategy" 55.9%	Why could you not understand this question? What will happen next in the text? Are you sure? Should it be in this way? Is it more precise in that way? When it is used in that way, will it be correct? For instance, I prepare watching activities, I suddenly stop it and ask the students questions related to the next scene, and I enable them to communicate with each other in groups.	Do you use social media? Which social media tools do you use? Do you like using social media? How much time do you spend on social media? Which age group uses the social media the most? How many friends have you got on social networking sites?
Providing feedback that moves learners forward	"Yes, I do …" Mean: 108.1 "I would like to learn	Why did not you understand here? …to provide feedback for the students' correct answers and to take a note for them, and they could influence their final grade. The teacher stated to use exams and oral statements as feedback and added that	That's a good essay for a student at your age. The information mentioned above is satisfactory. The autobiography is also motivating.

	further on this strategy" 55%	exam results were the only way of feedback. … some students showed the teacher their written works to get feedback, and the teacher stated to make some corrections on the sentences and write sample sentences. ….use plus/minus 5 points for participation during the course as feedback. …s/he checked their exam and quiz papers, indicated their mistakes, and wrote some suggestions on; and for their homework and quiz, students were given their answer keys.	It needs to be improved regarding the author's first attempts to learn English. You should be careful about punctuation.
Activating students as owner of their learning	"Yes, I do …" Mean:106.6 "I would like to learn further on this strategy" 54.1%	…look over the exam questions and worksheets together with the students. …to ask their ideas about the exam results. …to expect students to assess their worksheet with the answer key. While the student was doing this, we could say that you knew your strengths and weaknesses, and we could provide some suggestions related to how to improve their weak sides. However, the teacher admitted not to be able to carry out this with all of the students but only with a few.	Peer correction Checklists or questionnaires Questioning, eliciting other answers Using checklist It provides an opportunity for the students to evaluate themselves Students will determine success criteria Portfolio
Activating students as instructional resources for one another	"Yes, I do …" Mean: 89.2 "I would like to learn further on this strategy" 55.9%	…peer assessment is useful, and positive results can be accomplished. However, …it did not work well in his/her classes. The teacher made students check others' homework, and then the teacher also controlled their homework….this could not become a habit in the first trial, but the teacher continued to use this way for a few months. While the teacher was controlling their works, they explained how they went over the works, and the teacher expected them to do it in the same way. So, the teacher aimed to develop their skills of assessing peers' work in the way of imitating what the teacher did during homework control.	Students will change their papers after they finish writing. They will grade their work Share with deskmate and give feedback.

As seen in Table 7, high scores are detected for the items; namely, the teachers stated to practice these items which was one of the major concerns of the study. Following this, these teachers reported learning further on a variety of points related to these five strategies. Due to the rather intriguing results, data from interviews and tasks became more of an issue to see whether these reported practices were in keeping with their actual implementations. The findings of the interviews and tasks shed light on that the teachers were aware of some of the *AfL* strategies and practised these techniques to some extent, but they did not match the basic principles appropriately; thus, the reported practices they identified as responses to checklist items.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The aim of the present research was to investigate EFL high school teachers' reported and actual classroom teaching *AfL* practices, whether there was any difference between these two, and if so, what possible reasons could be, and what their wants were for further learning on *AfL*. This study identified English language teachers' reported practices as a consequence of the data collected through the checklist. These teachers recorded quite high scores for all the strategies of *AfL*. This may indicate, while preliminary, that they carried out a variety of techniques during their English language lessons. At the same time, more than half of the participants of the study reported their desire to learn further on several issues in relation to the items on the checklist. For this reason, these high scores obtained were carefully evaluated, and it became more interesting to examine their actual *AfL* classroom implementations. When the reported practices were compared to real classroom practices based on the data gathered from the interviews and tasks, some variations were detected in the light of *AfL* principles. In line with the literature, the reasons for these variations could be a lack of competency to implement FA (Deneen et al., 2019), the pressure of exams and grading (Vattøy, 2020), or a lack of assessment opportunities for students (Xu & Harfitt, 2019).

The first research question was about EFL high school teachers' reported *AfL* practices and their wants for further learning on *AfL*. Overall, the results demonstrated that the participants mostly rated high scores for the items of the checklist which reflects these teachers' reported *AfL* practices. Although the rates of reported *AfL* implementations were high, these results should be interpreted with caution since over half of those surveyed stated their desire to learn further about these strategies. Thus, it could be deduced that the teachers would like to learn more about *AfL,* whereas they considered implementing these strategies. These inconsistent results made investigating real *AfL* classroom implementations of the EFL high school teachers more significant.

The second research question examined EFL high school teachers' actual *AfL* practices, and following this, the last one was whether there was any differentiation between the reported and actual practices. In the current study, some variations were detected between their reported and actual practices which are discussed in the rest of this section. Thus far, several studies (Crusan, Plakans, & Gebril, 2016; Li, 2013; Wu, Zhang, & Dixon, 2021) revealed contradictions in various English language teaching contexts. Wu, Zhang, and Dixon (2021) found a mismatch between what EFL teachers stated about their *AfL* implementations and their values. According to Li (2013), various factors should be considered in understanding the relationship between teachers' beliefs and implementations. "Social desirability" was pointed out by Crusan, Plakans, and Gebril (2016) as a reason for the inconsistency between teachers' expressions and assessment knowledge. In the Turkish EFL context, some researchers (Büyükkarcı, 2014; Kır, 2020; Öz, 2014) also identified a contradiction between teachers' ideas or beliefs and classroom implementations.

One of the checklist items was about learning students' expectations for determining the course aims, and the lowest score was obtained for this item related to identifying learning intentions and success criteria. This result could be evaluated as expected in the Turkish EFL context which is mainly teacher-oriented. This result is in agreement with Nasr et al. 's (2019) findings. Another result of the present study revealed the teachers' strong tendency to act in accordance with the curriculum standards, and in that case, it could be hard to consider the expectations of students. Similarly, Nasr et al. (2019) found that teachers did not carry out *AfL* due to rigid curriculum implementation. For this case, a justification could be Crichton and McDaid's (2016) findings that 'Success Criteria' was not teachers' first concern owing to time issues, and they allotted time for teaching content instead of making 'Learning Intention' and 'Success Criteria' clear. As for the same strategy, the outcomes of the study shed light on the variation between what teachers reported implementing as a response to the checklist and their explanation of how they conducted it in their classes. Accordingly, teachers did not mention showing sample tasks of

different qualities during the interviews or as a task response; however, 95.5% of those teachers answered this item of the checklist as 'yes'. Not having appropriate competency could be an explanation for this case which was revealed in the study of Deneen et al. (2019) that teachers stated the value of FA and at the same time their lack of competency to implement FA.

A variation was also found between their reported and actual classroom practices in relation to the second strategy. To make it clear, the teachers either used the question-answer technique to make students find a single correct response or posed yes-no questions. These findings are in harmony with those revealed in the study of Lee (2007) and Sardareh and Saad (2013). It was concluded in the study of Lee (2007) that feedback was used not with the purpose of *AfL* but for summative assessment. More interestingly, Sardareh and Saad (2013) revealed that teachers looked for a specific correct response still using open-structured ones. The questions suggested in the interview and task responses of the present study show similarity with the results of Sardareh and Saad's (2013) and Sardareh et al. 's (2014) studies. In the study of Sardareh and Saad (2013), the results pointed out that teachers were familiar with the value of classroom questioning, but they expected specific answers from the students. Sardareh et al. (2014) also detected that teachers preferred traditional questioning techniques in their courses. "Insufficient interaction" (p. 20) concluded as a finding in the study of Nasr et al. (2019) could be seen as a reason for this outcome.

The teachers in the current study reported relatively high scores for the checklist items which show their high rates for the reported practices in terms of *AfL* feedback implementations; however, some discrepancies were noted when their interview and task responses were analysed. According to Marshall and Wiliam (2006), an important issue in providing feedback is to further the students' progress in thinking. However, it would not be possible to achieve this with the questions suggested by the teachers in this study such as *"Why did not you understand ...."*, *"OK! Good! It is our objective, go in this way"*, *"Well done!"* or *"That's a good essay for a student at your age"*, *"The autobiography is also motivating"*, *"It needs to be improved regarding the author's first attempt to learn English"*. As an alternative to *"OK! Good!"* offered in the present study, Marshall and Wiliam (2006) suggested *"Yes, I see what you mean"* and *"You've put that really well"* (p.15) in order to make clear the strong part of work or performance. In a similar vein, the feedback statement *"I repeat the correct forms of ..."* expressed during the interview in this study was different from the suggestion of Marshall and Wiliam (2006) *"I am not clear what you are trying to say here"* (p.15) in terms of clarity of the utterances. This case can be explained with Vattøy's (2020) finding that *AfL* was considered hard to implement by half of teachers owing to the pressure of exams and grading. In the same study, Vattøy (2020) underlined *'time'* and *'confidence'* as two essential issues needed for teachers to achieve better outcomes. Volante and Beckett (2011) also concluded that FA was not complete without students' reflection on learning and taking responsibility for learning depending on the teachers' opinions in that study.

In relation to the self-assessment, the teachers in the present study answered the items of the checklist, and the obtained scores were high. However, these results of the reported practices did not match with the actual classroom practices, namely the results of the interview and the task. These outcomes of the present study are in agreement with the findings of Volante and Beckett (2011). In that study, Volante and Beckett (2011) uncovered teachers' suggestions for several self-assessment techniques; at the same time, these teachers underlined the requirement of practicing these techniques meticulously. Most importantly, among the results of this study, teachers also frankly stated their need to conduct self-assessment more effectively. Öz (2014) revealed that many EFL teachers consisting of a group of high school teachers chose traditional assessment techniques instead of FA techniques including self-assessment. At this point, the results concluded in the study of Öz (2014) vary from the outcomes revealed in the current study. According to the results of Volante and Beckett (2011), faculty of education was identified by the several educators as major source for their professional development. In this respect, the findings of the current study showed that a majority of the participants (73%) responding checklist graduated from the ELT department, and more than half of them reported taking either one

course or two courses related to assessment. In Türkiye, there are only two courses related to assessment "Assessment and Evaluation" and "English Language Testing and Evaluation" in the scope of undergraduate level of ELT. Nevertheless, Ölmezer-Öztürk and Aydın (2019) who conducted a study in the Turkish EFL context concluded that the training received during the undergraduate period may be insufficient for becoming assessment literate. Thus, when the results obtained from the checklist were cautiously evaluated in light of the findings gained from the interviews and tasks, a discrepancy was seen between their reported practices and actual classroom implementations of self-assessment.

High percentages were revealed as the result of the checklist items of the peer assessment, and this shows the teachers' reported practice for this strategy. However, the study outcomes concluded that some teachers stated during the interviews not to use peer assessment techniques as a part of their courses. This result was also supported with the results obtained from the task responses. These results reflect those of Lee and Coniam (2013) who also detected problems teachers encountered, and peer assessment was identified as one problem. In the present study, one interview respondent stressed the importance of peer assessment and expressed not benefit from these techniques properly. The possible reason for this case could be reported by Xu and Harfitt (2019) as a constraint that gave fewer assessment opportunities to students. The current study found that teachers encountered some problems in trying to implement peer assessment techniques. In return for these difficulties, Lee (2011) concluded the effect of *AfL* on enhancing students' motivation for writing and underscored the necessity of changing teaching approaches and assessment techniques. One of the suggestions of Lee (2011) was to share responsibility with students with the implementation of self-assessment and peer assessment. Even so, Öz (2014) who also examined assessment in the Turkish EFL setting was cautious about changing teachers' perceptions and emphasised the possible need for extra time and support.

The findings of this study suggest that teacher education programs should concentrate on preparing teacher candidates for implementing *AfL* in EFL classes more competently in addition to the summative techniques. Depending on the results revealed in the study of Ölmezer-Öztürk and Aydın (2019) indicating the possible insufficiency of the undergraduate period for becoming assessment literate, more opportunities should be provided for both pre-service and in-service teachers to enable them to learn and implement *AfL* practices adequately.

Statement of Researchers

Researchers contribution rate statement: The authors contributed equally to the article.
Conflict statement: The authors declare no conflict of interest.
Support and thanks: None.

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