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**AN INVESTIGATION OF TURKISH EFL INSTRUCTORS'
ONLINE ASSESSMENT LITERACY: CHALLENGES AND
OPPORTUNITIES**

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SCIENTIFIC ETHICS STATEMENT

I declare that I have complied with all of the rules of academic and scientific ethics from the proposal stage to the completion of this study, titled “Investigation of Turkish EFL Instructors’ Online Assessment Literacy: Challenges and Opportunities,” which I prepared as a Master’s thesis; that I have obtained all information in relation to the Project within the framework of scientific ethics and traditions; that I have provided sources for each quotation made directly or indirectly in this study; and that the works I used are listed in the bibliography.

Tuncay GEZDER

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ONAY SAYFASI

Tuncay Gezder tarafından hazırlanan “*An Investigation of Turkish EFL Instructors’ Online Assessment Literacy: Challenges and Opportunities*” başlıklı bu çalışma, **28/06/2022** tarihinde yapılan sınav sonucunda başarılı bulunarak, jürimiz tarafından **YÜKSEK LİSANS** tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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ÖZET

YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETEN ÖĞRETİM GÖREVLİLERİNİN ÇEVİRİMİÇİ DEĞERLENDİRME YETKİNLİKLERİNİN ARAŞTIRILMASI: GÜÇLÜKLER VE FIRSATLAR

Bu karma yöntemli çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'deki üniversitelerin hazırlık sınıflarındaki Türk İngilizce öğretmenlerinin çevrimiçi değerlendirme yetkinliklerinin yanı sıra COVID-19 salgını sırasında Acil Uzaktan Eğitimde karşılaştıkları zorlukları ve fırsatları araştırmaktır. Katılımcılar 17 üniversitede hazırlık sınıflarında yabancı dil olarak İngilizce dersi veren ve en az bir dönem çevrimiçi olarak konuşma ve yazma derslerini verip bu derslerin değerlendirmesini yapan 48 öğretim görevlileridir. Katılımcıların belirlenmesinde amaca uygun örneklem ve kartopu örnekleme yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Veri toplama araçları anket, açık uçlu sorular ve bireysel görüşmelerden oluşmaktadır. Araştırmacı nitel verilerin analizinde kodlama ve tema oluşturma yöntemini kullanmıştır. Bu çalışmada temalar tekrar eden ifadeler kullanılarak belirlenmiştir. Nicel verilerin analizinde SPSS istatistik paketi kullanılmıştır. İlk olarak, maddelerin güvenilirliği Cronbach Alpha katsayısı ile hesaplanıp .95 olarak bulunmuştur. Daha sonra, ankette yer alan maddelere verilen yanıtların ortalamalarını ve standart sapmalarını incelemek için betimsel analiz yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Bulgular, öğretim görevlilerinin canlı derslerde öğrencilere sözlü olarak dönüt verebilme ve her öğrencinin çevrimiçi değerlendirme sonuçlarını gizli tutma gibi konularda kendilerini yetkin olarak düşündüklerini gösterirken çevrimiçi sınavlarda öğrencilerin kopya çekmelerini engelleme ve çevrimiçi değerlendirme sonuçlarını öğrencilerin aileleriyle paylaşma gibi konularda yetkin olmadıklarını düşündüklerini göstermektedir. Ek olarak, bulgular öğretmenler tarafından karşılaşılan teknik problemlerin en yaygın karşılaşılan güçlükler olduğunu gösterirken öğretmenler tarafından en az karşılaşılan zorluğun Acil Uzaktan Eğitim sürecindeki çevrimiçi derslerde çok sayıda öğrencinin olduğunu göstermiştir. Ayrıca bulgular, teknolojinin öğretmenler için sağladığı faydaların en yaygın karşılaşılan kolaylık olduğunu gösterirken en az karşılaşılan kolaylığın kaynakların öğrencilere iletilmesinin olduğunu göstermektedir. Bu çalışma Acil Uzaktan Eğitim sürecinde üniversitelerin hazırlık sınıflarında İngilizce dersi veren öğretim görevlilerinin çevrimiçi değerlendirme yetkinlikleri hakkında çıkarım yapılmasını sağlayabilir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Çevrimiçi değerlendirme yetkinliği, güçlükler, fırsatlar, COVID-19, Türkiye

ABSTRACT

AN INVESTIGATION OF TURKISH EFL INSTRUCTORS' ONLINE ASSESSMENT LITERACY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The aim of this mixed-method study was to investigate the online assessment literacy of Turkish EFL instructors in the preparatory classes of universities in Turkey, as well as the challenges and opportunities they faced in the Emergency Remote Education (ERE) context during the COVID-19 pandemic. The participants were 48 instructors of English as a foreign language in preparatory classes at 17 universities who have taught and assessed online writing and speaking courses for at least one term. Convenience sampling and snowball sampling strategies were used to select the participants. The data collection tools included a questionnaire, open-ended questions, and individual interviews. The researcher used the coding and theme creation method in the analysis of the qualitative data. In this study, the themes were determined based on repetitive expressions. For quantitative data, the SPSS statistical package was used. Firstly, the reliability of the items was calculated with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which was found to be .95. Next, the descriptive analysis method was used to examine the means and standard deviations of the responses given to the items in the questionnaire. The findings revealed that while instructors considered that they were competent in providing oral feedback to students in online classes and keeping the online assessment results of each student confidential, they felt that they were incompetent in communicating the online assessment results to parents and preventing students from cheating on online tests. Additionally, the findings indicated that technical problems were the most common challenges faced by both instructors and students, while the least common challenge was the large number of students in ERE. Moreover, the findings demonstrated that taking advantage of technology was expressed as the most common opportunity by both the instructors and the students, while the least common opportunity reported by the instructors was the ability to transmit sources to students. This study may provide inferences about the online assessment literacy of the instructors who teach English in the preparatory classes of Turkish universities in the context of ERE.

Key Words: Online assessment literacy, challenges, opportunities, COVID-19, Turkey

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CoHE	: The Council of Higher Education
COVID-19	: Coronavirus Illness
EFL	: English as a Foreign Language
ERE	: Emergency Remote Education
ESL	: English as a Second Language
ICT	: Information Communication Technology
IT	: Information Technology
LMS	: Learning Management System
MA	: Master's Degree

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Problem

The first case of COVID-19 was recorded in 2019 in Wuhan, China. This severe acute respiratory disease, also known as coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2), quickly spread from China around the globe, resulting in a pandemic (Remuzzi & Remuzzi, 2020). The first cases in Turkey were detected in March 2020. In order to mitigate the impact of the virus, the government announced isolation rules, subjecting the country to rigorous quarantine regulations. As with all other aspects of life during the pandemic, the coronavirus lockdown had a significant impact on education at all levels, as the crisis led to an unprecedented transition to online-only learning (Burgess & Sievertsen, 2020); in early 2020, educational institutions worldwide were ordered to close their doors and to provide education exclusively via digital learning platforms (Bao, 2020).

According to UNESCO (2020b), COVID-19 school closures have affected 87% of the world's student population. As of April 06, 2020, UNESCO (2020) reported that COVID-19 had impacted 1,576,021,818 students in 188 countries at all levels of education. To stop the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, most nations have temporarily closed child-care centers, nurseries, primary and secondary schools, colleges, and universities (Briefing, 2020). According to Pujari (2020), COVID-19 impacts the whole educational system, including exams and assessments. In anticipation of the potentially disastrous repercussions of suspending the educational process, UNESCO has encouraged governments worldwide to take steps to maintain educational functioning to the greatest degree feasible (Owusu-Fordjour et al., 2020).

On a global level, one challenge to offering Emergency Remote Education involved using digital teaching resources. In this regard, educational institutions that had pre-existing online teaching systems were able to begin offering education without delay. However, while some nations had the infrastructure and background for online education prior to the pandemic (Mishra et al., 2020), others lacked the necessary facilities and strategies (Zhang et al., 2020). For example, some countries were able to use television, radio, and the Internet to reach students; however, countries such as China, Italy, and South Korea used

their online educational capabilities (Emin & Altunel, 2021). Those countries that did not have substantial resources in offering online education attempted to create methods for adapting to ERE. In other parts of the world, educational institutions were fully closed, suspending the learning process for millions of students, and the education industry entered a downturn. Nevertheless, the educational process has continued via online platforms for two years since the beginning of the pandemic.

In regard to the process of transitioning to ERE, different countries had different situations. According to Bao (2020), Chinese institutions were obliged to shut their campuses and begin offering online classes. Thus, since the spring of 2020, Chinese institutions have seen an enormous movement from person-to-person education to ERE, wherein most Chinese institutions have begun to provide online teaching-learning to meet the government's requirements. Hundreds of educators began lecturing in front of a computer monitor, and students were expected to attend their online classes from home. Similarly, according to Paudel (2021), face-to-face education in Nepal have been transformed into an online environment, resulting in new knowledge for many educators and students in higher education. Likewise, in many other parts of the world, technology-based learning, especially online teaching, has emerged as the most realistic alternative for maintaining educational programs during the pandemic. Educational establishments in technologically sophisticated nations such as the United Kingdom, Japan, the United States, and Turkey have enhanced their technological capacities. In contrast, educational institutions in less technologically advanced countries such as Nepal have not. In addition, Mishra et al. (2020) explained the situation in India, in that the Indian government began actively addressing the COVID-19 problem and emphasizing the importance of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and online classes as part of the university's mandatory teaching-learning activities. Furthermore, this was reflected in preparing a newly drafted education policy for 2019, which can be seen as a proactive and technologically effective measure in the midst of the pandemic. Namely, SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds) is a Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) platform launched by the Indian state. Moreover, Meeter et al. (2020) analyzed COVID-19

mitigations in the Dutch Research University and found that the campus was closed, and all education was delivered online during a semester. In that case, students rated ERE as less favorable than classroom-based education and resulting in decreased motivation. This situation was reported in the context of the reduced time commitment; classes and small-group activities were performed less often. In contrast to systems where ERE was provided, Sintema (2020) drew attention to the situation in Zambia, noting that the Zambian government declared that all educational institutions would be shut down on March 20th, 2020 due to concerns about the COVID-19 pandemic. This suspension had an adverse effect on Zambia's education sector. Similarly, Toquero (2020) pointed out that educational institutions in nations such as the Philippines faced significant obstacles in their planning, implementation, and assessment systems.

The impact of COVID-19 on education varies in different nations concerning their financial levels, as well (Wajdi et al., 2020). According to Winthrop (2020), for instance, most nations in Europe, East Asia, Central Asia, the Caribbean, the Pacific, and Latin America have delivered distance learning to rural students entirely through online courses or a mixture of broadcasting and ERE. On the other hand, in North and Middle Eastern Africa, around 28% of nations have delivered education solely through broadcasting; fewer than 40% have delivered ERE exclusively, and 22% have provided a mixture of broadcasting and ERE. Furthermore, in South Asia, 40% of the nations have delivered broadcasting education, and 50% have provided a mixture of broadcasting and ERE. In Sub-Saharan Africa, 11% of nations have provided ERE strictly, and 23% have provided a mix of broadcasting and ERE (Thomas, 2020). However, in the majority of low- and middle-income nations, most students have not been able to access broadcasting and ERE opportunities (Winthrop, 2020). Regarding Ethiopia, for example, since more than 80% of the population inhabits rural regions with reduced access to electricity, it is difficult for students to study through television and radio classes (Tiruneh, 2020). In this regard, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the countries' traditional education systems, so developing countries need to improve their broadcast, online, and virtual classroom substructure (Tadesse & Muluye, 2020). Nevertheless, with their broken technical infrastructure, academic incompetence, and limited

resources, third-world countries are experiencing policy paralysis in dealing with the unexpected changing education situation during the pandemic (Thomas, 2020). In contrast, educational institutions in metropolitan areas are able to use Google Classroom, e-mail, social media, and other applications to educate their students remotely by uploading assignments, textbooks, and reading materials (Tadesse & Muluye, 2020).

The coronavirus has been a disruptive force (EdSource, 2020), posing a long-term danger for schools and universities from nursery to the tertiary level, with the impact worsening daily (Mishra et al., 2020). Firstly, regarding middle schools, the unexpected lockdown was a constructive move by the government to protect school-aged children from the risk of catching COVID-19 because schools contain hundreds of students, making them risky sites where the disease may spread quickly (Sintema, 2020). Secondly, concerning higher education, the COVID-19 pandemic became increasingly dangerous after March 20th, 2020 (Karalis & Raikou, 2020). According to Erkut (2020), higher education was one of the areas most badly hit by COVID-19. As a result, almost all schools worldwide were compelled to discontinue traditional teaching, and about two billion students were compelled to carry on their education via online learning. According to the World Bank, different solutions for addressing the shutdown were attempted in various universities worldwide. For example, many institutions terminated the spring semester, while others paused their courses temporarily as they created online learning systems and redesigned curricula. In some instances, certain universities' transitions to ERE occurred on the same day of their closure (Crawford et al., 2020).

Some studies have focused on the impact of COVID-19, specifically from the perspective of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and English as a Second Language (ESL) online classes (Duraku & Hoxha, 2020; Kitishat et al., 2020; Mishra et al., 2020; Paudel, 2021). For instance, Kitishat et al. (2020) researched the impact of the pandemic on ESL education, in particular. The study examined the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning to determine the validity of online courses, visual and audio courses for educational purposes. Furthermore, a descriptive approach was used to assess students' interactions with ERE, as well as the hybrid education approach, as compared to the traditional classroom

setting. The results showed that both educators and learners had optimistic views and awareness of the online learning setting. Students were prepared for ERE but preferred Blended Hybrid Learning to online-only learning. This preference was because of the extent to which students could profit if the opportunities were available. Furthermore, despite significant obstacles, educators had positive opinions toward implementing blended or online learning in their teaching. Another critical aspect in this regard was the responsibility of academic institutions to equip educators with Internet Technological (IT) expertise by offering repetitive training classes to keep their IT abilities up to date. In this sense, Kitishat et al. (2020) found that most educational institutions were unprepared for ERE, blended learning, and put additional workload on instructors.

Regarding physical classrooms, Mishra et al. (2020) point out that holding courses in traditional classrooms was hard during the COVID-19 pandemic when maintaining social distance was critical; therefore, online teaching became an unavoidable necessity. Without the extensive use of online teaching resources, the pandemic educational scenario after COVID-19 would have been impossible. Thus, as the COVID-19 disease spread, there was a growing movement toward online teaching and learning as the only option accessible during the indefinite shutdown of schools, universities, and institutions (Martinez, 2020). In this context, various nations' central and state authorities agreed to establish ERE with the support of university-level educators' and students' organizations. Most nations have also encouraged parents and schools to assist students in continuing to study at home via ERE (UNESCO, 2020a) or through home-accessible radio and television lessons (Tadesse & Muluye, 2020).

For the definition of the term, Malone (2013) explained assessment knowledge as "language teachers" familiarity with the definition of testing, as well as the implementation of this information classroom practice in general and particularly to challenges connected to language assessment. Regrettably, many instructors lack an understanding of practical assessment (Crusana et al., 2016). As such, assessment literacy has been a jointly acknowledged phrase in educational research, and it has lately been expanded to the field of language testing via the term "language assessment literacy" (Inbar-Lourie, 2008). Language assessment literacy can be explained as a set of skills that allow an

instructor to comprehend, assess, and construct language exams and analyze test results. Language assessment literacy is critical for language instructors and other partners (Taylor, 2009). Because instructors' language assessment practice has gained significant priority in worldwide educational systems (e.g., Coombe et al., 2012; Gardner, 2010; Stoyhoff & Coombe, 2012), language assessment proficiency has been critically interrogated. According to Alderson (2005), exams created by educators are typical of poor quality, and the information they provide on success, growth, strengths, and weaknesses is generally extremely limited. With regard to this issue, Mendoza and Arandia (2009) elaborated on several tendencies that have evolved due to instructors' lack of assessment training. Firstly, the researchers discovered that assessments were often summative rather than formative and rarely utilized consistently. Secondly, they found that assessments were utilized incorrectly, noting that test grades were frequently used in ways that were not planned or anticipated. Overall, they indicated that in the Colombian context, instructors could not effectively monitor the results of exams and that they were incompetent in language assessment due to a lack of training. Additionally, they argued that Colombian instructors' lack of language assessment literacy was due to a fundamental lack of awareness of assessments and the use of formative versus summative exams; of the several forms of language assessments; of how to deliver meaningful feedback to learners; of how to motivate learners for taking responsibility for education; of how the findings of assessments are utilized; and of principles like validity, reliability, and fairness. Likewise, Razavipour and Rezagah (2018) showed that poor language assessment among Iranian English instructors was a factor leading to the discrepancy between reform-based assessment policy and instructors' ability to assess. In another study of English language learners, Gardner and Rea-Dickins (2001) found that educators had restricted the selection of language testing words accessible for self-assured usage. Furthermore, Jin's (2010) analysis of the professional education of language educators in China revealed that whereas qualified theory's scope and the use of language testing are documented, educational and psychological assessment practices received significantly less focus in China. This conclusion appeared to be supported by studies in classroom experiences in English as a second language (Tzagari, 2011). Finally, Reynolds-Keefers (2010) found that the

trainee instructors were more inclined to utilize grading rubrics in their courses due to their previous practice with rubrics as learners.

A further concern relates to online exams, which have posed severe problems for educational institutions worldwide (Barker & Bennett, 2012). Given the nature of online assessment, opportunities are available for students to cheat. Studies have shown that, compared to traditional examinations, the primary issue with online exams was the inability to control cheating (Harmon & Lambrinos, 2008; King et al., 2009; Watson & Sottile, 2010; Yilmaz, 2017). This is because students have instant access to the Internet and other technologies, giving them a considerable advantage over traditional exam methods. Furthermore, since it is difficult to monitor student behaviors during online exams, they are more inclined to cheat because they know that test administrators will not be able to detect it. As such, creating examinations requires a different perspective in online assessment than in assessments in physical classrooms, where the danger of students cheating is less due to the presence of the instructor. Although, in some cases, instructors assume that if student webcams are turned on, they will be able to identify cheating; however, according to Ali and Dmour (2021), this is not the case since students can cheat in a variety of ways.

Nearly all educational institutions and faculty were unprepared to teach through online educational platforms due to a lack of necessary infrastructure and experienced educators (Zhang et al., 2020). Moreover, the shift to ERE was quick and forced rather than scheduled and consensual (Bozkurt et al., 2020). Considering assessment in the educational process, according to Tzagari and Vogt (2017), many instructors do not carry out assessment-related activities since they have not obtained adequate academic assistance in their education programs. Consequently, they accept their supervisors' and colleagues' assessment procedures. Researchers have indicated that procedures such as "test as you were tested" or "learning on the job" prevent instructor improvement. In this sense, as Popham (2004) argues, a lack of proper training in assessment leads to "professional suicide." Regretfully, some experienced instructors lack appropriate assessment competence (Crusana et al., 2016), and although instructors are required to assess students' learning (NEA, 1983; Schafer, 1993), test users and a considerable number of educators have poor knowledge regarding assessment

principles such as reliability and validity (Popham, 2009). Ideas about assessment can change from person to person, but it is indisputable that it plays an essential role in education. To determine student progress, all educators need to use assessment practices in their teaching. However, unsatisfactory language assessment literacy can threaten assessment's reliability, validity, and fairness and, therefore, negatively affect students' learning (Xu & Brown, 2017). Recent research done during the COVID-19 pandemic revealed that instructors lacked online teaching skills (Bao, 2020) and struggled to assess their students' performance (Cutri et al., 2020). Such concerns have been highlighted by Koh et al. (2018), who note that language instructors often cannot successfully meet their English language curriculum goals due to a lack of assessment literacy competencies. Thus, a strong understanding of the connections between curriculum, classroom teaching, and assessment should be established.

In Turkey, there were 7.9 million students enrolled in university programs in the 2019-2020 academic year. The Council of Higher Education (CoHE), the constitutionally authorized governing body for coordinating, managing, and monitoring all 203 public and private universities in Turkey, issued recommendations for higher education institutions to follow throughout the pandemic era. For example, universities formed Coronavirus Commissions on March 11th and face-to-face teaching and learning activities were suspended at all higher education institutions for one week on March 12nd. On March 16th, the suspension was extended for the entire semester. Thus, for the spring semester of the 2019-2020 academic year, only online educational solutions were available for all university courses, whether offered synchronously or asynchronously. Institutions with distance education centers could shift to ERE fairly, and instructors learned to teach remotely utilizing online education systems. On the other hand, some Turkish institutions lacked the required infrastructure and could only share documents with their students, as opposed to offering online learning (Bakan Kalaycıoğlu et al., 2022). Furthermore, about testing, most of the online exams administered in Turkey during this period did not entail reliable supervision for learners (Acar-Güvendir & Özer-Özkan, 2021; Özalkan, 2021; Tüzün & Toraman, 2021). Additionally, the pandemic impacted primary and secondary education; when the first incidence of COVID-19 infection was

reported in Turkey, the Ministry of Education made the decision to pause face-to-face education and launched ERE for primary and high school students. As part of this effort, a broadcasting station known as the Education Information Network Television (EBATV) was launched to allow students to follow their lessons via this channel. Teachers and learners become increasingly involved in ERE through online classroom settings. However, the Ministry of Education later declared that traditional education is necessary for students and reinstated face-to-face learning on September 6th, 2021, although hundreds of people still had the virus. On the other hand, at the higher education level, most universities turned to a hybrid method, with 60% of the lessons taking place in person and 40% being provided online. With respect to Turkey, in particular, the pandemic demonstrated that the higher education system was unprepared for such a problem and inadequate in providing quality online learning, with administrators and lecturers having significant challenges in this regard.

1.2. The Distance Education Phenomenon

Gunawardena and McIsaac (2013) define distance education as organized learning in which the student and instructor are separated by location and in some cases, by time. As the most rapidly expanding type of domestic and global education, Dinçer (2016) likewise defines it as an educational system in which teachers and students communicate with each other at the same time via technology while being separated by distance. In this regard, the physical separation between learners and educators is a crucial feature of distance education (Wedemeyer, 2010). Distance education is not a new notion; it has been practiced at the university level since the early part of the nineteenth century (Bakan Kalaycıoğlu et al., 2022), with institutions developing distance teaching to aid students who were unable to attend campus-based programs due to geographical and financial restrictions (Bell & Tight 1993; Volery & Lord, 2000). Kayaduman and Battal (2021), who focused on instructors' opinions, found that distance education, according to the majority of instructors, promotes ubiquitous and personalized learning and improves instructor productivity by reducing time and energy commitments in planning and conducting course activities. In this regard, instructors frequently maintain their previous teaching conceptualizations and techniques in distance education (Aydemir et al., 2016; Roy & Boboc, 2016).

According to Gunawardena and McIsaac (2013), the evolution of distance education media occurred in the following order: print, broadcast television and radio, cable television, interactive instructional television, recorded audio and video media, teleconferencing, computers, and virtual reality. In their study, the researchers investigated distance education in the UK and found that colleges and universities offer current courses through distance learning programs as an alternative to regular attendance. Bozkurt (2017) investigated distance education from the Turkish perspective and asserted that the evolution of distance education took place in four phases. The first was the conceptual phase (1923-1955), followed by the letter (writing) phase (1956-1975), then the audio-visual tools phase (1976-1995), and finally, the Internet/Web-based technology period (1996-present). Bilgic and Tuzun (2020) report that today, distance education is used by more than 78 higher education institutions for bachelor's, master's, and associate degrees in Turkey.

1.3. The Online Education Phenomenon

Online education is characterized as pre-planned courses delivered electronically via multimedia platforms such as letters, radio, television, and the Internet (Altıparmak et al., 2011). Learning in this context can be asynchronous, synchronous, or a combination of both. In this regard, asynchronous learning refers to a teaching process that does not occur in real time (Moore & Kearsley, 2011), whereas synchronous learning occurs in real time via technology such as the Internet (Sun & Chen, 2016). The review of its history reveals that online education has grown swiftly, powered by Internet access.

Online courses require extensive lesson plans and teaching materials (Bao, 2020). As such, Crawford-Ferre and Wiest (2012) propose that online instructors should have adequate professional training about online design and instruction. Furthermore, Keengwe and Kidd (2010) recommended that online educators have clear and organized techniques for creating and controlling, getting and using necessary resources, documenting activities, and establishing timetables.

According to Bell and Fedemen (2013), online education allows higher education organizations to enter new markets. Many adult learners may appreciate the flexibility of attending courses while carrying out their other responsibilities.

The many technological advancements utilized by universities' online programs may improve contact between students and instructors, as well as among students in general; however, professional development programs intended to train instructors in the use of online teaching tools have typically been regarded as insufficient, since they are one-time events that focus solely on the technological aspects of online education (Bickerstaff & Cormier, 2015; Flint et al., 2011).

1.4. The Emergency Remote Education Phenomenon

Bates (2021) and Williamson et al. (2020) assert that the instructional techniques conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic era should be classified as emergency remote education or emergency online delivery rather than distance or online education. These terms are generally used interchangeably with no significant difference (Guri-Rosenbilt, 2005; Moore et al., 2011). According to Hodges et al. (2020), most ERE courses lack a comprehensive design, in contrast to online education, due to the rapid shift in educational environments. Hodges et al. (2020) further note that even though there is a common component between distance education and ERE, wherein learners and teachers are separated, distance education differs from ERE in terms of plan and design.

According to Green et al. (2020), the move to remote education has been surrounded by anxiety due to the uncertainties relating to the global pandemic. The pandemic has touched everybody in this post-digital era. Many discussions have developed concerning the COVID-19 situation regarding how the borders between work and home and university and home have now evolved into a single experience. The researchers draw attention to two elements that have become prominent in ERE. First, it has prompted consideration of people's affective moods, and the need to acknowledge and support them through physical and mental discomfort. As such, instructors should consider these concerns when designing their courses. Second, issues have emerged to digital access and connectivity, shedding light on the phenomenon of digital inequality. However, Green et al. (2020) also focused on the opportunities for instructors to ERE, including debating and learning different approaches to teaching and supporting student engagement and team education.

1.4.1. Online Assessment Tools

With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, higher education institutions worldwide were obligated to shift to ERE and use online tools (Crawford et al., 2020; Salim et al., 2021). However, while many common educational activities, such as teaching and communicating, are easily performed via advanced online learning tools, others, such as assessing learning outcomes, are replete with difficulties (Hussein et al., 2020).

In Turkey, all universities completed the spring 2020 semester using online resources. Online assessments were conducted using various methods, including examinations, homework, and tasks (Senel & Senel, 2021). In ERE, learning management systems (LMS) are widely utilized. These tools include Canvas, Blackboard, Edmodo, Moodle, Google Classroom, and Microsoft Teams. Likewise, video conferencing applications such as Zoom, Skype, and Adobe Connect are newer online tools often used for online classes (Koh & Kan, 2020; Nyachwaya, 2020). These tools can offer a variety of benefits in terms of assessment (Araka et al., 2020). The benefits of using these tools are listed by Senel and Senel (2021) as immediate feedback, ease of editing based on feedback, ease of submitting/responding, control and storage, providing statistical data, re-use, potential to enrich assessment tools and products, providing student participation, and motivation. However, aside from the benefits of using online tools in assessment, there are certain limitations. One of the most conflictual issues is testing security (Butler-Henderson & Crawford, 2020; Dawson, 2020; Vazquez et al., 2021). For example, according to Senel and Senel (2021), preventing cheating, copying, and plagiarism poses difficulties in ERE. Another issue in ERE relates to ICT literacy. Limitations in the capacity of instructors and students to use technology may have an undesirable effect on the qualified use of assessment tools.

1.5. The Rationale of the Study

Previous studies have frequently investigated the challenges instructors have faced in ERE (e.g., Aliyyah et al., 2020; Çiçek et al., 2020; Forrester, 2020; Sari & Nayır, 2020). Researchers have found that instructors cope with challenges such as lack of internet access and infrastructure, classroom management and

human resources, inactive student cameras, background noise, lack of technical tools, and Internet connectivity. In addition to these issues, other studies have analyzed the challenges both instructors and students have faced in ERE (e.g., Lassoued et al., 2020; Peters et al., 2020), noting that challenges have emerged due to the effects of the physical distance between instructors and students, the requirement to use technology to communicate with learners, workload, time management, and the continuing necessity for a range of assessment information to be collected and to supply feedback. Additionally, researchers have found that educators and learners face several logistical, social, and economic challenges. Likewise, studies investigating the challenges faced by EFL instructors in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020) have revealed problems relating to students, instructors, and parents; issues relating to a lack of preparation and planning have also been reported. Concerning online assessment before ERE, some studies have identified challenges (Kearns, 2012; Liang & Creasy, 2004), issues with validity and reliability (Gaytan & McEwen, 2007), concerns about safety and privacy (Brem 2002; Rowe, 2004), and difficulties assessing online classroom interactions (Morley, 2000). In this respect, researchers have found that instructors cannot watch and respond to student questions; the lack of low-level social cues and emotions may reduce the depth of communication, and online cheating is frequently more difficult to detect.

Numerous other studies have investigated the advantages of remote education noted by instructors and students (e.g., Liang & Creasy, 2004; Miyamoto et al., 2017; Robles & Braathen, 2002; Walsh, 2015). Researchers have found that educators can be more flexible in the online atmosphere since they can lecture from anywhere, and learners are able to learn wherever they want. Similarly, students can learn whatever they want, whenever they want, and, most crucially, can assess what they have learned.

Several studies have also been conducted with respect to the benefits of online assessment (e.g., Buzzetto-More & Bennett 2006; Ekon, 2013; Fluck, 2019; Hricko & Howell, 2006; Lally, 2020; Spivey & McMillan, 2014). Researchers have found that online assessment provides cost savings relating to the printing materials, examination venues, travel, and freely accessible internet resources. It also reduces paper consumption, entails fewer worries about the security of

transferring test papers, offers flexibility in terms of time and location, allows for constant feedback, and facilitates random selection and repeatability of exam questions.

However, very few studies have investigated the challenges and opportunities EFL instructors have encountered in the Turkish context during ERE (e.g., Ayaz et al., 2019; Başaran et al., 2020; Şanlı, 2021). In the existing studies, however, researchers have found that the challenges faced by Turkish EFL instructors during ERE included course books, crowded classes, fairly limited class hours, and unmotivated students. Additionally, while ERE provides some beneficial aspects, there are challenges related to limited interactions, short course periods, lack of infrastructure, inequality of opportunity, and inadequate content and materials.

Based on the literature review of Turkish EFL instructors' online assessment literacy, as well as the challenges and opportunities they face during the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a need to develop a detailed description of EFL instructors' online assessment literacy, as well as the challenges and opportunities they faced in the Turkish context and an in-depth analysis of the data regarding such challenges and opportunities. Therefore, by collecting triangulated qualitative data, this study aims to bridge this research gap by investigating Turkish EFL instructors' online assessment literacy, as well as the challenges and opportunities they faced during the COVID-19 pandemic in Turkey.

1.6. The Purpose of the Study

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the governments of many countries, such as the USA, China, Nepal, Jordan, and Turkey, have mandated that all educational institutions pivot from face-to-face to ERE via tools such as the Internet, computers, televisions, smartphones, and tablets. This drastical alteration in the educational process has inevitably given rise to numerous challenges, as well as opportunities and has changed instructors' perceptions. One of the goals of this MA thesis is to delineate the challenges and opportunities that instructors have faced in the online assessment process during ERE. The study also aims to develop a deeper understanding of Turkish EFL instructors' online assessment literacy. The main research questions in this regard were what challenges and

opportunities EFL instructors have faced while assessing students' performative skills (e.g., writing and speaking) in ERE during COVID-19 in the Turkish context, as well as their perceptions about online assessment. Instructors who teach English as a foreign language in university preparatory classes were included in this study to identify as many challenges and opportunities they faced as possible.

1.7. Research Questions

The study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?
3. What did instructors who lectured in online courses do frequently to increase the reliability and validity of performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills assessment in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?
4. What were the Turkish EFL instructors' perceptions on the assessment of online performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?
5. What assessment tools did Turkish EFL instructors use while assessing students' performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?

A questionnaire was administered to the Turkish EFL instructors to answer the questions above. Immediately afterward, open-ended questions in English and individual interviews in their native language were conducted via face-to-face meetings or Zoom.

1.8. Significance of the Study

In the Turkish context, studies have examined the challenges of remote education and how stakeholders perceive it. Firstly, Sari and Nayır (2020) examined the difficulties faced by academics, administrators, and instructors during the COVID-19 pandemic. Next, Başaran et al. (2020) analyzed the opinions of students, parents, and instructors about the success of remote

education during COVID-19 in Turkey. There appears to be a lack of research-based studies on the challenges and opportunities of ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic in Turkey, so the study's most significant feature was that it was the first to investigate Turkish EFL instructors' online assessment literacy as well as challenges and opportunities in the ERE context during the COVID-19 pandemic in Turkey. This particular study makes a remarkable difference from those other studies in answering the comprehensive research questions. The findings of this study are intended to benefit university EFL instructors because it provides a clear picture of the challenges and opportunities they may experience during online assessment in ERE, enabling them to take preventative measures against the challenges. Furthermore, the study is expected to contribute to university administrations since it may help them provide ERE demands like appropriate infrastructure and hardware components to EFL instructors. It also presents comprehensive information about students in ERE so that they can be aware of any issues they may cause, such as cheating and reluctance to attend online lessons, prompting them to behave more reasonably.

1.9. Definition of Terms

Assessment: The continuum of obtaining and debating data from different sources to gain a thorough picture of what participants know, comprehend, and can accomplish with their knowledge as a consequence of their training practices (Huba & Freed, 2000, p. 8).

Assessment Literacy: An "individual's understandings of the fundamental assessment concepts and procedures deemed likely to influence educational decisions" (Popham, 2011, p. 267).

Language Assessment Literacy: The "ability to design, develop and critically evaluate language tests and other assessment procedures, as well as the ability to monitor, grade and score assessments on the basis of theoretical knowledge" (Vogt & Tsagari, 2014, p.377).

Online Assessment: A means of assessing students' learning that takes place in an online environment.

Online Assessment Tool: Computer software that provides for teaching and assessing online.

Face-to-Face Education: A type of learning in which instructors and students meet simultaneously and in a location.

Online Education: A term that “refers to educational processes that utilize information and communications technology to mediate synchronous as well as asynchronous learning and teaching activities” (Naidu, as cited in Jereb & Šmitek, 2006, p. 15).

Synchronous Online Learning: A “live, real-time (and usually scheduled), facilitated instruction and learning-oriented interaction” (Murray, 2007).

Asynchronous Online Learning: A learning environment in which participants are not all online at the same time, and learning resources are available on-demand (Hrasintski, 2008).

Emergency Remote Teaching: A temporary teaching approach implemented in accordance with the COVID-19 regulations to provide educational content for continuing the educational process and avoid time loss (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020).

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1. An Overview of Online Assessment

Some concerns have been raised in the literature concerning assessment in online teaching. These include interests in academic entirety (Kennedy et al., 2000), the utilization of assessments that promote academic self-regulation (Kim et al., 2008; Robles & Braathen, 2002), the significance of assessment events (Kim et al., 2008; Robles & Braathen, 2002), and the challenges involved in assessing online debates, use of content analysis and cooperation (Meyer, 2006; Naismith et al., 2011; Vonderwell et al., 2007).

Kim et al. (2008) researched if the principles of assessment in online teaching are represented in the assessment activities performed by the developers and supervisors of online distance courses. The study's findings revealed that the assessment activities of online distance courses do not precisely adhere to the standards proposed in the literature. The researchers also identified the assessment features in online teaching as formative assessment, feedback in assessment, self assessment, team assessment, peer assessment, and authentic assessment.

On the other hand, Kennedy et al. (2000) called attention to problem areas in the assessment process, arguing that the lack of direct contact between teachers and students in online courses creates a unique opportunity for academic misconduct. In this regard, their study analyzed student and faculty members' perceptions of cheating and online learning. The results showed that both faculty members and students believe that online assessment is difficult, and easier to cheat in an online educational setting.

According to Robles and Braathen (2002), even though instructors at all levels have welcomed the use of online technology as an instructional device, the question of assessing student learning in an online environment has received little attention. In their study in an online program at the University of North Dakota, they aimed to identify the methods, advantages, and challenges of student assessment. Accordingly, learners in an online class were compared to learners in a traditional class regarding learning results. To the researchers, many traditional classroom environments were being replaced with the online environment. Under

this scenario, students can learn whatever they want, whenever they want, and wherever they want, and most crucially, they can assess what they have learned. Online assessment entails more than merely testing and grading students. Online instructors may adjust their assessment activities to give relevant feedback, encourage accountability, and provide opportunities to exhibit excellence by remembering basic assessment concepts. Instructors should use online assessment to evaluate student academic progress, taking into account several components of evaluation. The researchers concluded that if online instructors continue to improve their teaching methods, students can learn more effectively.

2.2. Challenges and Opportunities in Online Assessment

The literature reveals a range of difficult issues concerning assessing students' speaking skills (Forrester, 2020), the dynamics of classroom assessment (Liang & Creasy, 2004), challenges and practices in student assessment (Kearns, 2012), and challenges and opportunities of online learning system (Almaiah & Althunibat, 2020).

Instructors and researchers alike have pointed out that, since education through technology should be promoted using the right pedagogical approaches (Daugherty & Funke, 1998), it is essential to ask how this can be accomplished and what factors should be considered for more beneficial assessment to ensure the quality of online assessment (Liang & Creasy, 2004). Accordingly, Liang and Creasy (2004) focused on analyzing the dynamics of WebCT classroom assessment in their investigation of educators' perspectives and experiences. They also concentrated on the challenges and opportunities relating to online classroom assessment. Their study comprised 216 students in the College of Education at an urban university in the midwestern United States, and 10 faculty members who taught WebCT programs. WebCT is a form of an online training program that was widely used at the university in question, and it was used for interviews and classroom observations. The WebCT courses were web-based (with over 50% of the curriculum given online) provided by their university's college of education. The researchers asserted that the distinctive character of web-based learning placed students in the heart of the action, allowing them to take charge of their education. In reporting the study results, the researchers elaborated on the challenges, noting that instructors could no longer watch and respond to student

questions. Moreover, a lack of low-level social cues and emotions reduced the depth of communication, and online cheating was frequently more challenging to detect. On the other hand, the researchers drew attention to some opportunities that online courses could provide as a unique communication environment. For example, this system allowed students much quicker access to an extensive database, and online communication allowed for more interactive assessment to precisely measure learning outcomes, and foster peer feedback and increase participation.

In another study, Forrester (2020) investigated the challenges and solutions to problems faced by instructors in online group speaking assessments at a Hong Kong university. The results showed significant challenges included inactive student cameras, background noise, lack of technical tools, and Internet connectivity. In addition, the researcher found that adapting old material, receiving less feedback, using chat instead of speaking, being unsure of students understanding, and being ghosted by students presented as further difficulties. On the other hand, Forrester outlined four approaches to assessing students' speaking skills in online teaching. The first and second of these were improper for practical, technical, and pedagogical reasons; however, the most preferred method was through synchronous discussion assessment, wherein the instructors were participants and conversed individually with students by designing real conversations such as presentations and job interviews.

Kearns (2012) likewise explored both the challenges and the effective practices relating to student assessment in online teaching. This study focused on the many types of assessment techniques utilized in online classes and how the online environment facilitates or constrains these techniques. The researcher surveyed 24 online courses to identify the methods utilized to assess student learning and improve learner outcomes in the course. The research took place in two phases at a large university in the northeastern United States, beginning in the spring of 2011. Phase One was targeted at reviewing the syllabus so that researchers could determine the sorts of assessments that would best contribute to all students passing a given course. Phase Two included a focus group and interviews with eight online educators regarding their problems and practices in online assessment. The participants were educators teaching online lessons in

education, nursing, gerontological studies, and library science. The study revealed five categories comprising presentations, online discussions, fieldwork, writing tasks, quizzes, and assessments. The challenges that emerged included the physical distance between instructors and students, the requirement for using technology to communicate with learners, workload, time management, and the constant necessity for a range of assessment information to be collected and to supply feedback.

2.2.1. Challenges in Online Assessment

Over the past two decades, several researchers have revealed significant problems in assessing online courses (Liang & Creasy, 2004). Since in-house assessments are not possible, online assessments are the only medium through which instructors may monitor student performance and growth (Ali & Dmour, 2021). The online assessment presents difficulties on the whole, since it necessitates using a valid and reliable framework. One urgent issue in this respect involves cheating and plagiarism in online learning settings (Fuller & Yu, 2014). Indeed, one of the most challenging components of online assessment is the matter of academic integrity, as well as the related elements of identity security, plagiarism, unauthorized cooperation, and cheating. Even though these issues exist in the traditional education setting, they are exacerbated in the computerized environment since instructors do not directly see their students or their settings, and many features of online technology increase the possibility and incentive for misbehavior (Rowe, 2004). However, according to a survey by Wiley (2020), 93% of instructors felt that learners tended to cheat online. As such, doubts concerning online assessment in ERE stem from the fact that it is extremely challenging to regulate and prevent students from engaging in cheating (Şenel & Şenel, 2021), plagiarism, and other ethical breaches (Bakan Kalaycıoğlu et al., 2022).

Almaiah and Althunibat (2020) likewise explored significant challenges relating to the current online learning systems and investigated the main factors that supported the usage of online learning systems during the COVID-19 pandemic in six public universities in Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The thematic analysis method was used in this qualitative research, and interviews were the only instrument used to collect their data. The researchers interviewed 30 students

and 31 experts. The results with respect to challenges related to technical factors regarding online learning systems, lack of financial support, decreased efficiency, the overall quality of the online learning system, and online learning system adaptation. In addition, the researchers also revealed that culture, self-efficacy, and trust affected the adaptation of online learning systems and online assessment.

From a similar perspective, several cybersecurity dangers have also been cited. Unlike in face-to-face courses, the possibility of a hacked online classroom exists (Armstrong, 2013; Talent-LMS, 2020) because any server connected to the Internet poses security threats. Hackers all around the globe are continuously employing techniques and software systems to identify susceptible servers. When a security flaw occurs, a hacker may damage the system to disrupt a test or utilize the assessment system to deliver junk e-mail to degrade its functionality (Dennick et al., 2009).

2.2.1.1. Challenges in Online Assessment for Instructors

In the course of ERE during the pandemic, instructors worked to provide untested and unprecedented teaching methods (Çiçek et al., 2020). This has, therefore, led to an increase in the number of challenges faced by instructors. Some of these included the security of online assessment, technical concerns, student conditioning, cheating, and instructors' lack of technical competence. According to Nguyen et al. (2020), the most difficult aspects of ERE for instructors involve how to conduct assessment processes and assure exam reliability. Other studies in this regard have reported that educators and learners faced several logistical, social, and economic challenges (e.g., Lassoued et al., 2020; Peters et al., 2020).

In the Turkish context, Sari and Nayır (2020) investigated the challenges experienced by instructors, administrators, and academics in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their participants were 65 instructors working in various cities in Turkey. This study investigated issues in three thematic areas: lack of internet access and infrastructure, classroom management, and human resources. The findings revealed internet-related challenges such as connectivity issues, lack of infrastructure, internet access, technical problems, and lack of technical literacy. Moreover, difficulties with classroom management were also identified,

including lack of communication in class, lack of student follow-up, and poor participation in online classes. Concerning difficulties with human resources, the researchers determined that inability to use the system effectively and follow the courses lead to problems. Researchers concluded that these problems made online assessment difficult.

From another perspective, Başaran et al. (2020) analyzed the views of students, parents, and teachers on the effectiveness of remote education during COVID-19 in Turkey. In this qualitative case study, the researchers used a semi-structured interview form to collect data. The participants in their study were 80 teachers, 80 students, and 80 parents. According to the findings, the participants felt that ERE had beneficial aspects, but it also had challenges, such as limited interactions, short course periods, lack of infrastructure, inequality of opportunity, and subpar content and materials. Additionally, teachers reported drawbacks such as giving less detailed feedback to students and the unsuitability of some courses for ERE.

Moreover, the instructors cited several problems related to technical and technological concerns in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, few parents had mobile phones or laptop computers, and internet connections were inconsistent, especially in rural areas. Without solutions to these technological problems, students could not attend their classes (Aliyyah et al., 2020), as online teaching and learning heavily rely on various online resources and Wi-Fi access. The difficulties that instructors experienced influenced students' learning. All technical obstacles, conditioning, and student participation, as well as online instructor teaching experience, all had a detrimental influence on the attainment of educational goals.

The technological proficiency of instructors in an online context was another the challenge that impacted the success of educational exercises (Conrad & Donaldson, 2011; Ko & Rossen, 2017; Watson, 2020). In this regard, online teaching is challenging for instructors who lack relevant experience because teaching online requires instructors to grasp a range of applications. In this regard, faculty may be hesitant to adopt online courses due to a variety of potential barriers, including student achievement in online courses, ambiguity about their image as educators, technical support requirements, an eagerness for a rational

courseload, and manageable levels of enrollment in online courses (Wingo et al., 2017).

With respect to English language education, in particular, Atmojo and Nugroho (2020) investigated how 16 EFL instructors carried out online EFL teaching and reported on its challenges. The researchers indicated that instructors in their study did not use games, artificial intelligence, cyberspace, or augmented reality but they conducted discussions with learners to obtain a better understanding of the learners' lack of knowledge. Additionally, instructors conducted question-and-answer sessions with learners to engage them and help them address their learning challenges. However, many problems were caused by students, instructors, and parents because of a lack of preparation and planning, online learning did not function properly. Therefore, according to the researchers, instructors need to be trained and equipped with sufficient knowledge and abilities to optimize their practice in conducting online teaching.

Trust and Whalen (2020) also addressed the training aspect, investigating whether instructors were properly trained in ERE in the US. In their study, a total of 325 educators were selected to participate, and their instrument was an online survey of K-12 instructors. The results revealed that the challenges facing ERE instructors were internet connection problems, variable personal needs, and variable educational or government policies. This study also showed that instructors were not ready to use distance learning strategies and that it was difficult to adapt existing teaching methods to online courses.

Ayaz et al. (2019) likewise analyzed the behaviors of language teachers in high schools in Turkey during ERE. Their participants were 13 English language teachers and 55 high school students from different parts of Turkey. The data were collected via open-ended questions. According to their results, the challenges faced by EFL teachers during ERE included course books, crowded classes, fairly limited class hours, and unmotivated students.

2.2.2. Challenges in ERE for Students

Regarding challenges that students face in ERE, Grishchenko (2020) points out that economically disadvantaged learners and those living in rural areas frequently have restricted access to online technology. Since consistent access to

digital technology is required for online learning, the student who lacks such access or has little knowledge of how to use these tools may have difficulty adjusting to online learning. A digital split arising from these issues emerged before COVID-19, but the pandemic has exacerbated these concerns (Beaunoyer et al., 2020).

Other researchers have also asserted that students living in adverse conditions have struggle to attend online classes from home (Aguilera-Hermida, 2020). As Alliyah et al. (2020) explain, if servers are down or Wi-Fi connections are poor, online courses may be unavailable and unreliable. Thus, although online assessment is more convenient and less expensive than traditional exams, there are still significant infrastructural hurdles. For example, if a connection fails in the middle of a test, students not only miss out on the chance of being educated; their focus is also compromised, leading to less accurate results.

Moreover, according to a recent study in a developing Turkish university (Alma et al., 2020), some students lacked the knowledge and abilities to utilize the learning management system, and instructors were concerned about the students' digital literacy. Adedoyin and Soykan (2020) further maintain that instructors and learners with low levels of digital literacy struggled to perform necessary tasks in ERE during the pandemic. Moreover, according to Atmojo and Nugroho (2020), students need to be exposed to online learning to improve their digital literacy and correct their misconceptions about online learning.

2.2.3. Challenges in Online Exams and Its' Affect on Online Assessment

According to Ali and Dmour (2021), one of the challenges of administering online exams is that the same exam may have to be administered individually, owing to the limited number of students in each online classroom. This allows students to communicate with one another about the questions and answers. In addition, opportunities for collaborative projects and practical tests are also limited in online assessment contexts. Because of the present structure, the instruments utilized for online assessments are one-way, mainly relying on written exams. Online assessment tools do not provide assessment opportunities for students who study the arts or group projects in which learners are given a group task and graded on their performance. This situation limits comprehensive

assessment across all courses and demonstrates that online assessment only allows for specific types of testing (Paatham, 2019).

In addition to issues with online classroom assessment, several problems and concerns relating to online examinations have been frequently highlighted in the literature. These include student cheating (Arnold, 2016; Fontaine, 2012), wherein the Internet is thought to be a stimulant for cheating on online exams (Okada et al., 2019). Similarly, Harmon et al. (2010) argue that, although studies have been ambiguous about rising levels of cheating in online classes, they demonstrate that the risk of cheating is greater for online exams. Additionally, keeping track of the tests that students completed at home has generally not been feasible. Instructors could not ask them where they had put their learning resources, and they could not tell them not to talk with their classmates during a test (Petty et al., 2004; Suen & Parkes, 2002). According to Tauh and Naing (2021), the utilization of multiple screens, smartphones, screen sharing among students, taking a screenshot, sending it to classmates, and using traditional methods such as writing notes on hands or attaching note cards to monitors were all examples of potential cheating techniques during the online exam.

2.2.4. Opportunities in Online Assessment

Despite the challenges, numerous opportunities have also been cited for ERE and online assessment. In this regard, online assessment involves cost savings like printing, examination venues, travel, and freely accessible internet resources (Fluck, 2019; Hricko & Howell, 2006; Lally, 2020). It also reduces paper consumption, creates fewer worries about the security of transferring test papers, allows for flexibility in time and location, permits constant and immediate feedback, and facilitates random selection and repeatability of exam questions (Ekon, 2013; Spivey & McMillan, 2014). Online assessment has additional benefits: Better student statements, accessibility to a larger audience, allowance for meta-documentation, ease of maintaining, support for the improvement of student talents (Buzzetto-More & Bennett 2006). Regarding the benefits of online formative assessment, it has been argued that technologies foster increased student engagement and the establishment of a learning community (Gikandi et al., 2011).

2.2.4.1. Opportunities in Online Assessment for Instructors

Online assessment methods provide the most effective approach for instructors to determine whether or not their students are improving (Ali & Dmour, 2021). Assessment data from online classes can help instructors make decisions about students' fulfillment of learning outcomes, identify issues with student learning in particular areas, ensure intended feedback, and extend extra effort to students (Peterson, 2016).

Furthermore, according to Robles and Braathen (2002), questions provided in an online course allow the instructor a greater opportunity to assess overall student comprehension. Only one student can respond when the instructor poses a question in a traditional classroom. Unless the instructor actively engages with the other students in the class, the instructor has no way of knowing if they all comprehend the topic. When a question is presented online, each student must reply before proceeding with the lesson. Additionally, instructors can create online portfolios for students in the context of an online class. Namely, to assess student learning, instructors can construct an electronic portfolio of each student's improvement in a lesson by gathering online homework, comments, educator remarks, and projects. Monitoring these portfolios and assessing student learning through a pre-determined set of objectives can be used as part of the online assessment process. Additionally, this enables the transmission of continuous and real-time feedback at a convenient location and time for both the learner and the educator (Walsh, 2015). Instructors who work in online environment can also make use of online learning, benefiting from increased flexibility in terms of place and time; reusable and immediate updating of learning resources; increased ways to independently communicate with, monitor, and direct learners; and increased capacity to define the educational needs of students and personalize learning knowledge (Ally, 2004).

According to Palloff and Pratt (2011), an effective online instructor ought to grasp the nature of face-to-face and online education and use this knowledge to develop and facilitate online programs. Furthermore, instructors must adhere to the principles of online learning to develop and sustain instruction during online courses. In this regard, successful online instructors must encourage active communication, interaction, cooperation, and students participation. To

accomplish this, according to Keengwe et al. (2014) and Savery (2005), instructors ought to have personal qualities such as being highly driven, helpful, organized, analytical, considerate, accessible, and active. According to Miyamoto et al. (2017), instructors can be flexible in online learning since they can lecture from anywhere, even if they cannot be on campus owing to research, conference attendance, and other responsibilities. Alman and Tomer (2012) highlight that instructors in online teaching have the opportunity to study the guidelines of educational design technology, online pedagogy, and emerging technologies. Additionally, there is more contact between the instructor and each student, and it takes significantly less time to create lesson plans because just one lesson plan is required each week for one real-time session.

Sepulveda-Escobar and Morrison (2020) examined the challenges and opportunities of the online teaching experience in Chile during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their participants were 27 teachers. An online questionnaire, a blog post, and semi-structured interviews were the instruments applied in this mixed-method study. The results demonstrated that the experience of instructors not only allowed them to learn how to use different online platforms and promote their autonomy and accountability but also enabled them to reflect on the socio-cultural context in which students and their families lived during the pandemic.

2.3. Methods for Assessing Online Learning

The research on efficient methods of assessing online student learning has grown, yet it is still not complete (Robles & Braathen, 2002). Online assessments are largely based on traditional assessment procedures; however, they are assisted by online processes (De Villiers et al., 2016). Marshall (2003) claims that effective online assessment methods ought to be founded on the characteristics of excellent traditional classroom instruction, such as the challenge to imagine, the desire to enter the classroom, and the willingness to provide additional support, encouragement, and purposeful tasks. On the contrary, Robles and Braathen (2002) argue that online assessment necessitates more methodical, ongoing methods than traditional assessment approaches. Furthermore, as assessment methods need to meet the intended degree of competence, online assessment necessitates that instructors change their training processes to make them more creative than traditional training (Liang & Creasy, 2004).

Effective online assessment methods include: (a) developing authentic learning situations; (b) aligning learning goals with realistic scripts; (c) using the software as quickly as possible; (d) having online advisors available; and (e) delivering on-site instruction that addresses individual student learning differences (Boyle et al., 2004).

Numerous studies have focused on online assessment methods and the distribution of assessments (Arend, 2007; Gaytan & McEwen, 2007; Swan, 2002). Firstly, Swan (2002) examined 73 online courses at the State University of New York Learning Network (SLN) in the Spring 1999 semester. A questionnaire consisting mainly of multiple-choice items elicited answers to questions centered on demographic and student satisfaction information. A total of 1406 students responded to the survey. The researcher used one-way analyses of variation on this dataset to detect substantial variations in students' pleasure and perceived learning concerning demography and online learning perceptions. Two researchers reviewed the 73 online courses separately and assessed their content using a Likert-type scale on 22 factors. Conversations, essays, written tasks, projects, quizzes and examinations, and group work were the methods utilized. Moreover, almost three-quarters of the courses utilized online discussion as a graded activity, and the participants used written assignments, examinations, and quizzes in around half of their courses. According to the findings, with respect to their degree of contact with course materials, their instructor, and their peers in online courses, nearly all students thought these elements were as good or better than in typical in-person classes. The study found that three factors influenced students' pleasure and perceived learning. These included clarity of design, mutual effect with instructors, and active argumentation among students. Secondly, Arend (2007) came to similar conclusions in a review of 60 online classes. Online conversation, tests, written tasks, practical tasks, problem tasks, quizzes, journals, projects, and presentations were among the assessment methods the researcher reported in this case. This study chose Colorado Community Colleges Online, an online unit consisting of 13 enrollee colleges in the Colorado Community College system, Dawson Community College of Montana, Northwest Missouri State University, and Pickens Tech of Denver as the study sample. The researcher randomly selected sixty courses from the Spring 2005 semester and

utilized a one-way analysis of variances to assess the response bias. Fifty-one instructors fulfilled an instructor survey. These instructors had an estimated 13 years of experience teaching at the university level and five years of experience teaching online. In addition, 411 students completed a student survey. Like Swan (2002), the researcher discovered that a substantial number of the courses utilized online conversation as a grading activity. In 83% of the courses, the participants used quizzes and examinations, while they used written assignments in 63% of the courses. Using different and alternative assessment methods, spreading grades over time, and providing regular feedback to students appeared to be helpful practices in this study. Moreover, the students reported that they preferred elaboration and critical thinking to rote memorization, because they were more complicated learning practices. On the other hand, they noted that online instructors must ensure that they use assessments wisely and that feedback is helpful.

Finally, in their study, Gaytan and McEwen (2007) asked online instructors to state the assessment methods that they thought to be especially influential in the online context. The researchers used the descriptive research method to explore student and instructor views of online instructional and assessment technology. All educators and students registered in courses at two institutions in the south of the state during the autumn of 2004 were included in the study population. The data were collected using online questionnaires delivered through the Blackboard and WebCT course administration systems. An instructor survey and student survey were administered separately in this process. The researchers used descriptive statistics to synthesize the instructor and student answers and evaluated their general opinions of online classes involving the quality of instruction and the usefulness of online assessment. According to the results, solutions such as projects, portfolios, self-assessments, peer reviews with feedback, scheduled tests and quizzes, and asynchronous discussion were among the assessment methods options. The instructors emphasized the importance of reviewing the written records of student discussion postings to identify improvements in learner comprehension. Moreover, it was found to be advantageous to utilize the channel and discussion board capabilities of most class administration systems to contribute to the development of interaction and team

coherence in the online environment. According to the researchers, instructors should form groups for collaborative work by using online meeting rooms because they support synchronous and asynchronous communication. In addition, educators should make an effort to develop effective rubrics because these support the assessment activities. Educators should also carefully check the clarity of assignments and ensure that students have enough details to understand them correctly. Finally, this study revealed that strategies to ensure quality of online teaching include keeping student contacts open, ensuring online courses were as strict as their traditional counterparts, utilizing different educational methods to draw students from different training styles, and forcing students to communicate with the instructors and with one another in order to promote team cohesiveness.

2.4. Online Assessment Strategies and Techniques

Researchers have analyzed various studies related to online assessment strategies and techniques (Pechenizkiy et al., 2009; Sewell et al., 2010). For instance, Sewell et al. (2010) explained the critical components of formative and summative online assessments, such as SCORM (shareable content object reference model) modules, assignments, discussion boards, proctored and non-proctored examinations. Their study aim to give instructors who were new to online teaching an overview of the design and, therefore, the usage of online assessment strategies. The findings of this study revealed that combining instructors' assessment techniques with technology made online assessment design easier. For example, when an instructor used automated scoring with ratings, students could obtain fast feedback on tasks. If instructors design learning assessments well, they will benefit learners, instructors, and the university.

Pechenizkiy et al. (2009) drew attention to process mining, focusing on the creation of a collection of smart devices and strategies to retrieve information relating to processes from an information system's event logs. In this study, the researchers showed how process mining works for educational data mining. They examined assessment knowledge from online multiple-choice examinations and performance analysis approaches. The researchers investigated several concerns connected to the composing and customizing of online assessment processes within a series of Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQ) tests conducted during mid-term examinations at the Eindhoven University of Technology utilizing Sakai

(Mneme testing component) open-source Learning Management Systems (LMSs) and Moodle (Quiz module tools). They gathered all possible information for each student and question on the test, involving accuracy, certainty, grade, whether an answer was checked for accuracy or not, whether a detailed explanation instruction was requested or not, and how much time was spent reading it. Additionally, information was gathered on the test involving correctness, certainty, score, time spent answering the question, and whether an answer was controlled for the correctness or not. As a conclusion of their study, by using standard techniques for categorization, gathering, and association analysis, the researchers effectively applied data mining techniques to many forms of educational data and helped to address a variety of challenges. The researchers demonstrated some of the potential of process mining techniques implemented for online assessment information, where students received no feedback but could respond to questions in a flexible order.

2.5. Assessment in Online Discussions

With respect to assessing online discussions, Vonderwell et al. (2007) examined the use of online asynchronous discussion, assessment processes, and students' knowledge in online courses. The researchers utilized the case research approach to analyze assessment in an online asynchronous discussion. The participants were from five online master's courses and were monitored over the course of three semesters at the Colleges of Education of two midwestern United States higher education institutions. The instructors utilized WebCT as the course management technology, carrying on an asynchronous discussion weekly or bi-weekly for inclusion in the course grades. The data collection and analysis processes in all five courses had been based on three data sources. These included an online investigation of asynchronous debates, open-ended online surveys of learners, and the transcript of an asynchronous "online teaching and learning" discussion. Two researchers monitored the online conversations and noted focusing on: (a) discussion assessment procedure or criteria, (b) participant involvement and mutual effect in the discussions, and (c) concerns arose regarding assessment. The findings showed that essential features of assessment in online conversations and learner practices included learning society, student writing skills, self-regulatory cognitions, and structure. Since the students stated

that a poorly organized question of debate influenced their responses and learning, it was noted that assessment requires a proper framework for an online conversation. According to the findings, discussioning “assessment as inquiry” and “assessment of built knowledge” could strengthen online learning pedagogy.

Similarly, Hazari (2004) investigated the assessment of conversational discussions in an online environment, particularly an online debate board. The study proposed an assessment instruction and demonstrated how to score interactions based on rubrics by utilizing an extract from an Information Technology and Network Management case study. This study concluded that an online learning environment wherein learners were motivated considerably enhanced a deeper level of understanding, and when students understood that the instructors were interested in their success, their motivation was high.

2.6. Role of Instructors in Online Environment

A single assessment form is not sufficient to assess all of the intended objectives and results. For online assessment to be effective, instructors must broaden the assessment measures utilized throughout the online course’s instructional delivery (Robles & Braathen, 2002). According to Oliver (1999), instructors need to assess online learning, and they must assess how effectively their lessons contribute to the learning outcomes. They may do this by researching the employment of new technologies to deliver relevant information and resources to learners, encourage them, and assist them in their learning activities.

It is generally recognized in online learning that the role of educator shifts from instructor to mentor (Coppola et al., 2002; Ryan et al., 2004). Educators are crucial in transforming the teacher-centered approach into student-centered learning via technology-based instruction (Paudel, 2021). According to Duraku and Hoxha (2020), educators’ attitudes on teaching methodologies have been shown to affect the degree to which technology is used in school. Attitudes are also inclined to play an essential role in the overall practice of ERE. At the beginning of lockdown, educators used WhatsApp, e-mail, and telephone communication to provide instruction. However, as the lockdown period was prolonged, WhatsApp, e-mail, and telephone communication became insufficient. To broaden their educational awareness, educators and students began to install

online educational tools like Zoom, Google Meets, Telegram, Udemy, and others (Mishra et al., 2020). According to Johnson et al. (2020), regardless of online teaching experience, many academicians acknowledged that they utilized new technologies.

Albrahim (2020) illustrates the skills and competencies necessary for online higher education courses. The researcher reviewed and analyzed literature to limit the abilities and proficiencies that instructors require to educate efficaciously in an online environment. The researcher classified abilities and competencies into six categories: (a) pedagogical competencies, (b) content competencies, (c) design competencies, (d) technical competencies, (e) management and institutional competencies, and (f) social and communication competencies.

Hazari (2004) asserted that instructors must abandon control in this mode and adapt to a new teaching method that fosters cooperative and collaborative learning among students. Instructors provided online web courses that use an online syllabus, timetable, course notes, assignments, and chat rooms to replicate the traditional classroom setting. Furthermore, students had the chance to connect with the instructor or other students via e-mail, bulletin, and live chat rooms. The researcher found that instructors could improve their skills by utilizing discussion forums in online course tools. The instructors used sound assessment technology to assist students in providing meaningful feedback, helping students to create communication and thinking skills. The Illinois Online Network noted that learning experiences correspondingly planned and conducted by experienced educators were essential for effective online teaching. Additionally, online instructors considered lecturer presence an essential component of online teaching (Richardson et al., 2016).

In this regard, Scarino (2013) asserted that language instructors were the most key partners since they were the direct test users. Instructors' views significantly impacted teaching process, particularly in EFL situations. Choi and Chung (2021) also focused on the role of instructors. The findings of their study demonstrated that it was critical to consider how to successfully provide language instructors with long-term training and professional development to support learners' language learning in the post-COVID-19 period. The findings implied

three pedagogical implications for technology-mediated, long-term instruction. Firstly, language instructors require the knowledge and expertise to successfully employ interactive digital platforms and technologies to increase learners' active participation in meaningful and collaborative online interactions. Next, language instructors need to be encouraged to participate in ongoing professional conversations, promoting the notion of social accountability. Lastly, it is critical to encourage instructors to form self-organized communities of practice where they may collaborate and engage in ongoing professional development.

Table 1 shows the details of the literature review of the current study.

Table 1.
Summary of the Literature Review

Studies Reviewed	Country	Date	Aim (s)	Methodology	Institution	Main Findings	Measure
Robles & Braathen	USA	2002	Discover the methods, advantages, and challenges of performing student assessment	Mixed, Quantitative Qualitative	University of North Dakota	The online instructor should intentionally use assessment techniques to reflect the pedagogy of online courses.	Student surveys
Liang & Creasy	United States	2004	Look at the characteristics of WebCT class assessment by studying the instructors' perspectives and experiences.	Qualitative	University in the Midwest	The distinctive character of web-based learning places students in the heart of the action.	WebCT
Kearns	United States	2012	To explore the challenges and efficient practices of student assessment in online education	Mixed, Quantitative Qualitative	Research University in the United States	Instructors can use self-assessments to provide meaningful customized feedback as an effective practice.	Blackboard, the university's Course Management System (CMS)
Swan	New York	2002	Discuss how course design influences the success of asynchronous online learning	Mixed, Quantitative Qualitative	State University of New York	Three factors influenced students' pleasure and perceived learning.	Online survey

Summary of the Literature Review

Studies Reviewed	Country	Date	Aim (s)	Methodology	Institution	Main Findings	Measure
Arend	USA	2007	Provide a description of formative and summative assessment and learning methodologies in online classes.	Mixed, Quantitative Qualitative	Colorado Community Colleges Online, Dawson Community College of Montana, Northwest Missouri State University, and Pickens Tech of Denver	Using different and alternative assessment methods, spreading marks in time, and regular feedback to students appear to be helpful practices.	The observational survey, an instructor survey, a student survey
Gaytan & McEwen	United States	2007	Better understanding the most effective teaching and assessment practices in the online learning setting	Qualitative	Two Institutions in the South of the State	Projects, scheduled tests, and quizzes were effective assessment methods	The faculty survey and the student survey
Pechenizkiy et al.	Holland	2009	Investigate several concerns connected to the composing and customizing of online assessment processes	Qualitative	Eindhoven University of Technology	Process mining is concerned with the creation of a collection of smart tools and techniques for obtaining process-related information	Sakai open-source LMSs and Moodle
Vonderwell et al.,	United States	2007	Examine the use of online asynchronous discussion in the online learning assessment continuum	Mixed, Quantitative Qualitative	Midwestern Higher Education Institutions	Asynchronous online conversations support a comprehensive assessment continuum, as shown by structure, self-regulatory tasks.	WebCT

Summary of the Literature Review

Studies Reviewed	Country	Date	Aim (s)	Methodology	Institution	Main Findings	Measure
Başaran et al.,	Turkey	2020	Perspectives of students, parents, and teachers about the effectiveness of ERE during COVID-19 in Turkey	Qualitative	Turkish government school	ERE has beneficial aspects, but it has more challenges.	Semi-structured interview form
Trust & Whalen	USA	2020	Whether teachers had been trained enough for Emergency Remote Teaching in the USA	Quantitative	Local Massachusetts school	Participants felt overwhelmed and unprepared to use online or remote teaching strategies and tools	Online Survey on K-12
Sari & Nayir	Turkey	2020	To ascertain the insights of teachers, administrators, and academics in ERE about the problems and overcoming strategies	Qualitative	Turkish public and private schools	Participants were not ready for the ERE process, and there was a lack of application.	Open-ended written interview
Ayaz et al.,	Turkey	2019	To explore language teachers' ideas about the English language teaching system	Qualitative	Turkish government school	Most teachers were not pleased with the course books, crowded classes, quite limited class hours, and unmotivated students.	Open-ended questions
Almaiah & Althunibat	Jordan and Saudi Arabia	2020	To identify the critical challenges in online learning systems	Qualitative	Six public universities in Jordan and Saudi Arabia	Enable researchers to get better acquainted with the key aspects of the online learning system	The interview method through NVivo software

Summary of the Literature Review

Studies Reviewed	Country	Date	Aim (s)	Methodology	Institution	Main Findings	Measure
Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison	Chile	2020	To investigate the challenges and opportunities of online teaching experiences in Chile	Mixed, Quantitative Qualitative	27 EFL teachers in Initial Teacher Education (ITE) program	While challenges strongly affected the participants' learning process, there were positive situations in online teaching	An online questionnaire, a blog entry, and semi-structured interviews

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Model of the Study

The study used a mixed-method approach to obtain a more in-depth analysis of Turkish EFL instructors' online assessment literacy in the context of preparatory classes in seventeen universities. In addition, the study explored the challenges and opportunities the instructors faced in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. First, the quantitative data were collected from Turkish EFL instructors to examine their literacy in online assessment and reveal the challenges and opportunities they face in ERE. In this phase, the Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire was applied. Next, the qualitative data were collected from a sub-sample of participants through open-ended questions and individual interviews. Namely, the qualitative data were triangulated by using open-ended questions and individual interviews.

Because a mixed-method design was adopted for this study, the researcher employed a mix of quantitative and qualitative research techniques. As Ivankova et al. (2006) clarified, "mixed method is a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and 'mixing' or integrating both quantitative and qualitative data at some stage of the research process within a single study to gain a better understanding of the research problem" (p.3). In this sense, the qualitative data analysis was used to explain and eliminate the limitations of the quantitative results obtained in this study (cf. Tashakkori & Creswell, 2007), because "the quantitative data and their subsequent analysis provide a general understanding of the research problem. The qualitative data and their analysis refine and explain those statistical results by exploring participants' views in more depth" (Ivankova et al., 2006, p.5). Specifically, this study adopted a mixed-method sequential explanatory design. Sequential explanatory designs comprise two different processes for analyzing the same situation, with a quantitative study followed by qualitative research. Creswell (2002) noted in this regard that "instead of collecting data at the same time and merging the results, a mixed-methods researcher might collect quantitative and qualitative information sequentially in two phases, with one form of data collection following and informing the other" (p.542).

3.2. Sampling

The target population for this study was Turkish EFL instructors who were teaching online to preparation classes and making assessments for at least one term at Turkish universities. The participants were instructors who took part on a volunteer basis. They were selected through convenience sampling and snowball sampling strategies. The individuals who were ultimately selected included 48 instructors working in seventeen Turkish universities. They had various educational statuses (BA, MA, Ph.D. Candidate, and Ph.D.).

3.3. Profiles of the Participants

The first part of the questionnaire consisted of 7 items involving the demographic data of the participants. These items included their gender, name of their university, highest qualification, usage period of online assessment tools, weekly hours of online teaching, English teaching experience, and online assessment training. The target population was EFL instructors who were teaching online courses in preparatory classes. As previously noted, performing an assessment for at least one term and working at a university in Turkey were the two eligibility requirements for participation. 48 instructors (18 males and 30 females) participated in the study. The frequency tables of the items present the required information. The following tables illustrate the results of the demographic characteristics of the instructors who participated in the questionnaire. The first item is related to the universities where the instructors were teaching.

Table 2.
Instructors' University Profiles

Universities	N	%
Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi	10	20.8
Trabzon Üniversitesi	6	12.5
Recep Tayyip Erdoğan Üniversitesi	5	10.4
Ordu Üniversitesi	4	8.3
Kafkas Üniversitesi	3	6.3
Erzincan Binali Yıldırım Üniversitesi	3	6.3
Bayburt Üniversitesi	3	6.3
Hacettepe Üniversitesi	2	4.2
Giresun Üniversitesi	2	4.2
Ege Üniversitesi	2	4.2
Atatürk Üniversitesi	2	4.2
Gebze Teknik Üniversitesi	1	2.1
Bandırma Üniversitesi	1	2.1
Ardahan Üniversitesi	1	2.1
Adıyaman Üniversitesi	1	2.1
Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli Üniversitesi	1	2.1
Alanya Alaaddin Keykubat Üniversitesi	1	2.1

Table 2 shows the distribution of the participants according to their universities. As convenience and snowball sampling strategies were used, the participants' numbers varied by the university. Among these universities, the highest ratio belonged to Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi (N=10), and the lowest ratio belonged to six universities, with one participant each. Three universities yielded three participants, four universities had two participants each, and one participant volunteered for the study from six universities.

Table 3.
Instructors' Educational Degree

Qualification Profiles	N	%
BA	11	22.9
MA	14	29.2
PhD. Candidate	14	29.2
PhD.	9	18.8
Total	48	100.0

Table 3 shows the educational degree of the participants. Most of the participants had master's degrees (MA) and Ph.D. candidates. The lowest ratio belonged to those with doctoral degrees.

Table 4.
Instructors' Experience in Using Online Assessment Tools

Years of Experience	N	%
1-2	33	68.8
3-4	6	12.5
5+	9	18.8
Total	48	100.0

Table 4 shows instructors' level of experience (in years) in using online assessment tools during ERE. Among these, the most frequently seen ratio belonged to 1-2 years (N=33) and the smallest ratio belonged to 3-4 years (N=6).

Table 5.
Instructors' Weekly Online Teaching Hours

Teaching Hours	N	%
Less Than 10	32	66.7
10-12	5	10.4
13-16	7	14.6
17-20	4	8.3
Total	48	100.0

Table 5 illustrates the instructors' weekly online teaching hours during ERE. Among these, the highest ratio belonged to less than 10 hours (N=32), and the lowest ratio belonged to 17-20 hours (N=4).

Table 6.
Instructors' English Teaching Experience

Years of Teaching Experience	N	%
Less Than 5	6	12.5
6-10	9	18.8
11-15	19	39.6
16-20	10	20.8
21+	4	8.3
Total	48	100.0

Table 6 outlines the teaching experience of the participants on a yearly basis. Among the participants, the highest ratio belonged to 11-15 years (N=19), and the lowest ratio belonged to more than 21 years (N=4).

Table 7.
Instructors' Pre-service and In-service Online Assessment Training

	Pre-service Online Training		Total	
	Yes	No		
In-service Online Training	Yes	3	8	11
	No	6	31	37
Total		9	39	48

Table 7 shows the participants' answers concerning whether they had received training in online assessment during the pre-service or in-service period. Among the participants, nine instructors had received pre-service online training. In other words, they had taken online training before beginning their teaching careers. On the other hand, 39 instructors had not received pre-service online training. Furthermore, among the participants, 11 instructors had received in-service online training; namely, they had taken online training courses during their active teaching careers. However, 38 instructors had not received in-service online training during their professional careers.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

The study used 3 data collection instruments. First, the Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire was used to collect the quantitative data. Next, open-ended questions and individual interviews were used to collect the qualitative data. In addition, the researcher stored the data on a computer and transcribed it.

3.4.1. Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire

The data collection instrument used in this study was a modified version of the Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire (Al-Bahlani, 2019). Al-Bahlani (2019) reported the results of a validity analysis conducted on the items of the questionnaire. The internal consistency reliability was .79, and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for internal consistency reliability was .97. As this was also suitable for the scope of this thesis study, the researcher selected this questionnaire.

In the current study, the content validity of the adapted and modified parts was verified by an expert. In addition, the participants' performance on each item in the questionnaire was correlated with the overall performance across all

participants (Bryman, 2008) to get the Cronbach's Alpha level, which should be above .7 (Pallant, 2010). In the current study, the internal consistency reliability was found to be .95.

The questionnaire data were gathered using a 5-point Likert-type scale, with items ranging from 1(Not competent) to 5(Very competent); higher scores indicated a higher level of expertise in online assessment. The researcher made 30 modifications for this study.

Table 8.
Modified Items in the Questionnaire

Original Statements	Change/Use	Statements used	Rationale for change
Constructing and Administering Assessment	Modified	Constructing and Administering Online Assessment	Clarity
Choosing the appropriate methods for classroom assessment	Modified	Being able to choose the appropriate methods for online classroom assessment	Clarity
Using a table of specifications to plan assessments	Modified	Being able to use a table of guidelines to plan online assessments	Clarity
Writing general instructions in a way that leaves no room for students to ask for any explanations about the test	Modified	Being able to write clear test instructions in a way that leaves no room for students to ask for any explanations about the online test	Clarity
Using assessment results in developing treatment plans for low-achieving students	Modified	Being able to use online assessment results in developing treatment plans for low-achieving students	Clarity
Writing test questions for higher cognitive levels	Modified	Being able to write online test questions that suit the level of high-achieving students	Clarity

Table 8 illustrates the number of the original questionnaire items from Al-Bahlani (2019), and the modifications. Appendix B contains all of the items, the modifications, and the rationale. Appendix A also includes the entire questionnaire.

Table 9.
Adapted Items in the Questionnaire

Original Statements	Change/Use	Statements used
Digital Language Assessment Literacy		Digital Language Assessment Literacy
giving computerized course tasks (e.g., end of unit vocab, grammar, listen and comment on a video etc.)	Adapted	giving computerized course tasks (e.g., end of unit vocab, grammar, listen and comment on a video etc.)
assessing student language skills (e.g., grammar, vocab, writing etc.) using online tools (discussion boards, blogs, wikis etc.)	Adapted	assessing student language skills (e.g., grammar, vocab, writing etc.) using online tools (discussion boards, blogs, wikis etc.)
varying digital assessment tools according to their effectiveness for classroom purposes	Adapted	varying digital assessment tools according to their effectiveness for classroom purposes
providing criteria for online/computerized tests/tasks along with the tests/tasks	Adapted	providing criteria for online/computerized tests/tasks along with the tests/tasks

On the other hand, the researcher in the current study adapted four items from Al-Bahlani (2019). Examples of the adaptations are shown in Table 9.

The questionnaire in this study included three parts. The first part consisted of brief information about the study. The second included a demographic information section. Finally, in the last part, there were 34 items that aimed to elicit the current level of the Turkish EFL instructors' online assessment literacy in preparatory classes, as well as the challenges and opportunities they faced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Of the 34 total items, 5(items 1-5) were related to constructing and administering online assessment:

- 1- Being able to choose the appropriate methods for online classroom assessment,
- 2- Being able to use a table of guidelines to plan online assessment,
- 3- Being able to write clear test instructions in a way that leaves no room for students to ask for any explanations about the online test,
- 4- Being able to use online assessment results in developing treatment plans for low-achieving students,
- 5-Being able to write online test questions that suit the level of high-achieving students.

The following 8 of the items (6-13) were related to online performance assessment:

- 6-** Assessing online class participation,
- 7-** Assessing students online learning through oral questions,
- 8-** Developing online performance assessment methods (e.g., assigning projects online, online assignments, online reports, online presentations etc.) based on clearly defined objectives,
- 9-** Defining online rating scales for performance criteria,
- 10-** Communicating online performance assessment criteria to students in advance,
- 11-** Assigning online hands-on activities (e.g., online presentations, online peer evaluation),
- 12-** Using the rating scale/checklist while observing students' performance in online classes,
- 13-** Assessing students' learning through online observation.

The following 4 items (14-17) were related to grading online:

- 14-** Determining students' grades according to their average performance in online classes,
- 15-** Identifying different factors to be considered when grading in online classes,
- 16-** Identifying students' characteristics that should not be used when grading in online classes,
- 17-** Determining students' grades to teach and assess in correspondence to the main learning objectives in online classes.

After this, the following 5 items (18-22) were related to communicating online assessment results with others:

- 18-** Using e-portfolios to assess students' progress,
- 19-** Providing written feedback to students in online classes,
- 20-** Communicating online assessment results to students,
- 21-** Providing oral feedback to students in online classes,

22- Communicating online assessment results to parents.

These were followed by 5 items (23-27) that were related to online assessment ethics:

23- Informing students of the assessment objectives before applying the online assessment,

24- Keeping the online assessment results of each student confidential,

25- Avoiding the use of online assessment as a way to punish students for their behavior,

26- Preventing students from cheating online tests,

27- Avoiding teaching to the online test when preparing students for tests.

7 of which (28-34) were related to digital language assessment literacy:

28- Using online tools to design language skills test (discussion boards, blogs, wikis etc.),

29- Giving computerized course tasks (e.g., end of unit vocab, grammar, listen and comment on a video etc.),

30- Assessing student language skills (e.g., grammar, vocab, writing etc.) using online tools (discussion boards, blogs, wikis etc.),

31- Using online tools to give student feedback on written assignments,

32- Varying online tools according to their effectiveness for classroom purposes,

33- Providing criteria for online/computerized tests/tasks along with the tests/tasks themselves,

34- Using online assessment tools data (student participation, grades, user activity in online discussion, safe-assign reports etc.) to plan future teaching.

Table 10.
Research Questions and Related Questionnaire Items

Research Questions	Questionnaire Items
1.What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Item 3, Item 4, Item 5, Item 6, Item 11, Item 13, Item 19, Item 30, Item 31, Item 18, Item 28, Item 29
2.What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Item 4, Item 6, Item 7, Item 10, Item 13, Item 20, Item 21, Item 22, Item 28, Item 29
3.What did instructors who lectured in online courses do frequently to increase the reliability and validity of the performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills assessment in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Item 1, Item 2, Item 8, Item 9, Item 11, Item 12, Item 14, Item 15, Item 16, Item 17, Item 23, Item 24, Item 25, Item 26, Item 27, Item 32, Item 33, Item 34
4.What were Turkish EFL instructors' perceptions on the assessment of online performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	None in questionnaire
5.What assessment tools did Turkish EFL instructors use while assessing students' performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	None in questionnaire

To find the answers to the research questions, the researcher of this thesis study asked several related questions in the questionnaire which are shown in Table 10.

3.4.2. Open-ended Questions

After administering the Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire with the participants in the first stage of the study, the second stage involved gathering and analyzing the qualitative data. In this stage, the researcher of this study posed open-ended questions to twenty-one participants immediately after they completed the questionnaire. The aim of this undertaking was to foster a deeper understanding of the current situation relating to Turkish EFL instructors' online assessment literacy in preparatory classes of universities, as well as to investigate their perceptions concerning opportunities and challenges of online assessment literacy. Therefore, the researcher asked open-ended questions "in an exploratory manner" (Dornyei, 2007, p. 136) to encourage the participants to disclose different aspects of a given fact from their own perspectives.

The findings of the qualitative data acquired through the open-ended questions are provided sequentially in line with the related section of the Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire.

This instrument consisted of 9 questions.

- 1- What assessment tools do you use while assessing your students' writing skills in online courses during ERE?
- 2- What assessment tools do you use while assessing your students' speaking skills in online courses during ERE?
- 3- What kind of opportunities have you faced while teaching writing skills in online courses during ERE?
- 4- What challenges have you faced while teaching writing skills in online courses during ERE?
- 5- What kind of opportunities have you faced while teaching speaking skills in online courses during ERE?
- 6- What challenges have you faced while teaching speaking skills in online courses during ERE?
- 7- What did you like and dislike most while assessing online courses in ERE?
- 8- What do you frequently do to increase the reliability and fairness of your assessment in ERE?
- 9- What are your ideas about online assessment during the COVID-19 pandemic in ERE?

Table 11.
Research Questions and Related Open-Ended Question Items

Research Questions	Open-Ended Question Items
1. What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Item 3, Item 4
2. What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Item 5, Item 6
3. What did instructors who lectured in online courses do frequently to increase the reliability and validity of the performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills assessment in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Item 8
4. What were Turkish EFL instructors' perceptions on the assessment of online performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Item 7, Item 9
5. What assessment tools did Turkish EFL instructors use while assessing students' performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Item 1, Item 2

To find the answers for each research question, the researcher of this thesis study asked several related questions in an open-ended format; these are shown in Table 11.

3.4.3. Individual Interviews

Individual interviews were the third step of the data collection process. A sub-sample of participants was selected to participate in the individual interviews. In this regard, the instructors who reported the most and the fewest challenges and opportunities on the questionnaire were considered in the selection of sub-sample participants. The researcher of this study interviewed ten of the participants. The purpose of selecting the sub-sample was to maximize the findings and increase the reliability.

As Johnson and Christensen (2008) explain, interviews are “used to obtain in-depth information about a participant’s thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, reasoning, motivations and reasoning about a topic” (p. 207). Moreover, regarding directly revealing ideas, emotions, and knowledge of informants about the research subject, interviews are a strong tool that allows the researcher to enter another person’s opinions and gain more insights (Creswell, 2005). Another

critical feature of utilizing interviews as a data collection tool is that the interviewer can delve into an issue by asking participants to clarify their answers or share extra information (Creswell, 2005; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Additionally, according to Merriam and Tisdell (2015), interviews help researchers explore informants' inner world by providing their interpretation of events in their own words, in addition to monitoring participants' knowledge and feelings.

The researcher conducted the individual interviews in two ways. Firstly, the researcher used face-to-face sessions with selected instructors. Then, the researcher used an online video conferencing application, Zoom, as a COVID-19 precaution. Before the individual interviews, the instructors were informed about the aim of the study and the procedure of the individual interviews. In addition, they were informed that their identity would be kept confidential and that the individual interview would be recorded to be used only for this study. After getting their approval, the researcher conducted individual interviews. The interviews were applied in the instructors' mother tongue, Turkish because it was assumed that the participants would state their ideas more effectively in their native language. The interviews lasted between 15 and 30 minutes and took place in a quiet environment. All of the individual interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. A complete transcript containing all of the interview questions and the instructors' answers was created. Afterward, the researcher read through the data several times to get a general sense, searching for similarities and differences in the responses. Then, similar data were grouped under a relevant category. New data were constantly compared to previous data and placed in the appropriate category. Finally, the categories were combined under broader themes. Further, the qualitative data were coded by the researcher, and another coder analyzed the collected data separately to ensure reliability.

This instrument consists of 8 questions.

- 1- What methods did you use while assessing students' writing skills in online/remote classes you have experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, and why?

- 2- What methods did you use while assessing students' speaking skills in online/remote classes you have experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, and why?
- 3- What were the situations you experienced that made the assessment of writing skills easier in online/remote classes during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- 4- What were the situations you experienced that made assessment of writing skills difficult in online/remote classes during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- 5- What were the situations you experienced that made assessment of speaking skills easier in online/remote classes during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- 6- What were the situations you experienced that made assessment of speaking skills difficult in online/remote classes during the COVID-19 pandemic?
- 7- What kind of precautions did you frequently take to ensure a reliable procedure of online/remote assessment?
- 8- What would you like to say when you consider online/remote exams in writing and speaking lessons during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Table 12.*Research Questions and Related Individual Interview Items*

Research Questions	Interview Items
1. What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Item 3, Item 4
2. What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Item 5, Item 6
3. What did instructors who lectured in online courses do frequently to increase the reliability and validity of the performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills assessment in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Item 7
4. What were Turkish EFL instructors' perceptions on the assessment of online performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Item 8
5. What assessment tools did Turkish EFL instructors use while assessing students' performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	Item 1, Item 2

To find answers to the research questions, the author of this thesis study asked several related questions in the interviews, shown in Table 12.

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

The data collection process consisted of three parts, lasting about five months: preparation of the questionnaire, the open-ended questions, and the interviews. Before carrying out the study, permission was obtained from ethics committee of the university. In the first part, the researcher reviewed the existing literature. The questionnaire was the Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire, which was modified from the Ph.D. dissertation "Assessment Literacy: A Study of EFL Teachers' Assessment Knowledge, Perspectives, and Classroom Behaviors" (Al-Bahlani, 2019). The researcher of the Ph.D. dissertation adapted and modified several questions of her questionnaire from Alkharusi (2009) and Alkharusi et al. (2012). The researcher in the current MA study received permission from both Al-Bahlani (2019) and Alkharusi (2009) for the use of the related items. The researcher then modified the questions, and an outside expert analyzed the questions and gave approval to the modified items.

The instructors who participated in the study were informed by the researcher about the aims, procedure, output and significance of the study at the

beginning of the meeting. They then voluntarily and consciously participated in the study, and all instructors approved the informed questionnaire form (see APPENDIX C: Consent approvals from participants). The individual interviews were prepared in Turkish to be understood thoroughly by all the instructors. The questionnaire items were numbered to avoid confusion. Then, the resulting data were entered into the SPSS, and the findings of the questionnaire were investigated by utilizing version 22 of the SPSS package for WINDOWS. Frequencies and percentages were calculated and placed into tables for a clearer understanding. The data analysis was described in detail (see 3.6. Data Analysis).

Table 13.
Study Schedule

November-December, 2021	Preparation of the Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy
December, 2021	Receiving expert opinion related to the questionnaire
	Conducting the Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy
January-February, 2022	Conducting Open-ended questions and Individual interviews
February-March, 2022	Data Analysis

3.6. Data Analysis

A quantitative data collection method was used in the first phase of this study. According to Dörnyei (2007), “Quantitative research involves data collection procedures that result primarily in numerical data, which is then analyzed primarily by statistical methods. Typical example: survey research using a questionnaire, analyzed by statistical software such as Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)” (p.24). The data in this instance were collected via the Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire. The findings of the study were interpreted using the results obtained from the questionnaire. Regarding the use of the questionnaire, Brown (2001) explains that “questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers” (p.6). A snowball sampling strategy was followed to maximize the number of volunteer participants.

Afterward, a qualitative data collection method was also applied. The data in this phase were obtained from open-ended questions and individual interviews conducted via face-to-face and Zoom sessions to provide flexibility for the

participants. The researcher coded the qualitative data collected in this manner. A second coder also analyzed the collected data to ensure reliability. The researcher categorized the codes and compared them with those of the other coder, who was an English teacher studying for a MA in English Language Teaching. The qualitative data consisted of open-ended questions administered immediately after the questionnaire, as well as individual interviews that were carried out in the native language of participants to avoid possible misunderstandings. A sub-sample of participants was selected to participate in the individual interviews. In this regard, the instructors who reported both the most and the fewest challenges and opportunities on the questionnaire were considered in selecting sub-sample participants. Interviewing is the most common qualitative data collection method in the educational sciences, to elicit participants' views, opinions, knowledge, and cognitive processes via their own statements (Brenner, 2006; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Social interactions, organizations, ideas, and relationship functions are all indicated through interviewing (Mason, 2002). Paltridge and Phakiti (2015) compared interviewing to other types of data collection and suggested that:

Interviews generate a very different way of understanding human experience, regarding knowledge as generating between people rather than as objectified and external to them. Participants are able to discuss their interpretations and perspectives, sharing what writing means to them rather than responding to preconceived categories (p. 340).

The findings of the quantitative and qualitative components of the study were merged so that each source's data could strengthen, expand, and supplement the data from the other sources (Creswell, 2002).

3.7. Reliability and Validity

In the analysis of the data, the SPSS statistical package for Windows was used. Firstly, the reliability of the items was calculated with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which was found to be .95, and thus satisfactorily reliable. Next, descriptive analysis was used to examine the means and standard deviations of the responses given to the items in each factor in the questionnaire. Next, the answers to the open-ended questions were applied to understand the participants' perceptions about the subject. Lastly, the answers of individual interview questions were used to reveal the participants' perspectives, beliefs, knowledge,

and cognitive processes through their own statements. Finally, the findings were interpreted by presenting them in tables.

Convenience and snowball sampling strategies were used to reach the detailed data set. External ecological validity was also ensured by the study, as future research may corroborate the findings. Moreover, the researcher made inferences from the participants' statements and presented the findings without alteration. Finally, two co-advisors checked every step of the data collection and reporting process.

4. FINDINGS

4.1. Quantitative Data Analysis

4.1.1 Analyzing Questionnaire

The Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire contained 34 items related to the following categories: Constructing and administering online assessment (5 items; e.g., choosing the appropriate methods for classroom assessment), online performance assessment (8 items; e.g., assessing students learning through oral questions), grading online (4 items; e.g., determining students grades according to students' average performance), communicating online assessment results with others (5 items; e.g., using portfolios to assess students' progress), online assessment ethics (5 items; e.g., avoiding the use of online assessment as a way to punish students for their behavior), digital language assessment literacy (7 items; e.g., giving computerized course tasks (e.g., end of unit vocabulary, grammar, listen and comment on a video)).

Table 14.
Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire Items

	N.C.	L.C.	S.C.	C.	V.C.	\bar{x}	SD
Constructing and Administering Online Assessment							
1. Choosing appropriate methods for online assessment	-	2 (4.2%)	13 (27.1%)	30 (62.5%)	3 (6.3%)	3.70	.65
2. Using guidelines to plan online assessment	-	4 (8.3%)	14 (29.2%)	24 (50%)	6 (12.5%)	3.66	.80
3. Writing clear test instructions	1 (2.1%)	-	10 (20.8%)	31 (64.6%)	6 (12.5%)	3.85	.71
4. Using online assessment results for low-achieving students	1 (2.1%)	5 (10.4%)	13 (27.1%)	25 (52.1%)	4 (8.3%)	3.54	.87
5. Writing online test questions for high-achieving students	1 (2.1%)	1 (2.1%)	7 (14.6%)	34 (70.8%)	5 (10.4%)	3.85	.71
Online Performance Assessment							
6. Assessing online class participation	-	3 (6.3%)	13 (27.1%)	23 (47.9%)	9 (18.8%)	3.79	.82
7. Assessing students' online learning through oral questions	-	3 (6.3%)	13 (27.1%)	25 (52.1%)	7 (14.6%)	3.75	.78
8. Developing online performance assessment methods	-	3 (6.3%)	10 (20.8%)	29 (60.4%)	6 (12.5%)	3.79	.74
9. Defining online rating scale for performance criteria	-	6 (12.5%)	14 (29.2%)	24 (50%)	4 (8.3%)	3.54	.82
10. Communicating online performance assessment criteria to students in advance	-	2 (4.2%)	10 (20.8%)	31 (64.6%)	5 (10.4%)	3.81	.67
11. Assigning online hands-on activities	-	4 (8.3%)	11 (22.9%)	27 (56.3%)	6 (12.5%)	3.72	.79
12. Using the rating scale	3 (6.3%)	4 (8.3%)	12 (25%)	22 (45.8%)	7 (14.6%)	3.54	1.05*
13. Assessing students' learning through online observation	2 (4.2%)	4 (8.3%)	12 (25%)	24 (50%)	6 (12.5%)	3.58	.96
Grading Online							
14. Determining students' grades in online classes	-	5 (10.4%)	13 (27.1%)	24 (50%)	6 (12.5%)	3.64	.83
15. Identifying different factors in grading online	1 (2.1%)	3 (6.3%)	11 (22.9%)	28 (58.3%)	5 (10.4%)	3.68	.82
16. Identifying students' characteristics in grading online	-	5 (10.4%)	16 (33.3%)	20 (41.7%)	7 (14.6%)	3.60	.86
17. Determining students' grades to teach and assess in online classes	-	5 (10.4%)	16 (33.3%)	24 (50%)	3 (6.3%)	3.52	.77

Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire Items

Communicating Online Assessment Results with Others							
18. Using e-portfolios to assess students' progress	2 (4.2%)	13 (27.1%)	7 (14.6%)	22 (45.8%)	4 (8.3%)	3.27	1.08*
19. Providing written feedback to students in online classes	-	2 (4.2%)	11 (22.9%)	27 (56.3%)	8 (16.7%)	3.85	.74
20. Communicating online assessment results to students	-	2 (4.2%)	7 (14.6%)	30 (62.5%)	9 (18.8%)	3.95	.71
21. Providing oral feedback to students in online classes	-	2 (4.2%)	8 (16.7%)	26 (54.2%)	12 (25%)	4.00*	.77
22. Communicating online assessment results to parents	23 (47.9%)	8 (16.7%)	3 (6.3%)	12 (25%)	2 (4.2%)	2.20*	1.38
Online Assessment Ethics							
23. Informing students of the assessment objectives	-	4 (8.3%)	8 (16.7%)	24 (50%)	12 (25%)	3.91	.87
24. Keeping the online assessment results of each student confidential	1 (2.1%)	1 (2.1%)	9 (18.8%)	22 (45.8%)	15 (31.3%)	4.02*	.88
25. Avoiding the use of online assessment as a way to punish students	3 (6.3%)	3 (6.3%)	7 (14.6%)	20 (41.7%)	15 (31.3%)	3.85	1.12*
26. Preventing students from cheating online tests	12 (25%)	8 (16.7%)	14 (29.2%)	8 (16.7%)	6 (12.5%)	2.75*	1.34
27. Avoiding teaching to the online test when preparing students for tests	-	6 (12.5%)	23 (47.9%)	12 (25%)	7 (14.6%)	3.41	.89
Digital Language Assessment Literacy							
28. Using online tools to design language skills test	2 (4.2%)	11 (22.9%)	5 (10.4%)	22 (45.8%)	8 (16.7%)	3.47	1.14*
29. Giving computerized course tasks	-	3 (6.3%)	10 (20.8%)	24 (50%)	11 (22.9%)	3.89	.83
30. Assessing student language skills	-	2 (4.2%)	10 (20.8%)	25 (52.1%)	11 (22.9%)	3.93	.78
31. Using online tools reports to give student feedback on written assignments	-	2 (4.2%)	11 (22.9%)	25 (52.1%)	10 (20.8%)	3.89	.77
32. Varying online tools according to their effectiveness for classroom purposes	-	8 (16.7%)	12 (25%)	20 (41.7%)	8 (16.7%)	3.58	.96
33. Providing criteria for online/computerized tests/tasks along with the tests/tasks	1 (2.1%)	2 (4.2%)	17 (35.4%)	21 (43.8%)	7 (14.6%)	3.64	.86
34. Using online assessment tools data to plan future teaching	-	3 (6.3%)	10 (20.8%)	27 (56.3%)	8 (16.7%)	3.83	.78

*N.C.= Not Competent, L.C.= A little Competent, S.C.= Somewhat Competent, C=Competent, V.C.= Very Competent

Table 14 details the Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire items and the participants' responses to these items.

While only two items received the highest score, which was over 4.00 [Item 21, Item 24], only two items received the lowest score, which was under 3.00 [Item 22, Item 26]. Item 21 and Item 24 had a standard deviation lower than 1.00, indicating that there was low variation in the perception of participants. The mean scores obtained from these items (e.g., 4.00 and 4.02, respectively) show that participants considered that they were very competent in providing oral feedback to students in online classes and in keeping the online assessment results of each student confidential. However, Item 22 and Item 26 had a standard deviation over 1.00, indicating that there was greater variation in the perception of participants. The mean scores of these items (e.g., 2.20 and 2.75, respectively) indicate that participants thought that they were incompetent about communicating online assessment results to parents and preventing students from cheating online tests.

There were 30 items received scores between 3.00 and 4.00. Except for Item 12, Item 18, Item 25, and Item 28, all items had a standard deviation under 1.00, indicating that there was lower variation in the perception of participants related to these items. However, for the reported four items, there was greater variation in the perception of participants.

The descriptive statistical results suggest that the participants considered themselves competent in the 30 items (e.g., constructing and administering online assessment, online performance assessment, grading online, communicating online assessment results with others, online assessment ethics, digital language assessment literacy). While the instructors perceived themselves as very competent in 2 items (e.g., communicating online assessment results with others: "providing oral feedback to students in online classes," and online assessment ethics: "keeping the online assessment results of each student confidential"), some of the other instructors believed that they were incompetent in terms of 2 items (e.g., communicating online assessment results with others: "communicating online assessment results to parents," and online assessment ethics: "preventing students from cheating on online tests").

4.2. Qualitative Data Analysis

4.2.1. Open-ended Questions

The open-ended questions were asked immediately after the questionnaire and administered, considering that these would provide in-depth information about the personal experiences of the individual instructors and would enable them to contemplate the situations or factors specific to their context that had an impact on their practice.

The questions asked the participants to respond with respect to the assessment tools they have used in the assessment of students' performative skills in ERE; the opportunities and challenges they have faced in this regard; positive and negative perceptions in the assessment of online courses; the reliability and fairness of the assessment; and their perceptions about online assessment in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of this process was to deeply examine and understand the participants' views. The responses to the open-ended questions were analyzed qualitatively by grouping similar responses into categories and then illustrating them in frequency tables.

Table 15.

Tools Used for Assessing Students' Writing Performance in ERE

Types of Tools	Participants	%
Synchronous Tools (e.g., Mentimeter, Padlet, Live lesson, Presentation of Course Books, Infrastructure of university)	P8, P14, P20	14.2%
Asynchronous Tools (e.g., iTools, Google Programs, Moodle, Cambridge Write and Improve, Microsoft Office Program)	P1, P4, P5, P9, P10, P11, P13, P15, P19	42.8%
Synchronous Tools and Asynchronous Tools	P2, P7, P18, P21	19%

*P=Participant

Table 15 shows the tools the participants used for assessing students' writing performance in ERE. One of the research questions in this regard was, "what assessment tools did Turkish EFL instructors use while assessing students' performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?" In the first part of the study, the author of this thesis focused on assessing students' writing skills in online courses. Table 15 shows that most of the participant instructors (N=9) used asynchronous tools, few of the participant instructors (N=3) used synchronous tools, and some of the participant instructors

(N=4) used both synchronous tools and asynchronous tools. On the other hand, some participants did not answer which tools they used to assess writing performance, so the total points did not reach one hundred.

Most of the instructors who responded to the open-ended questions used asynchronous tools such as “Google Classroom,” “Google Documents,” “iTools,” “Moodle,” “Cambridge Write and Improve,” “Microsoft Office Program” and “Google Drive” while assessing students’ writing performance in online courses. For example, P1, P9, P11, P13, and P19 stated that “I use Google Classroom.” P15 expanded on what these participants voiced and noted that “I generally use Google Classroom. However, Google Classroom is a medium. When I give feedback, I use a collaborative approach by sharing the same documents via Google Drive for online lessons.” Similarly, P5 mentioned that “I use iTools.” P10 explained that “I use Microsoft Teams for assessing writing skills in online courses.” Lastly, P4 expressed that “I use Google Classroom and Google Documents.”

On the other hand, as reported above, few of the participants who responded to the open-ended questions used synchronous tools like “Mentimeter,” “Padlet,” “presentation of course books,” “live lessons,” and “university infrastructure” in assessing students’ writing performance in online courses. To illustrate, P20 reported that “I try to enrich the course with Web 2.0 tools in online lessons during Emergency Remote Education. I use mostly Padlet for writing skills. Students can see what their friends write, and I can give immediate feedback. There can be peer correction.” For the same theme, P8 added that “I used infrastructure of university in writing skills.” In the same vein, P14 declared that:

While assessing writing skills in Emergency Remote Education, I often use online discussion boards like Padlet. The platform has a simple user interface. Thanks to Padlet, students can easily share their written assignments online through the link that I share on the learning management system. By the way, I can give written feedback under each post. Another advantage is that it elicits peer feedback. They can comment on or like their friends’ posts. Later, I can share the entire discussion board on my screen, so my students can find mistakes and make corrections interactively by giving constructive feedback.

Several participants used both synchronous tools and asynchronous tools like “Google Classroom,” “Padlet,” “iTools,” and “Mentimeter.” For example, P2

asserted for synchronic tools that “I try to give individual feedback to students by assigning homework through the live lesson platform,” and for asynchronous tools, P2 articulated that:

Assessing the writing skills of students can be quite difficult during Emergency Remote Education. Giving feedback during online lessons, which some students cannot attend, can be difficult because of limited participation in the lesson. At that point, writing assignments become involved. I try to give individual feedback to students by assigning homework through live lesson platforms such as Google Classroom and websites such as Cambridge Write and Improve. My aim is to see the students succeed by improving individually so they can be successful in writing activities.

For synchronous and asynchronous tools, P7 signified that “I use Padlet and Google Classroom.”

For asynchronous tools, P18 argued that:

I prepare writing assignments on Google Classroom for every week as asynchronous, and I ask students to post their writing assignments there. I can also set assignments on the Moodle platform that we use throughout the university and ask students to send their assignments there as a file.

On the other hand, P18 expressed an opinion for synchronous tools that:

We can assess writing abilities in two ways. One is synchronous during the lesson, and the other is with assignments outside the lesson. I use Web 2.0 tools synchronously for review and reinforce the subject that we study during the lesson. For example, I use Padlet. All of the students are able to complete their writing tasks at the same time by clicking on the link that I send during the lesson. I also use Mentimeter, which enables students to write at the same time.

While P21 alleged for asynchronous tools that “students sent their homework online via iTools and I assess them. I did not use any other platforms,” P21 formed for synchronous tools that “I only did the activities in the online activities of the book during Emergency Remote Education.”

Table 16.
Tools Used for Assessing Students’ Speaking Performance in ERE

Types of Tools	Participants	%
Synchronous Tools (e.g., Checklist, English File Online Practice, Presentation of course book)	P4, P15, P21	9.5%
Asynchronous Tools (e.g., Google Programs, Microsoft Office Program, VoiceThread Flipgrid, Youtube, iTools, Video, and task-based assignments)	P1, P2, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P13, P14, P17, P18, P20	66.6%

*P=Participant

Table 16 shows the tools used by the participants for assessing students' speaking performance in ERE. As reported, one of the research questions of this MA study was "what assessment tools did Turkish EFL instructors use while assessing students' performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?" In this section of the study, the researcher focused on assessing students' speaking performance in online courses. The findings of the qualitative data elucidated that while more than half of the participants used asynchronous tools (N=13), a small number of them (N=3) used synchronous tools. On the other hand, some participants did not answer regarding which tools they used for assessing speaking skills, so the total points did not reach one hundred.

Most of the instructors who responded to the open-ended questions reported using asynchronous tools like "Google Classroom," "VoiceThread," "Google Drive," "Flipgrid," "Youtube," "iTools," "Microsoft Teams," and "Video assignments" in their assessment of students' speaking performance during ERE. To illustrate, P1, P7, P9, and P13 responded, "I use Google Classroom." Similarly, P5 remarked that "I use iTools." Further insights were pointed out by P17 on this issue:

Well, I mostly applied task-based assessment because when I spoke with my students, they stated that the online system resulted in their anxiety being increased; therefore, I tried to choose those tasks that might assist them regarding this point.

On the other hand, P20 stressed that:

Speaking is the most difficult subject for me to give feedback in Emergency Remote Education. For this reason, although it is rare that students speak, I try to increase the understanding of the lecture by exalting as much as possible, but I do not think this is a testing strategy. However, I can occasionally increase the participation a little when I give a video assignment. I choose subjects from basic to difficult, from the subject they know and are interested in to more abstract subjects, considering that students often feel nervous when speaking in target language. Students choose the subjects that I determined beforehand. Therefore, the students who relax a little more can express themselves easily.

Furthermore, P8 highlighted that "I use Microsoft Teams for speaking skills," and similarly, P10 asserted that "I use Microsoft Teams for assessing speaking skills in online courses." P18 additionally pointed out that:

I usually assess speaking skills asynchronously because the online lesson time is too limited. Trying to get students talking in a lesson takes too much time. I want students to make a video via Flipgrid, Youtube, or Google Drive while they are preparing a presentation and narrating the summary of a book. I assess students' videos with rubrics, watching them one by one.

Expanding on the issue, P2 asserted that “I do not make corrections directly during the attendance of students in online lessons during ERE. Rather, I assess them individually through different video recording assignments. By focusing on general mistakes, I give information related to these in the lessons, and I encourage them to improve themselves.” P14 highly valued this perspective, stressing that:

I often use asynchronous video programs such as Flipgrid or VoiceThread. I'm giving general English courses, and my students do not have enough proficiency in speaking English. Not surprisingly, they do not want to participate in speaking tasks due to fear of making mistakes. I think that the great majority of them have public speaking anxiety or embarrassment. Therefore, it is efficient to use online video-mediated speaking tools to encourage them to speak and assess their speaking skills. In this way, they do not need to talk in front of their peers. These tools provide best practices for students to make presentations. They are also engaging because other peers can comment under shared videos.

On the other hand, as it is reported above, a small number of the participants involved in open-ended questions used synchronous tools like “checklist,” “English file online practice,” and “presentation of course books” in their assessment of students' speaking skills in ERE. To illustrate, P4 reported that “I use English file online practice,” while P15 reported that “I do not use a specific tool for speaking skills. I assess my students through their performance in lessons and synchronous meetings.” In addition to this, P21 highlighted that “I did not use digital platforms. There were several parts related to pronunciation in the online activities of the book, and I tried to use those activities.”

Table 17.*Opportunities in the Assessment of Students' Writing Skills in ERE*

Opportunities	Participants	%
Saving time in giving feedback and assignments	P1, P7, P14, P16, P18	23.8%
Peer learning of students	P2, P14, P20	14.2%
Opportunity for instant communication between students and instructor	P4	4.7%
Immediate feedback by instructors	P7, P9, P10, P11, P13, P18	28.5%
Reduced instructor fatigue	P7, P21	9.5%
Ease of teaching vocabulary	P10	4.7%
Ease of using online tools	P12	4.7%
Increased the effectiveness of teaching	P15, P16, P19	14.2%

*P=Participant

Table 17 indicates opportunities encountered by the participants while assessing students' writing skills, as well as the opportunities encountered by the students in ERE. The related research question in this study concerned "what challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?" In this section of the study, the researcher focused on the participants' assessment of writing skills and opportunities that both instructors and students faced in ERE.

More than one-fourth of the participants (N=6) agreed on "immediate feedback by instructors" and as one of the essential opportunities in the assessment of students' writing skills in ERE. For example, P7 expressed that "I used technological opportunities more effectively and efficiently. I was able to save time and energy. I could give feedback immediately." Similarly, P9 reported that "I can give feedback instantly by sharing a paper on screen," while P10 put forward that "we correct mistakes and teach vocabulary immediately." In accordance with this perspective, P11 and P13 articulated that "I can instantly show students' general mistakes." Moreover, P18 maintained that:

All students can write at the same time, and they can see each other's sentences; these are important advantages. In particular, I try to use platforms that allow writing synchronously since I can check students' grammar mistakes and give them feedback immediately. Since they usually make common mistakes, I explain for everyone when I give feedback to someone's article.

Table 17 shows that slightly less than one-fourth of the participants (N=5) put forward ideas relating to the theme of “saving time in giving feedback and assignments.” To illustrate, P7 asserted that “I used technological opportunities more effectively and efficiently. I was able to save time and energy. I could give feedback immediately,” while P1 noted that “I used time more efficiently while I was giving feedback.” P14 expanded on what P1 voiced and noted that “in Emergency Remote Education, students put their pencils down. Since all students are connected to the lesson by computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone, they can easily and quickly type what they want with the keyboard or keypad.” P18 added that “I try to use platforms that allow writing synchronously since I can check students’ grammar mistakes and give feedback to them immediately.” In the same vein, P16 maintained that:

Assignment submission is easier and more practical. Thanks to this, by giving assignments on more, and desired subjects, the rates of students’ assignment submission and earlier assignment submission were improved. Online feedback made corrections more practical by allowing them to understand their mistakes in Emergency Remote Education.

A small percentage of participants (N=3) believed that “peer learning of students” was a significant opportunity in the assessment of writing skills during ERE. To illustrate, P2 pointed out that “we can mention opportunities such as students learning altogether and correcting their mistakes by seeing their classmates;” additionally, P20 explained that “peer learning is very effective in Padlet. The opportunity of instantly sharing documents such as interactive text examples, photographs, quotations, and music which prompt them to write is great.” In the same vein, P14 expressed that:

In online teaching, students put their pencils down. Since all students are connected to the lesson by computer, laptop, tablet, or smartphone, they can easily and quickly type what they want with the keyboard or keypad. For example, I use online documents to do creative writing. The students are given the first paragraph of a story and asked to complete it. Small groups of students can work with their peers in breakout rooms. In this way, they can also interact, talk to each other, and share their screen. By using Google Docs, students can collaborate to write their stories and edit their writing from any device they connect with. After completing, students can make their writing visible to their classmates and instructor by sharing their screens. The other peers can give feedback or make comments. It works!

“Increased the effectiveness of teaching” was another opportunity cited in terms of assessment of writing skills in online courses during ERE. To illustrate, P19 explained that “we corrected students’ mistakes easily and clearly.” Similarly, P15 stated that “I started to use Google Drive, which I did not use before, as a collaborative application in this process. I can show my suggestions and comments related to students’ writing more practically and permanently on collaborative documents.” In that regard, P16 believed that:

Assignment submission is easier and more practical. Thanks to this, by giving assignments on more and desired subjects, the rates of students’ assignment submission and earlier assignment submission were improved. Online feedback made corrections more practical by allowing them to understand their mistakes.

Citing an additional benefit of online assessment, a small number of participants (N=2) asserted that they got tired less often. For example, P7 highlighted that “I used technological opportunities more effectively and efficiently. I was able to save time and energy,” while P21 pointed out that “since misspelled words were underlined, our students had the opportunity to see their mistakes before sending them to us, so we did not get as tired.” While P10 referred to the “ease of teaching vocabulary” as an opportunity for the assessment of writing skills in ERE, asserting that “we teach vocabulary easily,” P12 referred to the “ease of using online tools” as an opportunity, mentioning that “the usage of Google Documents was very practical and students liked it very much.” Lastly, P4 supported the idea of the “opportunity for instant communication between students and instructor” and added that “in the chat section, students can send instant answers on the subject that I want from them, and if we cannot understand one another, we can contact in the same section.”

Table 18.*Challenges in the Assessment of Students' Writing Skills in ERE*

Challenges	Participants	%
Limited access to technology by students	P1, P2, P12, P13, P15	23.8%
Insufficient time for teaching and assessing	P2, P14, P18	14.2%
No usage of blackboard	P4	4.7%
Absenteeism	P7, P9	9.5%
Lack of peer assessment	P7, P16	9.5%
Technical problems faced by instructors and students	P14, P21	9.5%
Students' reluctance to use technological tools	P14, P15	9.5%
Lack of immediate feedback by instructors and students	P4, P16, P19	14.2%
Distraction	P20	4.7%

*P=Participant

Table 18 outlines the challenges faced by the participants in assessing students' writing skills, as well as the challenges faced by students in ERE. As previously noted, "what challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?" was one of the research questions for this thesis. Therefore, in this section of the study, the researcher focused on the assessment of writing skills and the challenges that instructors and students faced in ERE.

With regard to "limited student access to technology" slightly less than one-fourth of the participants (N=5) believed that this theme was a significant challenge relating to writing skills in ERE. To illustrate, P1 reported that "with the limited technology used by students, more of the incorrect typing situation emerged in Emergency Remote Education." Likewise, P12 indicated that "students who do not have a computer tried to write articles via their mobile phones, and I tried to score line by line the articles that were full of mistakes." In accordance with this concern, P2 reported that "since students generally attend lessons via their phone, they cannot use the keyboard appropriately, and this situation causes difficulties in writing." P13 supported this statement, noting "the students had difficulties in accessing technology." In the same vein, P15 asserted that "in addition to the problems related to general language proficiency encountered in the face-to-face classroom environment, students' partial lack of interest and their financial situations created challenges."

On the other hand, few participants (N=3) pointed to “insufficient time for teaching and assessing” as a challenge. In this sense, P2 remarked that “assessing students’ homework is a time-consuming activity in ERE,” and P18 highlighted that “writing skills are easy to measure and difficult to assess. Analyzing each student’s writing one by one and giving feedback takes too much time. The problem is the same for online lessons because it is necessary to read and assess numerous students’ writing.” Accordingly, P14 maintained that:

Even before using the simplest web tool, it is necessary to give students preliminary information on how it is used. Some students may have a low level of digital literacy or technological competence. They are always asking for help. It is time-consuming to give extra clarifications.

“Students’ reluctance to use technological tools” was a significant challenge in the assessment of writing skills in online courses. In this sense, P15 noted that “students’ partial lack of interest and their financial situations created challenges,” while P14 asserted that:

Some students are not interested in using technological tools and prefer traditional strategies. Some of my students show no interest in ICT use since they are not flexible and open to new ways of learning. It may be challenging to use web tools with such a student profile.

Table 18 shows that a small percentage of participants (N=2) drew attention to the “absenteeism” issue. To illustrate, P7 and P9 articulated approximately the same statement that “students’ attendance was low in ERE.” On the other hand, few participants (N=2) referred to “technical problems faced by instructors and students” as a challenge. For example, P14 expressed that “it is time-consuming to cope with sudden technical problems,” while P21 asserted that “as in every field, there were several difficulties, such as internet connection problems, interruption of sounds, and disconnection from the lesson in Emergency Remote Education.” In the assessment of writing skills during ERE, another challenge was viewed as “lack of immediate feedback by instructors and students,” according to several participants (N=3). P16, for example, stated that “there was no group work, peer feedback, or the ability to give immediate feedback by walking around to students, as in face-to-face classes; so by giving homework instead of writing activities in class, we provided feedback later.” In the same vein, P19 indicated that “we could not give immediate feedback.” In addition to this, P4 articulated that “students could not immediately ask me about something that stuck in their head while

writing and I could not give immediate feedback.” With regard to “lack of peer assessment,” a small number of participants (N=2) gave their opinions. For example, P7 noted that “peer assessment limitation was one of the challenges that I face during online assessment.” P16 supported this idea by stating that “there was no group work, peer feedback, or the ability to give immediate feedback by walking around to students, as in face-to-face classes.” Moreover, P20 gave an opinion relating to “distraction” by expressing that “the students’ interest can be distracted quickly, and it may not be fully understood who is learning what.” Lastly, P4 put forward an idea about “no usage of blackboard” by asserting that “we could not use the blackboard in online classes during ERE.”

Table 19.

Opportunities in the Assessment of Students’ Speaking Skills in ERE

Opportunities	Participants	%
Increasing the effectiveness of teaching	P1, P11, P13	14.2%
Peer assessment of students	P2, P18	9.5%
Students’ inclination toward technology	P2, P5	9.5%
Low levels of student anxiety	P3, P4, P6, P14	19%
Advantage of technology for instructors and students	P2, P15, P16, P17, P18, P20	28.5%

*P=Participant

Table 19 illustrates the opportunities noted by the participants while assessing students’ speaking skills, as well as the opportunities faced by students in ERE. Another of the research questions in this study related to “What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students’ speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?” In this section of the study, the researcher focused on the assessment of speaking skills and opportunities that instructors and students faced in ERE.

More than half of the participants (N=6) drew attention to the “advantage of technology for instructors and students.” To illustrate, P20 expressed that “I can share files easily and instantly, such as speaking videos, photographs and videos that they can speak about it. Their listening skills improve at this stage.” P18 reported that:

Assessment of speaking skills synchronously or asynchronously is the most important advantage that technology has brought to language classes. Waiting on all students to give a performance in traditional face-

to-face classes took too much time. Thanks to common platforms, our workload becomes easier. For example, we could assess students formatively thanks to applications such as Quizziz, Quizlet and Wordwall.

Similarly, P15 stated that “I was able to instantly share online materials that I wanted to share with students, or they instantly sent students’ posts to us by sharing a link from the chat window. This situation provided an important opportunity.” In the same vein, P2 reported that:

The importance of remote online education which has been applied for long years in different countries because of the COVID-19, is clearly understood. Even if both instructors and students had difficulty in adaptation to ERE in the first part of the pandemic, technology made this situation easier. Numerous companies in our country and different parts of the world have developed remote online education applications and put them into use.

Additionally, P16 asserted that “listening to students’ performance again in recorded lessons, practical English sections in some books and recording speaking homework were several opportunities that I faced in online courses.” Along the same line, P2 highlighted that “students find the opportunity to assess themselves and their peers in applications such as video recording assignments.” P18 likewise paid attention to video assignments by noting that “students can re-shoot parts they do not want, so they produce better products.” P17 indicated that:

The students recorded their performances through Zoom meetings and with a very low recording size (e.g., only 400KB for three min.) so they could upload the files to the system. Moreover, I more frequently applied the processes of “listen to speak” and “watch to speak,” as the audio and visual settings and devices were already at hand.

“Low levels of student anxiety” was another significant advantage noted in the assessment of students’ speaking skills during ERE. For example, P3 noted that “students’ anxiety level is lower in online courses in Emergency Remote Education,” while P4 supported this idea by mentioning that “they just feel a little braver about speaking.” Similarly, P6 stated that “we could have effective lessons during ERE, since anxiety levels are lower in online courses than face-to-face courses.” In the same vein, P14 indicated that “my students are not required to put their cameras on. Thus, they feel less stressed, as their peers do not see them while speaking.”

A small percentage of participants (N=3) also believed that assessment of speaking skills in online courses permitted them to increase the effectiveness

of their teaching. P1, for example, indicated that “we could make simultaneous and effective corrections by having students listen to the speaking lesson feedback,” and P11 expressed that “I allocated time to the students individually and enabled them to speak in a longer and more concentrated manner.” Along the same lines, P13 stated that “I had more opportunity to listen to the pronunciation of my students.”

“Peer assessment of students” was an additional opportunity encountered while assessing speaking skills in ERE. P2 supported the idea of peer assessment and added that “students find the opportunity to assess themselves and their peers in applications such as video recording assignments.” From the same perspective, P18 articulated that:

Students can do their assignments outside of class, share with each other, and assess themselves by means of web tools instead of making their presentations in class. Students can both make a presentation in front of an audience, so they can overcome their public speaking anxiety in this way; and they can also prepare more carefully and use language more attentively, since they know that other students watch them.

From another perspective, P2 put forward ideas about “students’ inclination toward technology,” asserting that “students sometimes shy about speaking in face-to-face lessons. Generations growing up with technology and expressing themselves with technology can express themselves easily in online lessons.” P5 supported this idea, mentioning that “they try to answer all the communicative questions. I do extra communicative exercises during class.

Table 20.
Challenges in the Assessment of Students’ Speaking Skills in ERE

Challenges	Participants	%
Technical problems faced by instructors and students	P1, P3,P4, P7, P16, P17, P21	33.3%
Lack of online tools for assessment and teaching	P2, P18	9.5%
Students’ reluctance to speak	P5, P10, P12, P14, P20, P21	28.5%
Poor financial situation of students	P7, P16	9.5%
Students’ high levels of anxiety	P9, P15, P17	14.2%
Insufficient time for each student’s speak	P13	4.7%
Absenteeism	P17	4.7%

*P=Participant

Table 20 delineates the challenges faced by the participants while assessing students’ speaking skills, as well as the challenges faced by students in

ERE. One of the research questions for this thesis study inquired into “what challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students’ speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?” In this section of the study, the researcher focused on participants’ assessment of speaking skills, and the challenges that instructors and students faced in ERE.

According to several participants (N=6), “students’ reluctance to speak” was a significant challenge in the assessment of speaking skills in ERE. P12, for example, asserted that “getting students who do not turn on their microphones to talk is difficult for me, and I did not assess the speaking skills of those who did not turn on their microphones.” P20 also referred to this challenge, noting that “if students do not get marks, they generally refuse to attend the lecture by voice. I cannot give feedback since I do not know what his/her knowledge is. If students are reluctant to learn, progress will not emerge.” P21 similarly pointed out that “students were very hesitant to speak because their cameras were turned off,” and P5 and P10 made approximately the same assertion that “students avoid speaking in online courses during ERE, so I could not make any assessments.” In the same vein, P14 indicated that:

Many of my students sometimes do not want to use their microphones. They always make endless excuses for their silence. On such occasions, it is not easy to maintain an effective interaction when students do not actively participate in speaking tasks. For this reason, I often prefer using video-mediated speaking tools.

Most participants (N=7) believed that the most critical challenge involved “technical problems faced by instructors and students.” To illustrate, P1 alleged that “we could not understand speech when the internet connection was bad,” while P3 asserted that “I faced a lack of interaction among students because of technological difficulties.” In the same line, P4 described “having to ask the students whose speech I could not understand or hear because of technical problems to write what he/she meant in the chat section or to repeat it.” P17 also remarked that “no need to mention the electricity cuts and weak internet connections.” Additionally, P7 reported that “students could not use their microphones actively because of technical and financial problems, so speaking sections were quite inefficient in ERE.” Likewise, P16 stated that “technical problems, students’ technical knowledge, and their computers’ inadequacies sometimes prevented students’ participation in the lessons in

Emergency Remote Education.” Furthermore, P21 articulated that “students’ microphone problems, disconnection from the internet, and interruptions of sounds were several challenges that I faced during online courses in ERE.”

A certain number of participants (N=3) pointed out that “students’ high levels of anxiety” was another problem. For instance, P9 indicated that “there was no nonverbal language or gestures in online lessons, and this situation reduced class participation and increased anxiety.” Additionally, P15 reported that “students’ anxiety due to background noises, their stress for different reasons when they had to talk with the camera on and tensions caused by students because of recording were the main challenges for me.” Similarly, P17 indicated that “there were some students that didn’t want to speak with the microphone, as they felt more anxious.”

Participant 7 drew attention to the “poor financial situation of students” by noting that “students could not use microphone actively because of technical and financial problems, so the speaking assessment was quite inefficient in ERE;” and likewise, P16 indicated that “their computers’ inadequacies sometimes prevented student participation in the lesson.”

Moreover, the “lack of online tools for assessment and teaching” was another challenge in the assessment of students’ speaking skills during ERE. For instance, P2 stated that “I think that technology helps teach speaking skills, but more applications should be improved to assess speaking skills.” P18 further expressed that:

Finding an appropriate platform took a while since I wanted to select platforms that allow students to see each other at the same time and comment on each other and which they can use easily. Additionally, I would like to have an application that lets me listen and assess students at the same time.

P13 drew attention to “insufficient time for each student’s speak” in online courses by asserting that “there was not enough time for each student to talk in ERE.” On the other hand, P17 criticized “absenteeism” by noting that “unfortunately, as there were not any attendance obligations, so I could not include student participation as an item for assessment during Emergency Remote Education.”

Table 21.*Instructors' Positive Perceptions towards Assessing Students' Performative Skills*

Positive Perceptions	Participants	%
Saving time and space for instructors and students	P1, P3	9.5%
Accessing and sharing data easily	P2, P6, P15, P16, P17, P20	28.5%
Advantages of technology for instructors and students	P2, P7, P10, P14, P16, P17	28.5%
Assessment ease and efficiency	P4, P5, P6, P9, P14, P18, P20	33.3%
No need to supervise	P9	4.7%
Improving speaking and writing skills	P11, P12, P18	14.2%
Experiencing ERE	P19	4.7%

*P=Participant

Table 21 highlights the situations in which the participants positively perceive assessing students' performative skills (e.g., writing and speaking) as well as positive perceptions of students in ERE. Two of the research questions for this study included "what challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?" and "what challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?" In this section, the researcher of the study focused on the positive perceptions of participants and students.

More than one-fourth of participants (N=7) attached importance to "assessment ease and efficiency" in assessing students' performative skills in ERE. P5, for example, stated that "I liked testing and assessing," and P9 indicated that "except for assessing being easier and not having a supervisor, there is no opportunity." In addition to these views, P20 highlighted that "I liked being able to use fast and entertaining tools (Quizziz, Mentimeter, Kahoot) for assessment, quickly noticing where and why the students made mistakes and having fun." In this regard, P4 also reported that "I mainly liked that the assessment in online courses during ERE is easier and faster," while P6 likewise pointed out that "I most like that we had effective lessons and students improved their writing skills by gathering information from different resources in Emergency Remote Education. It was more effective to assess it." P18 also expressed that "it was easy to follow, as online, I could sort students and assess their performances via web tools." In the same vein, P14 articulated that "keeping track of my students' progress and making an assessment using online tools is easier. For example, on

Flipgrid, all the videos are recorded, so I can access and assess them whenever I want.”

“Improving speaking and writing skills” was a positive perception while assessing students’ performative skills in ERE. While P11 focused on speaking skills, noting that “the best thing in online courses was improving speaking skills,” P12 focused on writing skills by asserting that “I liked writing lessons in online courses.” P18 emphasized both writing and speaking skills by mentioning that “providing the experience of speaking and writing skills to all students was that I liked most.”

Several instructors (N=6) brought up the theme of “accessing and sharing data easily.” In the same vein, P15 reported that “I liked the practicality and ease of accessing information and sharing it with students in Emergency Remote Education.” From an even more positive standpoint, P20 explained that:

I liked using fast and entertaining tools (Quizziz, Mentimeter, Kahoot) for assessment, quickly noting where and why the students made mistakes, and having fun. I think that whether we are unprepared for very sudden situations initially, we can present appropriate activities for lessons because of the internet, which enriches the nature of the lecture.

In the same theme, P2 remarked that “I most liked gathering all data within easy reach.” P6 expanded on this, noting that “I most liked that we had effective lessons, and students improved their writing skills by gathering information from different resources. It was more effective to assess it.” Concerning the positive perceptions in ERE, P17 argued that:

I took advantage of using more audio and video settings to give homework and tasks to the students. Moreover, the material obtained from online sources was ready to use in online platforms, and there was no need for print-outs, etc. Moreover, I used different helpful websites such as Padlet or Quizziz. Also, I tried not to apply summative assessment as much as possible during face-to-face learning. During the online teaching, because of technical facilities, I applied more formative assessment through various tasks.

Apart from subjects related to the data, several participants (N=6) reported their ideas about “advantages of technology for instructors and students.” P2, for example, believed that “technology makes both instructors’ and students’ responsibilities easier.” Furthermore, P16 analyzed this theme in terms of finance by noting that “the best part of online courses was that it eliminates the cost of photocopying and sharing more documents.” P17 further elucidated ideas about

the subject by expressing that “the material obtained from online sources was ready to use in online platforms, and there was no need for print-outs, etc.” P7 further asserted that “I most liked using different technological applications.” With regard to recording lessons, P10 expressed that “I liked recording lessons in online courses.” P14 supported this view and added that:

Keeping track of my students’ progress and making an assessment on online tools is easier. For example, on Flipgrid, all the videos are recorded, and I can access and assess them whenever I want. It is challenging and misleading to assess simultaneous speaking exams or tasks unless you record them.

“Saving time and space for instructors and students” was another positive perception for participants. For example, P1 reported that “I liked the ease of teaching in every condition, regardless of time and space.” Likewise, P3 highlighted that “I most liked the opportunity for students to attend lessons without going to school and returning home.”

By mentioning that “I liked the lack of a supervisor,” P9 gave an additional opinion about positive perceptions for online courses. Moreover, for experiencing ERE, P19 pointed out that “I liked to see the extent to which this kind of education is beneficial and how to provide the most productive environment to test it for education.”

Table 22.
Instructors’ Negative Perceptions towards Assessing Students’ Performative Skills

Negative Perceptions	Participants	%
Being unsure about lessons’ intelligibility	P1	4.7%
Lack of reliability	P4, P15	9.5%
Low-class participation	P5, P11, P12, P16, P21	23.8%
Limited student access to technology	P12, P13	9.5%
Limited technological infrastructure	P7	4.7%
Cheating by students	P9, P15	9.5%
Students’ lack of self-discipline	P15	4.7%
The lack of compulsory attendance	P8, P17	9.5%

*P=Participant

Table 22 outlines the negative perceptions noted by the participants in assessing students’ performative skills (e.g., writing and speaking) as well as the negative perceptions mentioned by students in ERE. Two of the research

questions in this study included “what challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students’ writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?” and “what challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students’ speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic? In this section, the researcher of the study focused on the negative perceptions of participants and students.

As reported above, slightly less than one-fourth of the participants (N=5) expressed their ideas about “low-class participation.” To illustrate, P5 stated that “I do not like having lessons with few students.” Likewise, P11 and P21 made approximately the same statements, emphasizing that “unfortunately, participation was low during Emergency Remote Education.” P16 also asserted that “the worst part of assessing online courses was that students’ participation was not at the desired level,” while P12 added that “I am tired of teaching to a ghost class.”

“Lack of reliability” was a negative perception, according to a small number of participants (N=2) in terms of assessment in online courses. P4, for example, asserted that “I am not satisfied in terms of reliability,” while P15 expanded this view:

I can mention that students’ deficiency in self-discipline affected the assessment process because online courses allow freedom and lack of discipline. As a result, they feel incompetent and try to cheat on the exams. I think this situation affected the reliability of the assessment, even though I tried to ask individual open-ended questions.

In addition, a small number of the participants (N=2) also voiced ideas about “the lack of compulsory attendance.” For example, P8 reported that “I did not like that there was a lack of compulsory attendance,” as with P17, who noted that “the most important aspect I did not like was the lack of compulsory attendance.”

Few participants (N=2) argued that “limited student access to technology” was problematic. In this sense, P13 explained that “I used technology the way I wanted, but not all students had the same technological opportunities.” Additionally, P12 argued that “I am tired of making excessive concessions for everyone in order not to force students who have limited opportunities.”

Furthermore, “cheating by students” was another significant negative perception in assessing students’ performative skills during ERE. P9, for example, asserted that “the biggest challenge is cheating in the assessment of online lessons during Emergency Remote Education.” Further insights were pointed out by P15 on the issue: “I can mention that students’ deficiency of self-discipline affected the assessment process because online courses result in too much freedom and lack of discipline. As a result, they feel incompetent and try to cheat on the exams.”

Moreover, P1 complained about “being unsure about the lessons’ intelligibility,” noting that “I disliked the fact that I could not be sure that the lesson was fully listened to, as well as the uncertainty of assessing online courses.” On the other hand, P15 made a point about “students’ lack of self-discipline” by asserting that “I can mention that students’ lack of self-discipline affected the assessment process because online courses result in too much freedom and lack of discipline. As a result of this, they feel incompetent.” Regarding “lack of technological infrastructure”, P7 stressed that “I mostly dislike experiencing lack of access to lessons because of technological infrastructure.”

Table 23.
Increasing Reliability and Fairness of Online Assessment

Practices	Participants	%
Practicing question and answer teaching or summative assessment	P1, P10, P16	14.2%
Involving another instructor in the assessment	P2, P18	9.5%
Dividing students into groups	P4	4.7%
Obligation for turning on the camera	P4	4.7%
Administration of questions by lecturers	P6, P9	9.5%
Asking open-ended questions	P6, P15	9.5%
Checking plagiarism	P6	4.7%
Preparing detailed answer keys and rubrics and abiding by the rubrics	P7, P12, P14, P17	19%
Repeated and different scoring	P7, P12, P20, P21	19%
Assessing per question	P7	4.7%
Setting a time limit	P8, P9	9.5%
Exercising peer checks	P12	4.7%
Comparing class and exam performance	P16	4.7%
Checking course materials and content	P19	4.7%
Conducting pilot study	P20	4.7%

*P=Participant

Table 23 reveals participants' techniques for increasing reliability and fairness in online assessment. One of the research questions in this study was "what did instructors who lectured online courses do frequently to increase the reliability and validity of the performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills assessment in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?" In this section, the researcher focused on participants' efforts to increase reliability and fairness in online assessment.

The participants expressed different ideas about the reliability and fairness of the online assessment. To illustrate, P1 stated ideas about "practicing question and answer teaching or summative assessment," asserting that "I try to increase the reliability and fairness of assessment by practicing question-answer activities in class or end-of-course assessment during Emergency Remote Education." P10 also asserted that "I practice question and answer teaching." In accordance with this perspective, P16 reported that "I try to assess whether they are at a similar

level to the questions answered in the exam by asking in-class questions or focusing them on the lessons.”

A small percentage of participants (N=2) believed that “involving another instructor in assessment” is a significant way to increase reliability and fairness in assessment. For example, P2 expressed that “there can be a need for a second instructor for assessment, but it is not possible for numerous instructors.” Some further insight was put forward by P18:

To increase assessment reliability, other instructors should also assess. Unfortunately, this is impossible for me. Indeed, most lecturers self-assess their own classes, and just one instructor assesses the same students. It is also considered strange to ask other instructors to assess my students because everybody has their own business.

“Preparing detailed answer keys and rubrics and abiding by the rubrics” was another way to increase reliability and fairness in assessment, according to a number of participants (N=4). P12 and P14 made similar statements about the subject by noting that “I prefer using rubrics to give fair scores and obeying the rubrics.” In addition, P7 pointed out that “I prepare a detailed answer key and rubric.” Similarly, P17 contributed the opinion that “I check websites to see whether there are any upgraded rubrics or not. Also, after grading the students with rubrics, I ask myself, if I were supposed to assess holistically, would I give more or less the same grade?”

A small percentage of participants (N=4) shared ideas about “repeated and different scoring” for increasing reliability and fairness in online assessment. To illustrate, P7 reported that “I prepare a detailed answer key and rubric, and I score by hiding names. I score the same questionnaire twice.” Likewise, P12 noted that “I hide the names of the students. I assess the same questionnaire in different periods.” Similarly, P20 stressed that “I prioritize students’ levels in the assessment process, then I assess without names.” In the same vein, P21 specified that “I use the same rubrics more than once and consult my friends, especially those who have a master’s or doctorate.”

From another perspective, two participants focused on “asking open-ended questions.” P6 emphasized that “I can improve students’ critical thinking and writing skills with open-ended questions, and this is much easier in online lessons during ERE.” Similarly, P15 stated that “I tried to ask open-ended,

interpretive questions so that students would feel compelled to use individual expressions.”

Additionally, P7 highlighted “assessing per question,” articulating that “I score one by one instead of scoring the whole questionnaire. Namely, I score the first questions of all students and then the second questions.”

Participant 16 compared exam and class performances of students by expressing that “I observe students and check whether their in-class performance and exam success are equivalent. I try to assess whether they are at a similar level to the questions answered in the exam by asking in-class questions or focusing on them in the lessons.”

By expressing that “If I have the opportunity, I do a pilot study to increase reliability and fairness in assessment,” P20 elucidated the importance of “conducting a pilot study” to increase reliability and fairness in online assessment.

Moreover, P19 explained the issue of “checking course materials and content” by stating that “I check what is missing in the course materials and content I have given. Totipotence is essential for me. At this point, I encourage students to get ideas from numerous fields, to do research, and to experience.”

P8 and P9 also pointed to “setting a time limit,” noting that “I set a time limit to increase reliability and fairness in assessment.” On the other hand, P9 drew attention to the “administration of questions by lecturers” subtheme by stating that “I mix the question order for increasing reliability and fairness in assessment,” while P6 added that “I can increase the number of questions for increasing reliability and fairness in assessment.”

P12 focused on “exercising peer checks,” asserting that “I want students to do peer checks before submitting their homework.” Moreover, P6 drew attention to another theme, “checking for plagiarism” by pointing out that “I can check for plagiarism with different applications on the Internet.” On the other hand, P4 put forward an idea about “dividing students into groups” and enforcing an “obligation for turning on the camera,” stating that “we tried to ask different questions to the students by making groups, and we made turning on their cameras an obligation.”

Table 24.*Instructors' Perceptions about Online Assessment in the COVID-19 Pandemic*

Perceptions	Participants	%
Getting diversified online assessment tools	P2	4.7%
Ideas about online assessment and face-to-face assessment	P3, P4, P19	14.2%
Usefulness of online assessment	P1, P6, P13	14.2%
Harmfulness of online assessment	P1, P4,P5, P21	19%
Online assessment techniques' necessity	P6, P17	9.5%
Inability to assess	P7, P8, P9, P12, P16, P17	28.5%
Difficulty in adaptation of instructors and students	P2, P18, P20	14.2%
Needs of instructors	P20	4.7%

*P=Participant

Table 24 outlines the participants' ideas about online assessment during the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the research questions in this study asked, "what were the Turkish EFL instructors' perceptions about online performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills assessment in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?" In this section, the author of this thesis study focused on the instructors' thoughts about online performative skills assessment.

Regarding "inability to assess," P8 held the belief that "most students get help during online examination, so I think that there cannot be a fair assessment in ERE." P12 criticized the negative aspects of ERE: "unfortunately, if there is no appropriate infrastructure, nobody can prevent cheating in ERE." Further insights were pointed out by P9 on this issue in that "we cannot overcome cheating. Assessing examinations like tests is easy, but there may be technical problems in practice. There are too many applications for make-up exams, and there is suspense about how they can be assessed." In accordance with this perspective, P16 reported that "numerous factors were involved in the assessment of students during Emergency Remote Education. These could cause students to decrease in social, physical or motivational situations due to the intense nature of the pandemic." Likewise, P17 pointed out that "I did not like to apply multiple-choice tests, as there is a high frequency of cheating possibility, but sometimes there was no other choice."

Although some participants (N=4) thought that online assessment was harmful, several (N=3) also thought the opposite. For instance, while P13 stated that “it was a positive process in terms of the use of technology in education,” P1 noted that “it can lead to negative situations, especially in terms of reliability.” Likewise, although P6 reported that “online assessment is useful,” P4 objected to this idea by asserting that “I think that assessment should be done face-to-face because it makes sense in that way; otherwise, authentic assessment cannot be reported.” P5, on the other hand, focused on the physical position of instructors while carrying out assessments, and stated that “sitting in front of the computer causes some disorders in the body.” Further insights about assessment being harmful were pointed out by P21, who noted that “online assessment period in Emergency Remote Education was unproductive for both students and lecturers. Much time was wasted, and it was useless. The education and assessment were useless, too. I think that we just did it.”

A small percentage of participants (N=3) compared face-to-face assessment with online assessment, expressing that face-to-face assessment is more practical. To illustrate, P3 explained that “I think that face-to-face assessment is more effective and reliable than online assessment.” Similarly, P4 believed that “I think that assessment should be done face-to-face because it makes sense in that way; otherwise, authentic assessment cannot be reported.” In that vein, P19 had a different opinion, reporting that “it was emphasized that online assessment is a viable alternative for face-to-face assessment, and students should make a strong move in this direction.”

The “online assessment techniques’ necessity” was put forward by some participants (N=2) about online assessment during the COVID-19 pandemic. P6 believed that “online assessment is useful, and old online assessment techniques can be updated with technology; this results in more reliable and fair assessment.” Similarly, referring to the cost of applications, P17 noted that “I think more reliable tools should be provided for online assessment procedures. They should also be cheaper, so more educational organizations can benefit from them.”

A few participants (N=3) also believed that both instructors and students had difficulty in adapting to online assessment. P2 remarked on this situation, noting that “even if both instructors and students had difficulty in adapting to ERE

in the first part of the pandemic, technology made this situation easier.” On the other hand, P18 focused on instructors, remarking that “most instructors had difficulty in terms of adaptation in the first period of Emergency Remote Education.” P20 pointed out further insights on this issue:

We were suddenly involved in a process that we almost never knew, so sometimes we made good progress, but sometimes progress was very slow. The class that I taught at the beginning of the week was my pilot study; I tried to get closer to perfection for the classes on the weekend.

Furthermore, P20 attracted attention to the “needs of instructors” by indicating that “I think that I should be trained in online assessment. This is my 14th year in the profession, and I am good at assessment in face-to-face education, but assessment in ERE necessitates more focused training.”

From a different viewpoint, P2 believed that online assessment tools had become more diversified during the pandemic and asserted that “numerous companies in our country and different parts of the world developed remote online education applications and put them into use. Thus, online assessment tools have become diversified.”

4.2.2. Individual Interviews

In the individual interview questions with the participants, questions were asked relating to the assessment tools they used in the assessment of students’ performative skills during ERE; the opportunities and challenges they faced in the assessment of performative skills in ERE; the reliability and fairness of assessment; and instructors’ perceptions about performative skills exams in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. The aim of this effort was to examine and understand their perceptions in greater depth. The responses to the individual interview questions were analyzed qualitatively by grouping similar responses into categories and then illustrating them in frequency tables.

Table 25.*Tools Used for Assessing Students' Writing Performance in ERE*

Types of Tools	Participants	%
Synchronous Tools (e.g., Padlet, Presentation of Course Books, University Infrastructure, Zoom, Mergen, Edmodo, Adobe Connect, Etherpad)	P3, P10	20%
Asynchronous Tools (e.g., Google Classroom, Microsoft Office Programs, Mail, Moodle, Turnitin, Grammarly)	P6	10%
Synchronous Tools - Asynchronous Tools	P1, P2, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9	70%

*P=Participant

Table 25 shows the participants' tools used for assessing students' writing skills during ERE. One of the research questions in this study asked, "what assessment tools did Turkish EFL instructors use while assessing students' performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?" Table 25 shows that most participants used both synchronous and asynchronous tools.

Most of the participants (N=7) involved in the individual interviews reported that they used both synchronous tools like "Padlet," "Presentation of Course Books," "University Infrastructure," "Zoom," "Mergen," "Edmodo," "Adobe Connect," and "Etherpad;" and asynchronous tools such as "Google Classroom," "Microsoft Office Programs," "Mail," "Moodle," "Turnitin," and "Grammarly" for assessing students' writing skills in ERE. For example, P8 expressed that, for synchronous tools, "I used Etherpad and Padlet," and for asynchronous tools, "I mostly used the forum section of Moodle, since all students could see what the others were writing. A student who could not think of anything at that moment could see his/her friends' writing and write answers to them." P2 added with regard to synchronous tools that "in the beginning, I used Zoom, but I had some difficulties with that, so I started to use Microsoft Teams. As a writing tool, I also used a book called Smart Choice;" and for asynchronous tools, "I used open-ended questions in Moodle, since it was decided in my faculty to ask open-ended questions." In addition, P4 noted that for synchronous tools, the "university infrastructure provided an application. I required my students to send their written assignments, work, and assignments by using the university infrastructure instead of Google Classroom;" and for asynchronous tools, "I created a virtual class in Google Classroom. I taught some writing rules to students in this program, and I

asked them to send their assignments via the program. When the pandemic broke out, I used to get assignments via mail, but it was not proper like that. Using Google Classroom was easier.” P1 also gave an opinion about synchronous tools, asserting that:

I used the university infrastructure while assessing students’ writing skills. There were chat sections in all of the distance learning platforms that I used. I could display students’ writing skills in these chat sections. Students could write about the subjects that I asked of them in the chat section. Apart from this, there were private chat sections. Some of the students did not want their own writing to be seen by others, so that I could speak with students via this private chat section.

On the other hand, P1 noted an opinion for asynchronous tools that:

I got help from Microsoft Office programs. First, students prepared text files and sent them to me. Then I assessed their mistakes via video chat. Since I know my students’ potential, I could tell whether they cheated or not in their text files. When there were students who could not attend the lessons, they were able to watch recordings of the lesson asynchronously, and then they could ask me their questions.

Additionally, P5 mentioned with respect to synchronous tools that “I used books from Oxford since these books provided an online platform for both instructors and students. There were writing practices on the online platforms. When the students did these practices, I got notifications, and I comfortably assessed students’ writing skills.” On the other hand, with respect to asynchronous tools, P5 articulated that “the agreement of university was with the Google company, so I used its tools. The Google company let us use office tools like Google Sheets, Google Docs, and Google Translate, but I mostly used Google Classroom.” On the other hand, P7 asserted concerning synchronous tools that “I used the Mergen system. There were links for uploading lessons, modules, videos, and YouTube. I used ‘Introduction to English’ as a course book.” For asynchronous tools, P7 also reported that “for the writing section, I usually used ‘Microsoft Office Power Point’ in this book. I asked students to write articles within the ‘Mergen’ system. I also created a section that included open-ended questions in this system. When students wrote and saved their articles, I got notifications.” In addition, P9 remarked concerning synchronous and asynchronous tools that “I used the university infrastructure and Microsoft Teams provided to us by the Distance Learning Center. In the program, students had the

opportunity to reflect the text they wrote at the moment on the screen, and I comfortably assessed it that way.”

Two participants used only synchronous tools for the assessment of students’ writing skills. For instance, P3 expressed that:

I used “Edmodo” and “Adobe Connect,” the online platform provided to us by the university to share screens and give feedback to students while assessing their writing skills. I could identify their mistakes in the text they wrote and show them; I mainly used the comment feature in both programs. I thought that feedback in the writing skills lesson was beneficial because all students were able to see my feedback at the same time. Students also uploaded their assignments to “Edmodo,” and I assessed them; positive feedback was received from the students.

P10 raised further insights, stating that:

In order that everybody could upload their text at the same time and the mistakes made were reduced to a minimum thanks to peer learning, I mostly used “Padlet.” The students were able to correct their own mistakes. I reflected on the corrections I made on the screen at that time, and I was able to say that I am correcting it for this reason.

Just one participant reporting using only asynchronous tools for the assessment of students’ writing skills. In this regard, P6 articulated that:

While I was assessing online writing assessments, first, I asked my students to upload their writing tasks to the “Turnitin” application so as to check whether they plagiarized. Second, I used “Grammarly” to check the grammar and punctuation errors in all of the assignments. These applications helped me get a quick overview of the assignments before I made assessments. After these prefilters, I read the exams and decided on the grades via a rubric.

Table 26.
Tools Used for Assessing Students’ Speaking Performance in ERE

Types of Tools	Participants	%
Synchronous Tools (e.g., University Infrastructure, Zoom, Mergen, Formative Assessment)	P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P7, P9	70%
Asynchronous Tools (e.g., Flipgrid, Voice Spice, YouTube, Microsoft Office Programs)	P6, P8	20%

*P=Participant

Table 26 outlines the assessment tools the participants used with regard to the speaking skills of their students during ERE. One of the research questions in this study asked, “what assessment tools did Turkish EFL instructors use while assessing students’ performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?” In this section of the study, the researcher focused on

assessing students' speaking skills in ERE. The findings of the qualitative data indicated that while most participants (N=7) used synchronous tools, a small number (N=2) used asynchronous tools. Just one participant did not respond regarding which tools he/she used for assessing students' speaking skills, so the total points did not reach one hundred.

Most of the instructors who participated in the individual interviews used synchronous tools like "University Infrastructure," "Zoom," "Mergen," and "Formative Assessment." For synchronous tools, P1 explained that "I used both distance learning university infrastructure and Zoom. I asked for MP3 sound files related to the subject of the lesson from students who could not attend class and requested that they send them to me offline. In the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was difficult to teach a large number of students because the university infrastructure was insufficient, so I used two different programs while assessing students' speaking skills." On the other hand, P3 pointed out that:

I used just one application to assess students' speaking skills. When I gave an exam, I used Zoom and told the students to form groups. The students formed a group of 5 and discussed a specific subject with guidance questions using Zoom. Then they saved their discussions and sent them to me. This was an assessment in the form of a project.

With regard to university infrastructure as a synchronous tool, P5 reported that "I used university infrastructure, and I taught lessons, sent assignments and gathered materials via this infrastructure. In this system, both the students and I were able to follow their progress. Additionally, I could give feedback to all students." P4 expanded on what P5 articulated and noted that:

I used the university infrastructure. When I asked all of the students one by one, I could see which students replied or not, so I wanted them to attend lessons and answer questions. All of the students were able to attend lessons with their microphones because the number of students taking the online course was low. Since we did not have any problems with their audio, I was even able to make pronunciation corrections in online lessons during Emergency Remote Education.

With regard to other synchronous tools, P7 indicated that "there were also live lessons in the Mergen system. When I tried to do live lessons in Emergency Remote Education, I could not get efficiency due to the heavy load on the system because there were breaks in the system. That's why I focused on writing skills, not speaking skills."

In relation to formative assessment as a synchronous tool, P2 indicated that “I had four classes, and there were too many students, so I just made formative assessments.” Further insights were pointed out by P10 on this issue:

I would like to state that I did not use a particular application. Frankly, I had difficulties with assessing speaking skills. Fewer students wanted to attend lessons by voice, and thus, I had students watch soundless videos, and I asked them to answer by speaking English. In addition, I made students talk a lot through pictures related to the subject. I guided them by creating sample sentences, and I tried to make them create sentences so they could tell me about the subject I taught.

On the other hand, as reported above, a small number of the participants who participated in the individual interviews used asynchronous tools like “Flipgrid,” “Voice Spice,” “Microsoft Office Programs,” and “YouTube” in the assessment of students’ speaking skills during ERE. To illustrate, P8 reported that:

There was an application called Voice Spice; I gave assignments to students via this and asked them to record their voices. In Flipgrid, I had the students make the presentations, storytelling, and news narrations they would prepare in the lessons. This situation was excellent in crowded classrooms since I could see all 20 of the students at the same time.

On the other hand, P9 stated that “I used Microsoft Teams,” whereas further insights were pointed out by P6 on this issue:

During the online classes, it was hard to get every student to participate in the lesson; thus, it was not possible to assess their speaking skills. In order to reverse this handicap, I assigned students video tasks in which they recorded themselves while speaking about a specific topic for the week. By doing so, I had the possibility to assess their speaking skills. For these video tasks, I used the “Flipgrid” online tool that made it possible to upload videos and share them with the class. When both the class and I were in the audiences, students paid more attention to their tasks. When I had problems with “Flipgrid,” I used “YouTube” as a platform to share the videos.

Table 27.*Opportunities in the Assessment of Students' Writing Skills in ERE*

Opportunities	Participants	%
Ease of technology in the assessment of writing skills	P2, P4, P5, P6, P8, P9	60%
Low levels of student anxiety	P4, P5	20%
Students' eagerness to attend the online course	P1, P10	20%
Immediate feedback by instructors	P3	10%
Saving time in assessing	P6, P7, P8, P10	40%
Economical convenience	P8	10%
Transmitting sources to students	P9	10%

*P=Participant

Table 27 indicates opportunities faced by participants while assessing students' writing skills in ERE. "What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?" was one of the research questions for this thesis study. In this section of the study, the researcher focused on the assessment of writing skills and the opportunities that instructors and students faced in ERE.

Most of the participants (N=6) agreed about the "ease of technology in the assessment of writing skills" and it's being one of the essential opportunities in the assessment of writing skills in ERE. For example, P9 expressed that "I had no difficulty in giving and receiving assignments since studies were uploaded through the system." In accordance with this perspective, P5 explained that "since students typed on the computer, the programs they used showed their mistakes, and hence, I received fewer misspelled written assignments from students. It was easier assessing these assignments." P8 maintained that:

I was able to see who was writing what sequentially in the forum section of "Moodle" or "Etherpad." Each student had a color in the collaborative writing tools, and it was clear who wrote what. When the students finished their assignments, a video clip was formed, and I could watch it again. Additionally, while I assessed students' writing skills in face-to-face lessons, I could collect students' papers and give feedback, but sometimes I could not find the student or he/she could not come to class; but I was able to deliver the assessments I made online to the student immediately.

With regards to other opportunities, P2 asserted that "in the Moodle system which the university used as its infrastructure, I could see answers to the questions in several ways. As far as I remember, I could see answers next to the question. Additionally, there was a section in which I could see all answers. This

section made things easier.” Additionally, P4 explained that “I prefer assessing students’ assignments on the screen to assessing handwritings of students because it is easier. Students had more mistakes while writing in face-to-face education, but they had fewer mistakes thanks to the dictionary on their screen while typing on the computer in Emergency Remote Education.” P6 expanded on what P4 voiced and noted that “taking student assignments in Microsoft Office Word format made the prefiltering process easier, as electronic documents were easy to upload into applications. This process enables the lecturer to move faster to assess students’ writing skills.”

Nearly half of the participants (N=4) believed that “saving time in assessing” was an opportunity in assessing students’ writing skills. To illustrate, P7 reported an opinion about the subject: “I can say that it accelerated the assessment of writing skills. As the process progressed online, today’s students were able to exercise more comfortably, and this situation reflected credit on the assessment of writing skills. There were fewer mistakes in their sentences, and this made it easier for me to assess their writing skills.” Similarly, P8 added that “while I assessed students’ writing skills in face-to-face lessons, I could collect students’ papers and give feedback. Sometimes, I could not find the student, or he/she could not come to class, but I was able to deliver the assessment I made online to the student immediately.” Additionally, P6 pointed out that “taking student assignments in Microsoft Office Word format made the prefiltering process easier, as electronic documents were easy to upload into applications. This process enables the lecturer to move faster to assess students’ writing skills.” In the same vein, P10 articulated that:

I used to give the same feedback to my students one by one while I was walking around in class in face-to-face education, but I made the same correction on a single screen at most two times in ERE, and the others corrected their mistakes automatically. Therefore, I put in less effort in a shorter period of time.

“Low levels of student anxiety” was another opportunity mentioned in terms of assessment of writing skills in ERE. To illustrate, P4 explained that “students were a little more careful while typing on the computer, and they were able to write a little more stress-free since they were not in the classroom environment. In order to reduce stress for students in ERE, I asked them to make short and clear sentences. In that way, it was easy to assess their writing skill.” In

addition, P5 indicated that “as far as I observed, students’ anxiety levels were low, so they were able to write more easily.”

A small number of participants (N=2) believed that “students’ eagerness to attend the online lessons” was an opportunity to assess writing skills in online courses. For example, P10 stated that “I thought that as everyone could see what they were writing, students were getting a little more attentive to their written assignments. While worse written assignments were submitted to me, the papers reflected on the screen were a little more attentive, and this made it easier for me to make an assessment.” Accordingly, P1 maintained that:

I found opportunities in writing skills in terms of students. I asked students to write something related to a subject while focusing on writing skills, but I had some shy students. Some of these students became more active in online lessons. They started to get involved in a conversation fearlessly by writing English in the chat section. In fact, some of them even became the only students that I taught, while the other students did not attend the lesson. Some shy students in face-to-face classes attended lessons more actively in online classes.

From another viewpoint, “immediate feedback by instructors” was cited as a significant opportunity in the assessment of writing skills in online courses. P3 noted that:

It was beneficial for students to see my feedback live and synchronously because they could not see it so clearly in face-to-face classes. I opened the document and made corrections, added comments on it, and they could see this at the same time, so I thought that it made the assessment and especially feedback easier. All of the students benefitted from it.

On the other hand, P8 drew attention to the “economical convenience” subtheme by articulating that “it was not a waste of paper and it did not burden students financially.” Furthermore, with regard to “transmitting sources to students,” P9 noted that “I had no difficulty in transmitting materials to my students.”

Table 28.*Challenges in the Assessment of Students' Writing Skills in ERE*

Challenges	Participants	%
Cheating by students	P4, P7	20%
Technical problems faced by instructors and students	P1, P5, P10	30%
Instructors' old habits of assessment	P2, P6, P9	30%
Limited students' access to technology	P5	20%
Lack of face-to-face communication between instructor and students	P1, P3	20%
Students' reluctance to attend online lessons	P10	10%
Insufficient time for teaching	P9	10%
Lack of peer feedback and students' self-assessment	P9	10%
Large number of students in online lessons	P2	10%

*P=Participant

Table 28 delineates the challenges faced by the participants in the assessment of students' writing skills, as well as the challenges faced by students in ERE. "What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?" was one of the research questions in this thesis study. In this section of the study, the researcher focused on the assessment of students' writing skills and the challenges that instructors and students faced in ERE.

Several participants believed that technical problems faced by instructors and students were a significant difficulty in the assessment of students' writing skills. Regarding students' challenges, P1 reported that "students' internet connection status, as well as the status of their technological and their family status, can be given as examples of difficulties. The number of students who said that they had internet problems or their phone was broken was quite high." Likewise, P10 indicated that "there were also problems such as students' lack of internet or power outages." In relation to instructors' challenges, P5 remarked that "I have had a lot of internet outages. There were serious problems related to internet infrastructure around my home, and at the same time, since it was a construction site, there were many power cuts."

"Limited students' access to technology" was another challenge in the assessment of students' writing skills. P5 remarked that "most of the students did

not have laptop or computer. Some students tried to write by using their smartphones, but they sent wrong words than the words they wrote because of keyboard. Frankly, this gets tiring after a while.”

A further challenge regarding “cheating by students” was indicated by P4: “the biggest problem was cheating in that subject because students created their sentences using Google Translate. Even a student who did not attend the class was able to submit an assignment without mistakes, and I thought that this situation prevented me from making a fair assessment.” Similarly, P7 expanded on what P4 voiced and noted that:

The students tended to cheat. For example, when I gave the topic “the importance of English” for students to write about, they could write, but most of them wrote using “Google Translate,” and unfortunately, we could not prevent it. Additionally, in order to see what they were doing, I required students to turn on their cameras. However, the faces of the students could be seen via camera, but I was unable to know who was writing under the camera.

Some participants (N=3) also put forward ideas about “instructors’ old habits of assessment.” P2, for example, asserted that “I was not used to assessing students’ exams by reading from a screen. In this context, it was easier to read on paper.” Similarly, P9 denoted that “I usually have a routine in writing skills. Firstly, I introduce the general rules related to the subject to students, and they put it into practice. In face-to-face education, I am usually with the students in the classroom, and we try to form sentences one-by-one; but this interaction might not be possible in Emergency Remote Education.” Accordingly, P6 maintained that:

In Emergency Remote Education, you do not get a hard copy of the assignments, and you have to look at the screen for both assessing and giving feedback. If you were used to pen and paper and technology illiterate, it could be very hard to manage the same things on the screen. In the first phase of the ERE process, it was even hard for me to set up a style that was handy both for the students and me. However, when I faced the problems, I decided to research applications that would make it easy for me to assess students’ writing skills. The difficult part was to get used to the applications.

Few participants (N=2) expressed opinions about the “lack of face-to-face communication between the instructor and students.” In this regard, P3 stated that “students were unable to sit together and speak face-to-face,” and accordingly, P1 noted that “I sometimes had challenges in getting contact with students. Before the lockdown, students had to stay in the department at the university until a

certain hour on school days, but they did not have to do this in Emergency Remote Education. Some of them started to work, so I had challenges in getting contact with these students.”

Another instructor experienced “students’ reluctance to attend online lessons” as a challenge in the assessment of students’ writing skills. P10 put forward that “in face-to-face education, students had to submit something, but students who did not want to attend could not submit anything in ERE, and unfortunately, most of the students were there just to be there. I did not assess most of the students’ writing skills because of this.”

In addition, P9 drew attention to the issue of “insufficient time for teaching” by remarking that:

I usually have a routine in writing skills. Firstly, I introduce the general rules related to the subject to students, and they put it into practice. In face-to-face education, I am usually with the students in the classroom and we try to form sentences one-by-one, but this interaction might not be possible in ERE. I tried to follow the same method in the online continuum, but I had problems with time.

Regarding “lack of peer feedback and students’ self-assessment,” P9 argued that “this process could not provide opportunities such as peer feedback and self-assessment of students.” In relation to the “large number of students in online classes,” moreover, P2 stated that “having a large number of students made it difficult to assess students’ writing skills in online courses. I had to assess them one by one.”

Table 29.
Opportunities in the Assessment of Students’ Speaking Skills in ERE

Opportunities	Participants	%
Advantages of technology for instructors and students	P3, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P10	70%
Low levels of students anxiety	P4, P5, P9	30%
Saving time in assessing and teaching	P1, P6, P8, P10	40%
Ease of transmitting numerous sources to students	P10	10%

*P=Participant

Table 29 outlines the opportunities faced by participants while assessing students’ speaking skills, as well as the opportunities faced by students in ERE. “What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students’ speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?” was

one of the research questions of this thesis study. In this section of the study, the researcher focused on the assessment of speaking skills, and the opportunities that both instructors and students faced in ERE.

Most of the instructors (N=7) put forward ideas about “advantages of technology for instructors and students” in the assessment of students’ speaking skills. To illustrate, P7 articulated that “I can say that recording the lessons while students were speaking made my work easier. I could listen more than once, so I could make a complete assessment.” Likewise, P5 indicated that “I had students watch videos at their own level and asked them to speak in relation to the video. In addition, I sent them voice recordings and asked them to summarize the recording by listening carefully. Emergency Remote Education provided me the ability to use these activities easily.” In the same vein, P6 maintained that:

Using online tools for speaking skills assessment made the process easier because students were able to record their voices and upload them to a platform that made it easy to access and assess. This feature helped me act freely without paying attention to time and place.

Additionally, P10 expressed that “I was able to submit the documents which I prepared to students on a single screen in Emergency Remote Education. I can say that this has enriched me a lot in terms of resources. I easily assessed both the speaking and the writing skills of the students who really wanted to attend course.” Similarly, P3 indicated that:

In face-to-face classes, it is difficult to assess the speaking skills at the same time students are speaking because there may be things that I miss in the moment. Students saved and sent their speaking assignments in Emergency Remote Education, and I listened to the recordings later without missing anything. I believe that this made the assessment of speaking skills easier.

Apart from these participants, P4 gave an opinion about the same theme: “in addition to this, since the lessons were recorded, I had the opportunity to listen again and follow the progress of the students throughout the semester.” Along the same line with P4, P8 asserted that:

I believe my assessment was fair, as the system recorded students’ presentations. When I assessed students’ presentations in face-to-face classes, students could come and object to me by saying, “my presentation deserved a better assessment,” but when his/her presentation was recorded, he/she never objected because I was able to say, “let’s watch it together.” On the other hand, while I was assessing in face-to-face classes, I could not stop students in the moment, but I

could stop the recorded video whenever I wanted in Emergency Remote Education.

Regarding “low levels of student anxiety” P4 reported that “students are more comfortable speaking in ERE, which made it easier for me to assess the students’ speaking skills. Some students were unable to speak in face-to-face education because they were embarrassed in front of their friends, so I could not assess them properly.” On the other hand, P5 believed that “since students were at their homes, they could speak comfortably in a quiet environment, and I assessed them easily.” Likewise, concerning low levels of student anxiety, P9 articulated that:

A student’s anxiety level may increase when a conversation is held in a classroom setting, but the students talked as if there was no one around because the cameras were turned off in front of a computer or the phone during the Emergency Remote Education, and this reduced students’ anxiety levels.

Nearly half of the participants (N=4) gave opinions about “saving time in assessing and teaching.” In terms of saving time for teaching, P8 denoted that “I think that it made a big contribution in terms of time since when I had 20 students make three presentations for each week, I could not teach the subjects in the course. However, when they recorded and sent the assignments to me, I had no problem with time.” Additionally, P10 indicated that “I support Emergency Remote Education because I did not waste my time in ERE with problems such as running down a smart board or projection in class or internet outages.” Regarding saving time for assessing, P6 reported that “another positive side of the issue was that I was able to rewatch, stop and play the video. This made it possible to assess speaking skills quickly.” P1 expanded on what P6 reported, noting that:

Although not all of the students attended class, we were having an interactive conversation with participants in ERE. Then, I asked for a sound file (MP3 format) from students who did not attend the lesson, I listened to these sound files in detail and assessed them. It has made it quite easy in terms of time.

“Ease of transmitting numerous sources to students” was another opportunity reported by the participants. P10, for example, put forward the idea that “I was able to share the documents which I prepared for students on a single screen. Therefore, I can say that it has enriched us a lot in terms of sources.”

Table 30.*Challenges in the Assessment of Students' Speaking Skills in ERE*

Challenges	Participants	%
Technical problems faced by instructors and students	P2, P4,P5, P6, P8	50%
Students' high level of anxiety about attending lesson	P3	10%
Limited access to technology of students	P1, P10	20%
Lack of facial expressions between instructors and students	P6, P9	20%
Students' reluctance to speak and use new online tools	P8, P10	20%
Lack of immediate feedback by instructors	P7	10%
Large number of students	P5	10%

*P=Participant

Table 30 outlines the challenges faced by participants while assessing students' speaking skills, as well as the challenges faced by students in ERE. One of the research questions in this study asked, "what challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?" In this section of the study, the researcher focused on the assessment of speaking skills and the challenges that both instructors and students faced in ERE.

According to half of the participants (N=5), the most significant challenge was "technical problems faced by instructors and students." To illustrate, P5 articulated that "internet outages and uploading voice documents to the system were other difficulties in assessing students' speaking skills." Likewise, P8 explained that "technical problems always make assessment difficult. Sometimes students' microphones and webcam did not work." Moreover, P2 expanded on P8's opinion and noted that:

There was a problem related to the Internet, mostly because we experienced a lot of outages. In the first period, students especially had difficulties with connection. Most of them did not have internet connections, since they lived in villages. The students who were determined and able to participate due to their physical conditions could not participate in the online courses. Since the internet connection was cut off, I had to connect from my phone sometimes to save several lessons.

Additionally, P6 remarked on this theme that "for speaking skills assessment, I could say that the most difficult parts were the handicaps that the

technology brought about. I mean that, while we were talking, we had some technical problems with connection, microphone, and quality of voice.” Further insights were pointed out by P4 on this issue:

Technical problems made the assessment of speaking skills in online classes difficult. For example, some students lost their internet connection, or I did not hear the voice of a student from his/her microphone, but the student did not notice this situation and continued to speak. I wanted him/her to repeat his/her sentences at the end of his/her speech, but the motivation of the student deteriorated, so he/she had difficulty in forming the same sentences.

A small number of participants (N=2) made statements about “limited student access to technology”. P10, for example, specified that “I can say that I lost students who did not have technological equipment.” Similarly, from a more negative standpoint, P1 explained that:

The quality of internet connection, device, and microphone are important in online lessons. Since not every student has the latest technology and facility, the sound of students was heard intermittently because of poor internet connection, even if students could create correct sentences, so I had to ask students to repeat it. This time, negative attitudes such as whether I made a mistake or was I saying it wrong could occur in the student.

Several participants also drew attention to the “lack of facial expressions between instructors and students.” To illustrate, P6 indicated that “most of the time, we did not have webcam interaction, and this made it impossible to observe mimics. Mimics are important parts of the communication process, and absence of them caused problems.” Accordingly, P9 gave the opinion that:

One-to-one contact with the student is very important in speaking and writing. When you ask a question, even if a student does not fully understand the question, he/she can make inferences from your gestures and facial expressions; but this was not possible in the online process, and therefore this was a disadvantage while making the assessment.

Regarding “students’ reluctance to speak and use new online tools,” P10 voiced that “I can say that I lost students who did not have technological equipment, but there were also those who had technological equipment but lost them because students did not want to turn on their microphone and talk; as such, I did not assess their speaking skills.” Regarding usage of online tools, P8 explained that “students did not want to use new online tools and they alleged as a pretext. This situation has reduced my motivation.”

“Lack of immediate feedback by instructors” was also reported as a significant challenge in ERE. In this regard, P7 remarked that “when the students watched the recording of a lesson later in ERE, there was no error correction, as they could not ask their questions immediately, causing the students to learn incorrectly.”

Furthermore, P3 complained about “students’ high level of anxiety about attending the lessons” by noting that “the presence of the camera and recording somewhat hindered the natural speech of the students. This situation expressly worried the mediocre students.”

Focusing on the “large number of students” P5 remarked that “it was time-consuming and tiring for me to listen all voice recordings and give feedback to them in classes with a large number of students.”

Table 31.
Precautions to Ensure the Reliability of Online Assessment

Precautions	Participants	%
Mixing question order	P1, P2, P5, P7	40%
Setting a time limit	P4, P5, P7	30%
Giving clear information before exams	P3, P4, P7	30%
Checking for plagiarism	P3, P6	20%
Having a question pool	P1, P7	20%
Dividing students into groups	P3	10%
Obligation for turning on the camera	P1	10%
Checking the system for students’ cheating	P4	10%
Preparing questions via online tools	P5	10%
Making different types of assessment	P3, P6, P7, P10	40%
Assessing periodically	P10	10%

*P=Participant

Table 31 shows the participants’ techniques for ensuring the reliability of online assessment. One of the research questions for this study asked, “what did instructors who lectured online courses do frequently to increase the reliability and validity of the performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills assessment in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?” In this section, the researcher focused on participants’ efforts to increase reliability in online assessment.

The participants expressed different ideas about ensuring the reliability of the online assessment. To illustrate, P1 brought forth ideas about the “obligation

for turning on the camera,” asserting that “although I could not do it for each student, I tried to make an assessment by turning on a camera one-by-one with students. I made an assessment by demanding that students constantly look at the computer screen, concentrate fully, and not hear any other sounds around.” P4 gave an opinion about “checking the system for students’ cheating” by remarking that “in order to identify the students who got full marks in a very short time; I looked at the system in terms of how long the students spent in the exam on average.” P3 also drew attention to “dividing students into groups” by stating that “I required students to do teamwork and send it to me.” With regard to “preparing questions via online tools,” P5 highlighted that “although it was not definitely reliable, I took my own precautions, such as preparing questions on Google Forms.” On the other hand, P10 focused on “assessing periodically” as a precaution, stating that “I tried to assess periodically because I considered students’ motivation at that time. I did it periodically, thinking that the student might perform very poorly that day in a subject he/she was very good at.”

On the other hand, by expressing that “I used Turnitin to ensure the reliability of writing exams,” P3 elucidated the importance of “checking for plagiarism” to increase reliability in online assessment. Some further insight was put forward by P6:

Using plagiarism checker applications was the basic and most effective precaution for writing skills assessment. The application compared their writings with classmates’ productions within the database. Thus, it was hard for them to copy online materials or their friends’ productions.

From a different viewpoint, P7 explained the issue of “having a question pool” by stating that “I created a question pool. To illustrate, if I tested a class of 20 students, I would upload approximately 200 questions to the system.” Similarly, P1 contributed the opinion that “there are more than 300 questions in our system, and the system randomly assigned these questions to each student.”

With regard to “giving clear information before exams,” P3 reported that “I tried to give information to students as clearly and precisely as possible. I clearly stated what to do and how.” In accordance with this perspective, P4 indicated that “with regard to writing exam, I gave information about the exam before the examination period.” Furthermore, P7 also put forward the idea that

“I tried to make open-ended exams, and I clearly informed the students about the exam guidelines.”

Additionally, nearly half of the participants (N=4) pointed out the “making different types of assessments” theme. To illustrate, P3 highlighted that “in the phase of assessment, I made subdivided assessments based on different criteria, rather than a holistic assessment.” Likewise, P6 noted that “for speaking skills assessments, I used videos to analyze the improvement process of the students, and I made formative assessments. On the other hand, I conducted webcam exams for finals and assessed their instant performances directly.” In accordance with this perspective, P10 indicated that “I tried to carry out the same assessment through different activities. Finally, I did the writing part of the exams with individualized writing questions,” while P7 also asserted that “I tried to make open-ended exams.”

Several participants (N=3) also underlined the “setting a time limit” theme as a precaution for ensuring reliability. P5 and P7 made similar statements: “I set time limits for the exams.” Similarly, P4 contributed the opinion that “when I made exams in university infrastructure, I did not extend the time. If I had administered the same exam in class, I would have given an extra 10 minutes.”

Additionally, nearly half of the participants (N=4) described “mixing the question order” as a precaution. For example, P7 alleged that “the system sent questions to students randomly,” while P5 noticed that “I took my own precautions, such as preparing questions on Google Forms and making sure that the questions were mixed as they came before the students.” In accordance with this perspective, P2 indicated that “the university infrastructure allowed us to set the question number on the screen for reliability. For example, when I asked the questions to come one by one, the questions came one by one, and they came in front of the students in a different order.” Some further insight was put forward by P1: “there are more than 300 questions in our system, and this system randomly assigned these questions to each students. As a result, one student could not interfere with another student’s exam because their questions were completely different.”

Table 32.*Instructors' Perceptions about Online Assessment and Exams in ERE*

Perceptions	Participants	%
Unreliability of exams in online lessons	P1, P3, P5, P6, P7, P9	60%
Cheating by students	P1, P4, P7, P10	40%
Using formative assessment for exams	P1, P2, P3, P8	40%
Creating alternative approaches to assessment	P6, P10	20%
Difficulties faced by instructors and students	P2, P5, P9	30%
Making comparisons between online and face-to-face exams	P1, P3, P6	30%
Needs of instructors	P10	10%

*P=Participant

Table 32 signifies participants' ideas about exams and assessments in ERE. One of the research questions in this study asked, "what were the Turkish EFL instructors' perceptions about online performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills assessment in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?" Therefore, the researcher of this thesis study focused on instructors' thoughts about online assessment and exams.

Most participants (N=6) referred to the "unreliability of exams in online lessons" as a theme. To illustrate, while P1 focused on writing exams by stating that "I could mention that we could not provide one hundred percent reliability in writing examination," P3 drew attention to speaking exams by noting that "assessing speaking skill cannot be reliable in ERE. Students may be excited, and then they cannot speak." On the other hand, P6 compared online exams with face-to-face exams and asserted that "face-to-face exams are more reliable in terms of security." P7 and P9 formed approximately the same opinion by stating, "I think that online exams are not reliable." Some further insight was put forward by P5:

I think that the online exams were minimally reliable and valid because I could not get the students to turn on the camera, so I was unable to know what the students were doing in the background. The fact that most of the students got high grades showed that the online exams were reliable and valid at the minimum level in my opinion.

Nearly half of the participants (N=4) put forward ideas about "cheating by students." P1, for instance, asserted that "students could take notes at the corner of the computer screen during exams and try to cheat in this way." In accordance with this perspective, P4 indicated that "although I warned the students, I could

recognize that they took advantage of external sources while writing.” In addition, P10 remarked that “when I look from students’ perspectives, I can see that they would do anything to during exams.” Similarly, P7 contributed the opinion that “students found different ways of cheating. I have experienced that especially, in terms of students studying in the computer programming department getting higher marks. I think that we cannot avoid cheating on both exams.”

Regarding the “using formative assessment for exams” issue, P2 asserted that “I want to mention that I could just make formative assessment related to speaking exams;” likewise, P8 asserted that “during the pandemic, I did not give exams. More precisely, I made formative assessments in thinking about how I could assess students fairly.” In accordance with this perspective, P3 indicated that “I gave writing exams as a portfolio assessment. Students had weekly assignments to do, and I assessed these assignments, so I can say that I made formative assessments. The speaking exam is not as efficient as the writing exam.” P1 elaborated on P3’s perspective, noting that:

Regarding speaking examinations, I tried to do speaking exams synchronously by speaking with students face-to-face in the online continuum. With regard to writing examinations, it was not possible for me to expect every student to write something at the same time. I generally checked students’ writing skills in the Microsoft Office Word documents that they sent to me because I was unable to be among the students as in face-to-face education.

A certain number of participants (N=2) also pointed to “creating alternative approaches to assessment” in that regard. In this sense, P10, however, indicated that “I think that lessons and exams should be hybrid.” Similarly, P6 contributed the opinion that:

Emergency Remote Education has both disadvantages and advantages, as face-to-face ones do. When I compare both types, I can say that a hybrid version of assessment would be great to analyze the process, not the final/pin-point performance of students. Online tools can help students observe their improvements, as they make it possible to record performances. Face-to-face exams are more reliable in terms of security. Thus, combining these two types would be more efficient and educative.

In terms of another challenge, P5 drew attention to “difficulties faced by instructors and students” by asserting that “I think that the exams were minimally reliable and valid because I could not get the students to turn on the camera, so I was unable to know what the students were doing in the background.”

Additionally, P9 denoted that “while I was assessing the exams, I especially had problems with formative assessment.” P2, on the other hand, maintained that:

Typing on screen may be a problem for students because not everyone can use a keyboard well. Sometimes students reported that we wrote, but the system did not save half of it, and I said that if you sent it to me during the exam period, I would accept it. Moreover, there were students who never had an exam, and they reported this situation with a petition. After the university officials made the necessary examinations, they found them right, and they retook the exam.

From another perspective regarding “making comparisons between online and face-to-face exams” P1 marked that “I generally checked students’ writing skills in Microsoft Office Word documents, which they sent to me because I was unable to be among students as in face-to-face education.” P3 argued, however, that “you can do something to lessen the excitement of students in face-to-face education, but this is not possible in ERE.” Some further insight was put forward by P6:

Online tools can help students observe their improvements, as they make it possible to record performances. Face-to-face exams are more reliable in terms of security. We should put our learning into action and combine the positive sides of online and face-to-face education.

Finally, P10 contributed an opinion regarding the “needs of instructors” by stating that “when I look at it from an instructor’s perspective, I think that we should have professional training in online exams and assessment.”

Table 33 shows the detailed findings of the current study.

Table 33.
Summary of Findings

Research Questions	Open-ended Questions	Individual Interview
1-What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate feedback by instructors • Opportunity for instant communication between students and instructors • Ease of using online tools • Advantages of technology for instructors and students • Accessing and sharing data easily • Saving time in giving feedback and assignments • Saving time and space for instructors and students • Peer learning of students • Reduced instructor fatigue • Ease of teaching vocabulary • Increased the effectiveness of teaching • Assessment ease and efficiency • Improving speaking and writing skills • No need to supervise • Experience ERE 	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate feedback by instructors • Ease of technology in the assessment of writing skills • Transmitting sources to students • Saving time in assessing • Low levels of students anxiety • Students' eagerness to attend the online course • Economical convenience
	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheating of students • Technical problems faced by instructors and students • Limited access to technology of students • Insufficient time for teaching and assessing • Lack of peer assessment • Students' lack of self-discipline • Students' reluctance to use technological tools • Lack of immediate feedback by instructors and students • Absenteeism 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheating by students • Technical problems faced by instructors and students • Limited access to technology of students • Insufficient time for teaching • Lack of peer feedback and students' self-assessment • Students' reluctance to attend online lessons • Lack of face-to-face communication with instructor and students

Summary of Findings

Research Questions	Open-ended Questions	Individual Interview
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distraction • No usage of blackboard • Being unsure about lessons' intelligibility • Lack of reliability • Low-class participation • Limited technological infrastructure • The lack of compulsory attendance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large number of students in online lessons • Instructors' old habits of assessment
<p>2- What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?</p>	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantages of technology for instructors and students • Low levels of students anxiety • Saving time and space for instructors and students • Assessment ease and efficiency • Accessing and sharing data easily • Increasing the effectiveness of teaching • Peer assessment of students • Students' inclination toward technology • Improving speaking and writing skills • No need to supervise • Experience ERE 	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantages of technology for instructors and students • Low levels of students anxiety • Saving time in assessing and teaching • Ease of transmitting numerous sources to students
	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical problems faced by instructors and students • Students' high level of anxiety • Limited access to technology of students • Students' reluctance to speak • Limited technological infrastructure • Lack of online tools for assessment and teaching 	<p>Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical problems faced by instructors and students • Students' high level of anxiety to attend lessons • Limited access to technology of students • Students' reluctance to speak and use new online tools

Summary of Findings

Research Questions	Open-ended Questions	Individual Interview
	<p style="text-align: center;">Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor financial situation of students • Insufficient time for each student to speak • Absenteeism • Being unsure about lessons' intelligibility • Lack of reliability • Low-class participation • Cheating • Students' lack of self-discipline • The lack of compulsory attendance 	<p style="text-align: center;">Challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of facial expressions between instructors and students • Lack of immediate feedback by instructors • Large number of students
<p>3-What did instructors who lectured in online courses do frequently to increase the reliability and validity of performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills assessment in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Precautions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking plagiarism • Setting a time limit • Dividing students into groups • Obligation for turning on the camera • Repeated and different scoring • Practicing question and answer teaching or summative assessment • Checking course materials and content • Preparing detailed answer keys and rubrics and abiding by rubrics • Including another instructor in the assessment • Administration of questions by lecturers • Asking open-ended questions • Assessing per question • Exercising peer checks • Comparing class and exam performance • Conducting pilot study 	<p style="text-align: center;">Precautions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Checking for plagiarism • Setting a time limit • Dividing students into groups • Obligation for turning on the camera • Assessing periodically • Making different types of assessment • Checking the system for student cheating • Preparing questions via online tools • Giving clear information before exams • Mixing question order • Having a question pool

Summary of Findings

Research Questions	Open-ended Questions	Individual Interview
4-What were the Turkish EFL instructors' perceptions on the assessment of online performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	<p>Perceptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty in adaptation of instructors and students • Needs of instructors • Ideas about online assessment and face-to-face assessment • Inability to assess • Online assessment techniques' necessity • Getting diversified online assessment tools • Online assessment is useful • Online assessment is harmful 	<p>Perceptions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties faced by instructors and students • Needs of instructors • Making comparisons between online and face-to-face exams • Cheating by students • Creating alternative approaches to assessment • Using formative assessment for exams • Unreliability of exams in online lessons
5-What assessment tools did Turkish EFL instructors use while assessing students' performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?	<p>Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synchronous Tools • Asynchronous Tools • Both Synchronous Tools and Asynchronous Tools 	<p>Tools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synchronous Tools • Asynchronous Tools • Both Synchronous Tools and Asynchronous Tools

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Discussion

This study examined Turkish EFL instructors' online assessment literacy as well as the challenges and opportunities they faced during the COVID-19 pandemic in Turkey. For this purpose, the study included five research questions. In this section, the research questions are discussed in relation to the qualitative data.

5.1.1. Discussion of the First Research Question

What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The quantitative findings of this study showed that one of the challenges Turkish EFL instructors faced while assessing writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic related to preventing students from cheating online tests. Previous studies have also revealed that the challenges faced by EFL instructors in assessing students' writing skills in ERE were related to cheating on exams (Ali & Dmour, 2021; Okada et al., 2019; Tauh & Naing, 2021). The findings of this study such as preventing students from cheating online tests is parallel with those of previous studies (Ali & Dmour, 2021; Okada et al., 2019; Tauh & Naing, 2021). On the other hand, previous studies have also referred to the opportunities faced by EFL instructors while assessing students' writing skills. These were related to immediate feedback (Alman & Tomer, 2012; Bell & Federman, 2013; Ekon, 2013; Spivey & McMillan, 2014; Walsh, 2015). The findings of this study concerning providing written feedback to students in online classes is parallel to those of previous studies (Alman & Tomer, 2012; Bell & Federman, 2013; Ekon, 2013; Spivey & McMillan, 2014; Walsh, 2015).

The qualitative findings of this study showed that some of the challenges that Turkish EFL instructors faced while assessing writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic related to absenteeism, students' limited access to technology, students' lack of self-discipline, distraction, students' reluctance to use technological tools and attend online courses, lack of face-to-face communication with instructor and students, lack of peer feedback and student

self-assessment, no usage of the blackboard, lack of compulsory attendance, instructors' old habits of assessment, technical problems faced by instructors and students, insufficient time for teaching and assessing, lack of immediate feedback by instructors and students, cheating by students, and the large number of students enrolled in online courses.

The participating instructors considered "students' limited access to technology" and "absenteeism" as challenges since most students did not have computers or laptops. As such, they could not attend the online courses, and the instructors were therefore unable to assess them. Additionally, the participants described "instructors' old habits of assessment" as a challenge because most of them had not been trained in teaching and assessing online courses. As a result, they tended to turn to their old habits. Furthermore, the instructors reported "technical problems faced by instructors and students" as an obstacle since they had encountered many technical problems such as power outages, lack of infrastructure, and internet outages. Because of these challenges, the participating instructors reported that they were unable to assess their students' writing skills in ERE. Previous studies have also revealed that the challenges faced by EFL instructors in assessing students' writing skills in ERE were related to logistical problem such as stringing along with shifts, improvements, and technical difficulties of online teaching and program settings (Aliyyah et al., 2020; Almaiah & Althunibat, 2020; Fluck, 2019; Forrester, 2020; Sari & Nayır, 2020; Trust & Whalen, 2020) and cheating on exams (Ali & Dmour, 2021; Okada et al., 2019; Tauh & Naing, 2021). Some of the challenges relating to assessing students' writing skills were common even prior to ERE, such as cheating (Arnold, 2016; Fontaine, 2012; Fuller & Yu, 2014; Harmon et al., 2010; Rowe, 2004) and the safety and privacy of online assessment (Brem 2002; Rowe, 2004). The findings of this study, such as technical problems faced by instructors and students are parallel with those of previous studies (Aliyyah et al., 2020; Almaiah & Althunibat, 2020; Fluck, 2019; Forrester, 2020; Sari & Nayır, 2020; Trust & Whalen, 2020). Moreover, the finding of the present study relating to student cheating has also been reported in previous studies (Ali & Dmour, 2021; Okada et al., 2019; Tauh & Naing, 2021).

On the other hand, the findings of this study also indicated that the opportunities that Turkish EFL instructors faced while assessing writing skills of students in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. These were related to improving speaking and writing skills; the ease of using online tools and teaching vocabulary; accessing and sharing data easily; saving time in giving feedback, assignments and assessment; peer learning; reduced instructor fatigue; ease of technology in the assessment of writing skills; opportunities for instant communication between students and instructors; immediate feedback by instructors; increased effectiveness of the teaching process; economical convenience; low levels of students' anxiety; and student eagerness to attend online courses. In this regard, the participating instructors considered "accessing and sharing data easily" as an opportunity because they were able to readily locate and share extensive data related to the courses in the online environment. Additionally, the participants believed that "saving time in giving feedback" presented as an opportunity. Whereas in the traditional classroom, feedback needed to be given one-on-one, in the online environment, they were able to provide feedback to students just once, resulting in less time needed for this process. Furthermore, the participants perceived "low levels of student anxiety" as an advantage because their students felt relaxed in the online environment and were able to write with ease. As a result of these opportunities and advantages, the participants found it convenient to assess their students' writing skills in ERE. Previous studies have also referred to opportunities encountered by EFL instructors while assessing writing skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. These related to determining students' improvement (Ali & Dmour, 2021), cost savings in areas like printing, examination venues, travel and the use of freely accessible internet resources (Fluck, 2019; Lally, 2020), and more free time for students, as well as less occurrence of tardiness (Akimov & Malin, 2020). Some opportunities have also been reported by EFL instructors before ERE with respect to assessing students' writing skills. These included determining student improvement (Peterson, 2016), cost savings, flexibility in time and location, immediate feedback, and repeatability of exam questions (Alman & Tomer, 2012; Bell & Federman, 2013; Ekon, 2013; Spivey & McMillan, 2014; Walsh, 2015), quicker access to an extensive database (Liang & Creasy, 2004), accessibility to a wider audience, facilitation of the improvement of students' talents (Buzzetto-

More & Bennett 2006), and low levels of student anxiety (Benson, 2010). The findings of this study concerning accessing and sharing data easily and economical convenience are also parallel to those of previous studies relating to ERE (Fluck, 2019; Lally, 2020), as with improving speaking and writing skills (Ali & Dmour, 2021) and low levels of students anxiety (Akimov & Malin, 2020). Some of the findings of this study are also parallel to previous studies that took place prior to ERE, including those relating to low levels of student anxiety (Benson, 2010), immediate feedback by instructors (Alman & Tomer, 2012; Bell & Federman, 2013; Ekon, 2013; Spivey & McMillan, 2014; Walsh, 2015), and accessing and sharing data easily (Liang & Creasy, 2004).

5.1.2. Discussion of the Second Research Question

What challenges and opportunities did Turkish EFL instructors face while assessing students' speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The quantitative findings of this study showed that some of the challenges that Turkish EFL instructors faced while assessing speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic related to communicating online assessment results to parents and preventing students from cheating online tests. Previous studies regarding the challenges that Turkish EFL instructors faced while assessing speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic have indicated issues such as cheating on exams (Ali & Dmour, 2021; Tauh & Naing, 2021); challenges caused by students, instructors, and parents (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Başaran et al., 2020). The findings of this study, such as communicating online assessment results to parents is in line with those of previous studies (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Başaran et al., 2020). The findings relating to preventing students from cheating online tests is in line with those of previous studies (Ali & Dmour, 2021; Tauh & Naing, 2021). On the other hand, previous studies have also reported that EFL instructors encountered opportunities to assess students' speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. These are related to immediate feedback and flexibility in time and location (Lally, 2020), the advantages of online teaching and assessment for instructors, observation of students' improvement (Ali & Dmour, 2021; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020). The findings of the present study with respect to providing oral feedback to students in online classes is in line with that of previous studies (Lally, 2020). In addition, similar results

have been found in the literature with respect to communicating online assessment results to students and assessing students' online learning through oral questions (Ali & Dmour, 2021; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020).

The qualitative findings of this study indicated a number of challenges encountered by Turkish EFL instructors while assessing speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. These were related to high levels of student anxiety; students' reluctance to speak; lack of online tools for assessment and teaching; insufficient time for each student to speak; absenteeism; lack of student self-discipline; students' poor financial situations; technical problems faced by instructors and students; limited student access to technology of students; lack of facial expressions between instructors and students; lack of immediate feedback by instructors; and large numbers of students in a class.

For example, the participants considered "technical problems faced by instructors and students" as a challenge because both instructors and students experienced internet and power outages during online lessons. In addition, the participants viewed "limited student access to technology" as problematic since many students lacked computers or laptops and internet connections at home; they were, therefore, unable to attend online courses, and instructors were unable to assess their speaking skills. Moreover, the participants perceived the "lack of online tools for assessment and teaching" as a challenge because they believed that they were not trained adequately for ERE, and they could not find appropriate online tools for the assessment of speaking skills. Because of these challenges, the participants reported that they were unable to assess their students' speaking skills properly in ERE. Previous studies regarding the challenges that EFL instructors encountered while assessing students' speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic have also indicate issues such as technical difficulties of online examination and program settings (Aliyyah et al., 2020; Almaiah & Althunibat, 2020; Fluck, 2019; Forrester, 2020; Sari & Nayır, 2020; Trust & Whalen, 2020); cheating on exams (Ali & Dmour, 2021; Tauh & Naing, 2021); security flaws (Talent-LMS, 2020); lack of technological proficiency of instructors in an online context (Watson, 2020); challenges caused by students, instructors, and parents (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Başaran et al., 2020); challenges in assessing online courses (Ali & Dmour, 2021); not being sure about students' understanding; being

ghosted students (Forrester, 2020); and challenges faced by EFL instructors (Ayaz et al., 2019). The findings of this study, such as technical problems faced by instructors and students and lack of online tools for assessment and teaching are in line with those of previous studies (Aliyyah et al., 2020; Almaiah & Althunibat, 2020; Fluck, 2019; Forrester, 2020; Trust & Whalen, 2020; Sari & Nayır, 2020). The findings relating to lack of student self-discipline and lack of immediate feedback by instructors are in line with those of the previous studies (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Başaran et al., 2020), as well as students' reluctance to speak in class (Forrester, 2020).

In terms of opportunities that the Turkish EFL instructors encountered while assessing speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic, the findings of the current study pointed to low levels of student anxiety; ease and efficiency of assessment; peer assessment among students, improving speaking and writing skills, ease of transmitting numerous sources to students, and no need to supervise, students' inclination toward technology; increased effectiveness of teaching; benefits of technology for instructors and students; and saving time in assessing and teaching. The participants perceived "students' inclination toward technology" as an opportunity because today's students tend to be well-versed in using technology in their everyday lives, as well as in education. As a result, they are readily able to use technological tools in online courses, making assessment in ERE easy for instructors. Furthermore, the participants considered "low levels of student anxiety" as an opportunity because students felt relaxed at home and could speak comfortably during online courses, so instructors were able to assess their speaking skills quite easily. Previous studies have also reported that EFL instructors encountered opportunities in assessing students' speaking skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. These related to immediate feedback and flexibility in time and location (Lally, 2020); the advantages of online teaching and assessment for instructors; observation of students' improvement (Ali & Dmour, 2021; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020); more free time for students; reduced student tardiness (Akimov & Malin, 2020); advantages of online learning and assessment for students (Mishra et al., 2020); and increased student engagement (Sikurajapathi et al., 2020). Studies carried out prior to ERE likewise revealed opportunities that EFL instructors encountered while assessing students'

speaking skills before ERE. These included issues such as ease of assessment for instructors (Ally, 2004; Robles & Braathen, 2002); convenient environment for teaching (Liang & Creasy, 2004; Walsh, 2015). The findings of the present study with respect to low levels of student anxiety are in line with that of previous studies (Mishra et al., 2020). In addition, similar results have been found in the literature with respect to ease of assessment efficiency and less need to supervise (Ali & Dmour, 2021; Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020). Furthermore, Lally's (2020) finding that online assessment saves time in assessing and teaching is in line with the current study. Some of the findings of this study are also parallel to previous studies that took place prior to ERE, including those relating to ease of assessment efficiency (Ally, 2004; Robles & Braathen, 2002); increased effectiveness of teaching (Liang & Creasy, 2004; Walsh, 2015).

5.1.3. Discussion of the Third Research Question

What did instructors who lectured in online courses do frequently to increase the reliability and validity of performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills assessment in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The quantitative findings of this study indicated that participants encountered items such as choosing appropriate methods for online assessment, using guidelines to plan online assessment, writing clear test instructions, developing online performance assessment methods, defining online rating scale for performance criteria, communicating online performance assessment criteria to students in advance, using the rating scale, identifying different factors in grading online, and providing criteria for online/computerized tests/tasks along with the tests/tasks in the Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire related to increasing reliability and validity of performative skills (e.g., writing and speaking) in ERE. The descriptive statistical results suggest that participants utilized these ways fealty in increasing the reliability and validity of performative skills in ERE.

The qualitative findings of this study indicated that the Turkish EFL instructors perceived issues relating to checking for plagiarism; setting time limits; dividing students into groups; obligation for turning on the camera, repeated and different scoring; practicing question and answer teaching or

summative assessment; checking course materials and content; preparing detailed answer keys and rubrics and abiding by the rubrics; involving another instructor in assessment, administration of questions by lecturers; asking open-ended questions; assessing per question; exercising peer checks; comparing class and exam performance; conducting pilot studies; checking systems for student cheating; preparing questions via online tools; using different types of assessment; assessing periodically; giving clear information before exams; mixing question orders; and having a question pool for increasing reliability and validity of performative skills in ERE.

The participants considered the “obligation for turning on the camera” as a precaution to ensure reliability and validity of the performative skills because they believed that if students turned on their cameras, they could not cheat on an exam. Additionally, participants suggested, “mixing question orders and having a question pool” as precautions. For example, they were able to send questions to students from a question pool in a different order, so even if students were together during exams, they encountered different questions on their screens. As a result, the participants believed that students would not be able to cheat on exams. A further recommendation from the participants involved “conducting a pilot study” as a precaution; they reported that using pilot studies helped to ensure reliability and validity, and if the results of a pilot study were found to be reasonable, they used the study with their students.

5.1.4. Discussion of the Fourth Research Question

What were the Turkish EFL instructors’ perceptions on the assessment of online performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The qualitative findings of this study showed that the Turkish EFL instructors’ perceptions about online performative skills assessment were related to the needs of instructors; instructors’ and students’ difficulty adapting; ideas about online assessment; face-to-face assessment and exams; inability to assess; ideas about the necessity of online assessment techniques; obtaining diversified online assessment tools; usefulness and harmfulness of online assessment; difficulties faced by instructors and students; cheating by students; creating

alternative approaches for assessment; using formative assessment for exams; unreliability of exams in online lessons; and making comparisons between online and face-to-face exams.

In this regard, the participants expressed a perception about online performative skills assessment in relation to the needs of instructors because they believed that academicians lack online teaching expertise, and the majority of them struggled to assess their students' performance. Additionally, the participants expressed the view that instructors had significant challenges while assessing students' performative skills; these included technical problems, crowded classes, fairly limited class hours, and unmotivated students. As a result, the participants believed that they could not assess their students' performative skills effectively. Furthermore, the participants expressed views related to the usefulness of online assessment, as many companies around the world have developed remote online education applications for the assessment of students' skills. To conclude, the participants felt that they were able to assess their students' performative skills easily.

Previous studies have also revealed EFL instructors' perceptions about online performative skills assessment in relation to conducting online assessment processes and assuring exam reliability (Nguyen et al., 2020); challenges faced by instructors in relation to online assessment (Ayaz et al., 2019; Lassoued et al., 2020; Peters et al., 2020; Sari & Nayır, 2020; Trust & Whalen, 2020; Watson, 2020); challenges related to online assessment faced by students and their parents (Aliyyah et al., 2020; Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020); the needs of instructors (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020); opportunities related to online assessment faced by instructors (Ali & Dmour, 2021); and opportunities faced by students in related to online assessment (Mishra et al., 2020) in ERE. There are also several studies prior to ERE relating to EFL instructors' perceptions of the challenges (Conrad & Donaldson, 2011; Ko & Rossen, 2017; Wingo et al., 2017) and opportunities (Ally, 2004; Alman & Tomer, 2012; Peterson, 2016; Robles & Braathen, 2002) they face with respect to online assessment.

The findings of the current study, such as difficulty for instructors to adapt; inability to assess; and difficulties faced by instructors are in line with those of the previous studies (Ayaz et al., 2019; Lassoued et al., 2020; Peters et

al., 2020; Sari & Nayır, 2020; Trust & Whalen, 2020; Watson, 2020). Additionally, the findings related to difficulties faced by students and cheating by students are in line with those of previous studies (e.g., Aliyyah et al., 2020; Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020). Moreover, the findings related to creating alternative approaches of assessment, using formative assessment for exams, and ideas about the necessity of online assessment techniques are in line with the findings of Nguyen et al. (2020). Lastly, the findings of the current study regarding instructors' needs aligns with the findings of Atmojo & Nugroho (2020). Some of the findings of this study are also parallel to previous studies that took place prior to ERE, including those relating to alternative approaches for assessment and using formative assessment for exams (Ally, 2004; Alman & Tomer, 2012; Peterson, 2016; Robles & Braathen, 2002); instructors' and students' difficulty adapting, inability to assess, difficulties faced by instructors and students, cheating by students, the unreliability of exams in online lessons (Conrad & Donaldson, 2011; Ko & Rossen, 2017; Wingo et al., 2017).

5.1.5. Discussion of the Fifth Research Question

What assessment tools did Turkish EFL instructors use while assessing students' performative (e.g., writing and speaking) skills in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic?

The quantitative findings of this study showed that participants faced items such as using online tools to design language skills tests, using online tools reports to give student feedback on written assignments, varying online tools according to their effectiveness for classroom purposes, and using online assessment tools data to plan future teaching in the Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire with regard to using online tools for assessment and teaching in ERE during COVID-19 pandemic. The descriptive statistical results suggest that participants used online tools successfully in ERE.

Regarding the assessment of writing skills, the qualitative findings of this study indicated that Turkish EFL instructors used synchronous tools like Mentimeter, Padlet, live lessons, presentation of course books, university infrastructure, Zoom, Mergen, Edmodo, Adobe Connect, and Etherpad; and asynchronous tools such as iTools, Google Programs, Moodle, Cambridge Write

and Improve, Microsoft Office, Mail, Turnitin, and Grammarly. On the other hand, in terms of the assessment of speaking skills, the findings demonstrated that Turkish EFL instructors used synchronous tools like Checklist, English File Online, presentation of course books, university infrastructure, Zoom, Mergen, and formative assessment; as well as asynchronous tools such as Google Programs, Microsoft Office, VoiceThread, Flipgrid, Youtube, iTools, video and task-based assignments, and Voice Spice.

To elaborate, regarding the assessment of writing skills, the participants used synchronous tools like Padlet, as students could see what their friends wrote, allowing for peer correction. Additionally, instructors could give immediate feedback. On the other hand, they used asynchronous tools like Google Classroom to receive students' writing assignments and assess their performance. With regard to the assessment of speaking skills, the participants used synchronous tools like the university infrastructure because they could ask questions of all students one by one and see which students replied or not. On the other hand, they used asynchronous video programs such as Flipgrid or VoiceThread, since online lesson time was too limited and most of the students had speaking anxiety. As a result, most of the instructors required an MP3 sound file from the students to assess their performance.

Previous studies have also shown that the choices concerning the tools EFL instructors used in assessing students' performative skills (e.g., writing and speaking) in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic were aligned with the use of online tools in assessment (Koh & Kan, 2020; Nyachwaya, 2020; Senel & Senel, 2021); the benefits of using online tools in assessment (Araka et al., 2020; Senel & Senel, 2021); and the limitations of using online tools in assessment (Butler-Henderson & Crawford, 2020; Dawson, 2020; Vazquez et al., 2021). The findings of the current study regarding the use of synchronous and asynchronous tools in the assessment are in line with those of previous studies (Koh & Kan, 2020; Nyachwaya, 2020; Senel & Senel, 2021). In addition, the participants found using online tools like Padlet in assessment to be beneficial, as with the findings of previous studies (Araka et al., 2020; Senel & Senel, 2021). On the other hand, the participants reported cheating as a limitation of using online tools in assessment;

this finding is in accordance with those of previous studies (Butler-Henderson & Crawford, 2020; Dawson, 2020; Vazquez et al., 2021).

5.2. Conclusions

This study aimed to reveal Turkish EFL instructors' online assessment literacy, as well as the challenges and opportunities they encountered in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher of this study presented the challenges and opportunities as a means to understand Turkish EFL instructors' online assessment literacy.

The current research contributes to the existing literature on Turkish EFL instructors' online assessment literacy, and the challenges and opportunities they encountered in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. Turkish instructors of English as a foreign language have conducted ERE through various activities, from monitoring students for cheating to providing synchronous or asynchronous feedback on students' work. Moreover, they have used different synchronous (e.g., Mentimeter, Padlet) and asynchronous (e.g., iTools, Moodle) tools to conduct their online courses. However, there are several challenges in ERE, including technical and technological problems, crowded classes, identity security, limited class hours, plagiarism, and cheating. These concerns indicate that participants do not work effectively in the ERE. On the other hand, the participants reported that they found numerous opportunities in ERE such as reduced instructor fatigue, immediate feedback by instructors, and savings time in giving feedback and assignment.

As the findings indicate, Turkish EFL instructors have encountered challenges and opportunities in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. Regarding challenges, in many previous studies, researchers have also concluded that instructors are "ill-prepared to teach with technology" (Foulger et al., 2017, p. 418); in this regard, a considerable gap in instructor preparation and training for ERE has been observed during the worldwide pandemic (Trust & Whalen, 2020). This study found that the lack of instructors' training and support for constructing effective online teaching added additional stress and obstacles to ERE. As such, instructors must be thoroughly trained and equipped with the necessary knowledge and ability in order to optimize their effectiveness in conducting ERE.

On the other hand, Turkish EFL instructors have also experienced challenges relating to students. In this regard, because learners were not familiar with ERE, they demonstrated reluctance to speak or write in an online environment. As a result, the instructors were unable to assess their performance. Additionally, family financial situations played a crucial role in ERE; students who did not have access to a computer and an internet connection were not able to attend the online lessons, and therefore, the instructors could not assess their performative skills.

Regarding opportunities in ERE, Turkish EFL instructors have reported that they can save time in terms of giving immediate feedback and assignments to students; they also found it easy to use online tools for assessment and teaching; they were less tired because they did not have to go to campus. In addition to these benefits, they also perceived low levels of student anxiety in the online environment. As a result, students were able to write and speak more comfortably, allowing instructors to assess them easily. In addition, most of the instructors indicated that accessing and sharing documents with students was advantageous for instructors, and they could use these materials whenever and wherever they wanted.

5.3. Limitations of the Study

The current study has three limitations that should be considered in interpreting its findings. These limitations may also lead the way for further research. First, the major limitation of the current study is the sample size. The data for this study were collected from 48 English instructors working at universities in Turkey during ERE. This poses a limitation in terms of generalization since a higher number of participants may affect the results. Consequently, the results cannot be applied to all participants. Second, the researcher conducted this study primarily through online communication using Zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions. If the researcher of this study had an opportunity to go participants beside, the researcher would learn more about the thesis. The final limitation is that open-ended questions, and individual interview records were collected during eight weeks in the 2021-2022 academic year; therefore, findings may differ in research where the data collection procedure takes longer.

5.4. Implications of the Study

This study's results can shed light on Turkish university EFL instructors' assessment literacy, as well as the challenges and opportunities they faced in ERE during COVID-19. Additionally, this study aims to contribute to the growing research in this area by exploring the online assessment situation in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The results of the study can benefit the following stakeholders:

University EFL Instructors

The results of the study can assist university EFL instructors as it provides a clear view of the challenges and opportunities they may encounter during online assessment in ERE, allowing them to take precautions in advance against the challenges. Moreover, they can also take advantage of the opportunities outlined here that they might not have noticed for themselves and their students.

University Students

The study's results may assist to university students in preparatory classes in that their instructors will be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of online assessment, so they can be educated consciously. Additionally, the students can easily see some of the problems they may cause, such as cheating using the internet or reluctance to attend online lessons, prompting them to behave more fairly.

University Administrations

The study's findings can aid in the development of university administrators, as well. In this sense, greater awareness can guide them in providing the necessities of ERE, from appropriate infrastructure to hardware components to EFL instructors and students. Additionally, they may be made aware of their weaknesses and strengths, allowing them to make provision for the weaknesses and empowering their strengths in accordance with the study results.

5.5. Further Research

This study sheds light on some of the challenges and opportunities that instructors faced in ERE during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, further study is required with a larger sample size in order to ensure greater preparation and

professional improvement for instructors. To illustrate, researchers may consider analyzing how instructors have utilized technology in ERE. Further research may also be carried out to investigate whether online instructors have attempted to imitate their traditional education techniques by using online tools (e.g., Padlet, Microsoft Teams) or whether they have adapted themselves to technological innovations for creating authentic teaching and learning activities. Studies on instructors' usage of technology in ERE may also focus on how to enhance teaching and learning with technology.

Additional research is also necessary to investigate the differences between online education, distance education, and ERE. The differences can have a significant influence on an instructor's capacity to support students through the use of technology. Analyzing the differences between online education, distance education and ERE may also assist instructors in determining professional development subjects to support their perceptions of preparedness for teaching in any setting.

Regarding language learning, in particular, future training for instructors should involve the incorporation of technology in language learning due to its demonstrated benefits, including in online language learning courses and ICT. In this regard, Moorhouse (2020) proposed that inclusive studies analyzing the transition of face-to-face classes to online learning is particularly worthwhile.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire

You are being invited to take part in a questionnaire within the framework of a Master thesis: "An Investigation of Turkish EFL instructors' online assessment literacy in preparatory classes of universities, as well as the challenges and opportunities they face during Emergency Remote Education in the COVID-19 pandemic." The following information is provided to help you decide whether you wish to participate in this study. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and refusal to agree to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you choose to participate, you have the option to refuse to answer any question during the questionnaire.

Your responses will help to expand the body of knowledge related to university English as a foreign language (EFL) instructors' online assessment literacy as well as the challenges and opportunities you face during Emergency Remote Education. Specifically, your responses will be used to assist the researcher in understanding the process of online assessment in every aspect during the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic.

The amount of time required to participate in the questionnaire is approximately 15-20 minutes. Following the analysis of the questionnaire data, you will have the opportunity to review and verify the researcher's reporting and interpretation of the data. Your name and any identifying details will be withheld, and your confidentiality strictly ensured.

Please note that there are no risks or costs associated with being a participant in this study. While you will not receive any direct compensation or credit for your participation, you may ultimately benefit from the knowledge and related outcomes obtained through this research. Thank you in advance for your participation and support.

Principal Investigator: Tuncay GEZDER, Teacher
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Thesis co-supervisor: Servet ÇELİK, Associate Prof. Dr.
Department of Foreign Language Education,
Fatih Faculty of Education, Trabzon University

Part 1: Participants Information

Nickname :

Gender: M F

Name of your University :

Last Qualification: BA MA PhD Candidate PhD

How many years have you been using online language assessment tools :

1-2 3-4 5+

How many hours are you teaching online in a week this semester:

Less than 10 10-12 13-16 17-20

For how long have you been teaching English:

Less than 5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21+

Have you taken any pre-service courses on educational online assessment?

Yes No

Have you taken any professional development training on online language assessment?

Yes No

Part 2: TEACHER SELF-PERCEIVED ONLINE ASSESSMENT LITERACY DURING COVID-19

Please indicate how skilled you are in using the online assessment issue described by each of the statements below by ticking one of the choices next to each statement according to the following five-point scale:

- 1- not competent,
- 2- a little competent,
- 3- somewhat competent,
- 4- competent,
- 5- very competent

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
	Not Competent	A little Competent	Somewhat Competent	Competent	Very Competent

Constructing and Administering Online Assessment

Being able to choose the appropriate methods for online classroom assessment
Being able to use a table of guidelines to plan online assessments
Being able to write clear test instructions in a way that leaves no room for students to ask for any explanations about the online test
Being able to use online assessment results in developing treatment plans for low-achieving students
Being able to write online test questions that suit the level of high-achieving students

Online Performance Assessment

Assessing online class participation
Assessing students online learning through oral questions
Developing online performance assessment methods (e.g., online assigning projects, online assignments, online reports, online presentations etc.) based on clearly defined objectives
Defining online rating scale for performance criteria
Communicating online performance assessment criteria to students in advance
Assigning online hands-on activities (e.g., online presentations, online peer evaluation)
Using the rating scale/checklist while observing students' performance in online classes
Assessing students learning through online observation

Grading Online

Determining students grades according to students' average performance in online classes
Identifying different factors to be considered when grading in online classes
Identifying students' characteristics that should not be used when grading in online classes

Determining students' grades to teach and assess in correspondence to main learning objectives in online classes

Communicating Online Assessment Results with Others

Using e-portfolios to assess students' progress

Providing written feedback to students in online classes

Communicating online assessment results to students

Providing oral feedback to students in online classes

Communicating online assessment results to parents

Online Assessment Ethics

Informing students of the assessment objectives before applying the online assessment

Keeping the online assessment results of each student confidential

Avoiding the use of online assessment as a way to punish students for their behavior

Preventing students from cheating online tests

Avoiding teaching to the online test when preparing students for tests

Digital Language Assessment Literacy

Using online tools to design language skills test (discussion boards, blogs, wikis etc.)

Giving computerized course tasks (e.g., end of unit vocab, grammar, listen and comment on a video etc.)

Assessing student language skills (e.g., grammar, vocab, writing etc) using online tools

Using online tools reports to give student feedback on written assignment

Varying online tools according to their effectiveness for classroom purposes

Providing criteria for online/computerized tests/tasks along with the tests/tasks

Using online assessment data (student participation, grades, user activity in online discussion, etc.) to plan future teaching

Appendix B

Modified Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy Questionnaire

Original Statements	Change/Use	Statements used	Rationale for change
Constructing and Administering Assessment	Modified	Constructing and Administering Online Assessment	Clarity
Choosing the appropriate methods for classroom assessment	Modified	Being able to choose the appropriate methods for online classroom assessment	Clarity
Using a table of specifications to plan assessments	Modified	Being able to use a table of guidelines to plan online assessments	Clarity
Writing general instructions in a way that leaves no room for students to ask for any explanations about the test	Modified	Being able to write clear test instructions in a way that leaves no room for students to ask for any explanations about the online test	Clarity
Using assessment results in developing treatment plans for low-achieving students	Modified	Being able to use online assessment results in developing treatment plans for low-achieving students	Clarity
Writing test questions for higher cognitive levels	Modified	Being able to write online test questions that suit the level of high-achieving students	Clarity
Performance Assessment	Modified	Online Performance Assessment	Clarity
Assessing class participation	Modified	Assessing online class participation	Clarity
Assessing students learning through oral questions	Modified	Assessing students online learning through oral questions	Clarity
Developing performance assessment methods (e.g., assigning projects, assignments, reports, presentations etc.) based on clearly defined objectives	Modified	Developing online performance assessment methods (e.g., online assigning projects, online assignments, online reports, online presentations etc.) based on clearly defined objectives	Clarity
Defining the rating scale for performance criteria	Modified	Defining online rating scale for performance criteria	Clarity
Communicating performance assessment criteria to students in advance	Modified	Communicating online performance assessment criteria to students in advance	Clarity
Assigning hands-on activities	Modified	Assigning online hands-on activities (e.g., online presentations, online peer evaluation)	Clarity
Using the rating scale/checklist while observing students' performance	Modified	Using the rating scale/checklist while observing students' performance in online classes	Clarity
Assessing students learning through observation	Modified	Assessing students learning through online observation	Clarity
Grading	Modified	Grading Online	Clarity
Determining students grades according to students' average performance	Modified	Determining students grades according to students' average performance in online classes	Clarity
Identifying different factors to be considered when grading	Modified	Identifying different factors to be considered when grading in online classes	Clarity

Identifying students' characteristics that should not be used when grading	Modified	Identifying students' characteristics that should not be used when grading in online classes	Clarity
Determining students' grades to match the achievement instructional objectives	Modified	Determining students' grades to teach and assess in correspondence to main learning objectives in online classes .	Clarity
Communicating Assessment Results with Others	Modified	Communicating Online Assessment Results with Others	Clarity
Using portfolios to assess students' progress	Modified	Using e-portfolios to assess students' progress	Clarity
Providing written feedback to students	Modified	Providing written feedback to students in online classes	Clarity
Communicating assessment results to students	Modified	Communicating online assessment results to students	Clarity
Providing oral feedback to students	Modified	Providing oral feedback to students in online classes	Clarity
Communicating assessment results to parents	Modified	Communicating online assessment results to parents	Clarity
Assessment Ethics	Modified	Online Assessment Ethics	Clarity
Informing students of the objectives before applying the assessment	Modified	Informing students of the assessment objectives before applying the online assessment	Clarity
Keeping the assessment results of each student confidential	Modified	Keeping the online assessment results of each student confidential	Clarity
Avoiding the use of assessment as a way to punish students for their behavior	Modified	Avoiding the use of online assessment as a way to punish students for their behavior	Clarity
Preventing students from cheating on tests	Modified	Preventing students from cheating on online tests	Clarity
Avoiding teaching to the test when preparing students for tests	Modified	Avoiding teaching to the online test when preparing students for tests.	Clarity
Digital Language Assessment Literacy	Adopted	Digital Language Assessment Literacy	
Using Blackboard to design language skills test (discussion boards, blogs, wikis etc.)	Modified	Using online tools to design language skills test(discussion boards, blogs, wikis etc.)	Clarity
Giving computerized course tasks (e.g., end of unit vocab, grammar, listen and comment on a video etc.)	Adopted	Giving computerized course tasks (e.g., end of unit vocab, grammar, listen and comment on a video etc.)	
Assessing student language skills (e.g., grammar, vocab, writing etc) using online tools (discussion boards, blogs, wikis etc)	Adopted	Assessing student language skills (e.g., grammar, vocab, writing etc) using online tools (discussion boards, blogs, wikis etc)	
Using Safeassign reports to give student feedback on written assignment	Modified	Using online tools reports to give student feedback on written assignment	Clarity

Varying digital assessment tools according to their effectiveness for classroom purposes	Adopted	Varying digital assessment tools according to their effectiveness for classroom purposes	
Providing criteria for online/computerized tests/tasks along with the tests/tasks	Adopted	Providing criteria for online/computerized tests/tasks along with the tests/tasks	
Using Blackboard assessment data (student participation, grades, user activity in online discussion, Safeassign reports etc.) to plan future teaching.	Modified	Using online assessment data (student participation, grades, user activity in online discussion, etc.) to plan future teaching	Clarity

Appendix C:

Open-ended Questions

You are being invited to take part in open-ended questions within the framework of a Master thesis: “An Investigation of Turkish EFL instructors’ online assessment literacy in preparatory classes of universities, as well as the challenges and opportunities they face during Emergency Remote Education during the COVID-19 pandemic.” The aim of this study is to expand the body of knowledge related to Turkish EFL instructors’ online assessment literacy as well as the challenges and opportunities they face during Emergency Remote Education. Specifically, your responses will be used to assist the researcher in understanding the process of online assessment during the COVID-19 worldwide pandemic. In this study, you are expected to indicate the difficulties and opportunities you faced in Emergency Remote Education, what test strategies you used when assessing students’ writing and speaking skills, and what you regularly do to increase the reliability and validity of the assessment.

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and refusal to agree to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you choose to participate, you have the option to refuse to answer any question during the open-ended questions.

The amount of time required to participate in the open-ended questions is approximately 20 minutes. Following the analysis of the open-ended questions data, you will have the opportunity to review and verify the researcher’s reporting and interpretation of the data. Your name and any identifying details will be withheld, and your confidentiality strictly ensured.

Please note that there are no risks or costs associated with being a participant in this study. You will not receive any direct compensation or credit for your participation. Thank you in advance for your participation and support.

I participate in this study completely voluntarily, and I know that I can interrupt it at any time. I accept the use of the information I have provided in scientific publications.

Principal Investigator: Tuncay GEZDER, Teacher
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Thesis supervisor: Turgay HAN, Associate Prof. Dr.
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Thesis co-supervisor: Servet ÇELİK, Associate Prof. Dr.
Department of Foreign Language Education,
Fatih Faculty of Education, Trabzon University

Open-ended Questions

1. What assessment tools do you use while assessing your students' writing in online courses?
2. What assessment tools do you use while assessing your students' speaking in online courses?
3. What kind of opportunities have you faced teaching writing online courses?
4. What challenges have you faced while teaching writing online courses?
5. What kind of opportunities have you faced teaching speaking online courses?
6. What challenges have you faced while teaching speaking online courses?
7. What did you like and dislike most while assessing online courses?
8. What do you frequently do to increase reliability and fairness of your assessment?
9. What are your ideas about online assessment during the Covid-19 epidemic?

Appendix D

Individual Interviews

- 1- COVID-19 salgını boyunca deneyimlediğiniz çevrimiçi/uzaktan derslerde öğrencilerin yazma becerilerini değerlendirirken neleri ve neden kullandınız?
- 2- COVID-19 salgını boyunca deneyimlediğiniz çevrimiçi/uzaktan derslerde öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerini değerlendirirken neleri ve neden kullandınız?
- 3- COVID-19 salgını boyunca deneyimlediğiniz çevrimiçi/uzaktan derslerdeki yazma becerilerini değerlendirmeyi kolaylaştıran durumlar neler olmuştur?
- 4- COVID-19 salgını boyunca deneyimlediğiniz çevrimiçi/uzaktan derslerdeki yazma becerilerini değerlendirmeyi zorlaştıran durumlar neler olmuştur?
- 5- COVID-19 salgını boyunca deneyimlediğiniz çevrimiçi/uzaktan derslerdeki konuşma becerilerini değerlendirmeyi kolaylaştıran durumlar neler olmuştur?
- 6- COVID-19 salgını boyunca deneyimlediğiniz çevrimiçi/uzaktan derslerdeki konuşma becerilerini değerlendirmeyi zorlaştıran durumlar neler olmuştur?
- 7- Yaptığımız çevrimiçi/uzaktan değerlendirmenin güvenilir bir şekilde yürütülmesi için sıklıkla ne tür önlemler aldınız?
- 8- COVID-19 salgını boyunca çevrimiçi/uzaktan yaptığımız yazma ve konuşma derslerinin sınavlarını düşündüğünüzde neler söylemek istersiniz?

APPENDIX E



ORDU
ÜNİVERSİTESİ

BİLGİLENDİRİLMİŞ GÖNÜLLÜ OLUR FORMU

Bu katıldığınız çalışma bilimsel bir araştırma olup, araştırmanın adı AN INVESTIGATION OF TURKISH EFL INSTRUCTORS' ONLINE ASSESSMENT LITERACY: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES (Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğreten Öğretim Görevlilerinin Çevrimiçi Değerlendirme Yetkinliklerinin Araştırılması: Güçlükler ve Fırsatlar)'dır. Bu çalışma, Ordu Üniversitesi Yüksek Lisans öğrencisi Tuncay GEZDER, Ordu Üniversitesi İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Doç. Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Turgay HAN ve Trabzon Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Eğitimi bölümü Doç. Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Servet ÇELİK tarafından yürütülen bir çalışmadır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, Türkiye'deki üniversitelerin hazırlık sınıflarında görev yapan, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce dersi veren öğretim görevlilerinin çevrimiçi dil yeterliliklerini, karşılaştıkları güçlükleri ve fırsatları incelemektir. Türkiye'de görülen COVID-19 vakalarının artmasından sonra Acil Uzaktan Eğitim sürecine geçiş yapıldı ve eğitim belirli bir süreliğine bu yaklaşım ile devam ettirildi. Bu çalışmada sizden geçen yıldan beri oluşan çevrimiçi/uzaktan derslerdeki deneyimlerinizi dikkate alarak cevap vermeniz beklenmektedir. Bu çalışmaya katılırsanız sizden 20 dakikaya kadar zaman ayırmanız istenecektir. Bu çalışmada sizden Acil Uzaktan Eğitim sürecinde karşılaştığımız zorlukları ve kolaylıkları, öğrencilerin yazma ve konuşma becerilerini değerlendirirken hangi test stratejilerini kullandığınızı ve ölçümlerin güvenilirliğini ve tarafsızlığını artırmak için düzenli olarak neler yaptığınızı belirtmeniz beklenmektedir. Çalışmaya katılım tamamen gönüllülük esasına dayanmaktadır. Sizden kimlik belirleyici hiçbir bilgi istenmeyecektir. Cevaplarınız tamamen gizli tutulacak ve sadece araştırmacılar tarafından değerlendirilecektir ve elde edilecek bilgiler bilimsel yayımlarda kullanılacaktır.

Çalışma, kişisel rahatsızlık verecek unsurlar içermemektedir. Ancak, çalışma sırasında sorulardan ya da herhangi bir nedenden ötürü kendinizi rahatsız hissederseniz çalışmayı yarıda bırakıp çıkmakta serbestsiniz. Çalışma sonunda, bu çalışmayla ilgili sorularınız cevaplanacaktır. Bu çalışmaya katıldığınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederiz. Çalışma hakkında daha fazla bilgi almak ve sorularınız için Tuncay GEZDER ile iletişim kurabilirsiniz.

Bu çalışmaya tamamen gönüllü olarak katılıyorum ve istediğim zaman yarıda kesip çıkabileceğimi biliyorum. Verdiğim bilgilerin bilimsel amaçlı yayımlarda kullanılmasını kabul ediyorum.

Adı – Soyadı

Tarih

İmza

APPENDIX F

T.C.
ORDU ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu

OTURUM TARİHİ	OTURUM SAYISI	KARAR SAYISI
15/09/2021	08	2021-129

KARAR NO: 2021-129

Doç. Dr. Turgay HAN'ın "Investigation Of Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy: Challenges And Opportunities (Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğreten Öğretim Görevlilerinin Çevrimiçi Değerlendirme Yetkinliklerin Araştırılması: Güçlükler ve Fırsatlar)" başlıklı çalışması etik yönden incelendi.

Doç. Dr. Turgay HAN'ın "Investigation Of Turkish EFL Instructors' Online Assessment Literacy: Challenges And Opportunities (Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğreten Öğretim Görevlilerinin Çevrimiçi Değerlendirme Yetkinliklerin Araştırılması: Güçlükler ve Fırsatlar)" başlıklı çalışmasının etik yönden uygun olduğuna, toplantıya katılanların oy birliği ile karar verildi.

ASLI GİBİDİR
15/09/2021

Doç.Dr.Hasan Hüseyin MUTLU
Başkan

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Fakülte	Edebiyat Fakültesi
Bölümü	İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
Yüksek Lisans Mezuniyet	
Üniversite	Ordu Üniversitesi
Enstitü Adı	Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü
Anabilim Dalı	-
Programı	İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı
Doktora Mezuniyet	
Üniversite	-
Enstitü Adı	-
Anabilim Dalı	-
Programı	-
Akademik Çalışmaları	
1	-
2	-