

**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

**AN ACTION RESEARCH ON E-MENTORING: A SUPPLEMENTAL TOOL FOR  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EFL TEACHERS WORKING AT MNE  
SCHOOLS**

**THESIS BY  
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**MASTER OF ARTS**

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REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
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We certify that this thesis under the title of "AN ACTION RESEARCH ON E-MENTORING: A SUPPLEMENTAL TOOL FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EFL TEACHERS WORKING AT MNE SCHOOLS" is satisfactory for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of English Language Teaching.

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## QUOTATION

*“There is nothing permanent except change.”*

*Herakleitos*

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Muzaffer ÇETİN

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicated this work first and foremost to the devoted teachers in Turkey who remain hopeful no matter what is happening around. Without their existence, I would never have been able to show enthusiasm to continue this study.

## ÖZET

# MİLLİ EĞİTİMDE ÇALIŞAN İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN PROFESYONEL MESLEKİ GELİŞİMLERİ İÇİN YARDIMCI ARAÇ OLARAK E-MENTORLUK ÜZERİNE BİR EYLEM ARAŞTIRMASI

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Bu çalışma Türkiye'de Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı okullarında görev yapan sekiz İngilizce öğretmenin üzerinde yapılan bir online e-mentorluk eylem araştırma projesinde elde edilen bulguları rapor etmektedir. Çalışma e-mentorluk aracılığıyla konumsal dezavantajları olan Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı okullarında görev yapan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin mesleki gelişim bağlamında FA stratejilerini geliştirmeleri hakkında bazı ilginç fikirler verebilir. Bu okullar çoğunlukla konumsal dezavantajlı bölgelerde bulunmaktadır. Bu çalışmada yazar, araştırmacı ve mentor rolünü üstlenir; o öğretmenler ile bir e-mentor gibi davranarak e-mentorluk faaliyeti yürütmektedir. O konumsal dezavantajlara sahip Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı okullarında görev yapan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin üzerinde e-mentorluk etkisi ile elde edilen bulguları rapor eder. İngilizce öğretmenleri gönüllü olarak diğer öğretmenlerle işbirliği içinde çalışarak e-mentorluk desteği yoluyla FA stratejilerini geliştirdi.

Bu tez aynı zamanda, bir eylem araştırması perspektifini kullanarak, sonuçları raporlayarak, süreci yansıtarak ve gelecekteki online İngilizce öğretmen mesleki gelişim programları için bir çerçeve geliştirerek Türkiye'deki İngilizce öğretmenleri için bir online mesleki gelişim programı nasıl tasarlanır ve uygulanır konularını sorguluyor. Bu çalışma ile Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı'nın İngilizce öğretmenlerinin gelişimi için daha ekonomik ve etkili şekilde sağlayabileceği desteği ilgilendiren online işbirliği platformu bağlamında sonuçlara ulaşılabilir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** E-Mentorluk, Öğretmen Mesleki Gelişimi, Konumsal Dezavantajlı, Milli Eğitim Bakanlığı

## **ABSTRACT**

### **AN ACTION RESEARCH ON E-MENTORING: A SUPPLEMENTAL TOOL FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF EFL TEACHERS WORKING AT MNE SCHOOLS**

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This paper reports on findings from an online action research project conducting e-mentoring on eight EFL teachers working at MNE schools in Turkey. The study may raise some interesting ideas about how EFL teachers working at MNE schools with locational disadvantages can enhance their Formative Assessment strategies in the context professional development through the use of e-mentoring. These schools are situated in mostly locational disadvantaged areas. In this study, the author plays the role of researcher and mentor, i.e. he acts as an e-mentor with teachers online, conducts e-mentoring. He reports findings related to the impact of e-mentoring on EFL teachers working at MNE schools with locational disadvantages. EFL teachers who voluntarily work in collaboration with other teachers have improved their formative assessment strategies through e-mentoring support.

This thesis also inquires how a professional development program can be designed and implemented online for EFL teachers in Turkey; using an action research perspective, reporting on the results, reflecting on the process, and developing a framework for future online EFL teacher professional development programs. This paper may reach the conclusions in the context of online collaborative platform regarding the support that MNE may provide in order for their EFL teachers' development to be more economic and effective.

**Key words:** E-mentoring, Professional Teacher Development, Locational Disadvantaged Area, MNE

## ABBREVIATIONS

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| <b>FA</b>   | : Formative Assessment                                  |
| <b>EFL</b>  | : English as a Foreign Language                         |
| <b>ELT</b>  | : English Language Teaching                             |
| <b>FtF</b>  | : Face to Face  |
| <b>OECD</b> | : Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| <b>MNE</b>  | : The Ministry of National Education in Turkey          |
| <b>KLT</b>  | : Keeping Learning on Track                             |
| <b>KPSS</b> | : State Employees Selection Exam                        |



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## CHAPTER 1

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Presentation

This study aims to find out the in-service training needs of EFL teachers at state schools in Turkey and makes suggestions for an online e-mentoring model. The study includes five main chapters. The first section comprises the background to the study, statement of the problem, the aim of the study, the importance of the study, and research questions.

#### 1.2. Background of the Study

Teachers are one of the most crucial elements of the educational process. Teachers require lifelong development in order to keep up with the changes in life. Even though English language teachers accomplished being graduates of professional/appropriate universities in Turkey, it is not easy to say that all of them are fully professionally qualified in practices (Büyükkarcı, 2010). The demands of a knowledge-based era are constantly shifting, requiring teachers to continuously learn and develop their professional competencies. Therefore, teachers, especially English language teachers, are in need of constant support for their professional development (Richards, 2005), an idea highlighted in this study.

In addition, the study gives special attention to a recent innovative assessment approach: Formative Assessment (FA). OECD (2005) described this new approach in this way, "Formative assessment refers to frequent, interactive assessments of student progress and understanding to identify learning needs and adjust teaching appropriately. Formative assessment promotes the goals of lifelong learning, including raising levels of student achievement, achieving greater equity of student outcomes, and improving learning to learn skills" (p. 21). Formative Assessment practices have a strong effect on student achievement and the aim of supporting teachers is to give tools for the students (Greenstein, 2010, Wiliam, 2007). FA is used to help teachers improve the quality of teaching because they are constantly reviewing what works and what does not work for their students. What is needed is constant monitoring in classrooms. EFL teachers should not wait

until exams are imminent to assess student learning because adjustments can be made throughout a term to improve students' achievement. This assumption underlies this research project and underpins a major objective in this study. Constant monitoring of classrooms provides evidence needed to adjust teaching methods and improve student learning. FA allows for the students and teachers to share the responsibility of improving classroom performance. This will make them feel more autonomous as teachers through self-reflection and ongoing self-regulation of their own progress. In order to create more effective teachers, it is important to support them with professional development in relation to FA strategies (Greenstein, 2010, Wiliam, 2007).

In the Turkish context, summative assessment is mostly used, as the current need is on the result of the exams they take nationwide test. Students are exposed to exams to carry on their education. It requires a lot of hard work to be successful in these exams. Because of this, there seem to be anxiety for the students. Büyükkarcı (2010) in his dissertation commented on the negative impact of the preparing for the National University exam. He mentions about the National University exam that is a standard and multiple-choice type of test, taken by millions of students every year in Turkey, exemplifies a typical product-based summative assessment (p. 7). In terms of English language assessment, EFL teachers in Turkey have also same concerns as it was mentioned above. As Doğandere (2006) puts it:

The assessment of the students' performances on the target language was carried out mostly in a summative way by means of written and oral exams according to the Regulation of Primary Education. Because the materials used were grammar-based, most of the weekly class hours were devoted to the teaching of grammatical aspects of English, which determined the scope of the assessment. Limited-response tasks such as filling in the blanks, matching, transforming were frequently preferred in assessing the language performances of the learners. (p.16)

Therefore grammar-based English language teaching reduces the communicative interaction. The teachers have to teach according to the exams. They do not focus on more applicable skills. In other words, it can be said that there is an over-emphasis on summative assessment in Turkey since the focus of education is on exam results; which negatively affects both students and teachers in EFL classrooms.



As Thompson and Wiliam (2008) point out the teacher's role should shift from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning, as student achievement is key issue in education. They also state, "the teacher's task therefore moves away from delivering learning to the student towards the creation of situations in which students learn" (p.5). Changing such habits may lead to success. What we are seeking for is success for individual and society. If students reach out the success on their own learning, they will perform better in the society. People who are more educated will most likely make more money, so they will pay more taxes to the government and they will rely less on welfare. Only the success in education helps a society be more productive and efficient. For these reasons we should work on improving student achievement. In order to improve student achievement, long-term solutions gain more importance than temporary solutions. "Virtually every study that has examined the role of classroom teacher in the process of educating students has come to the same straightforward conclusion: an effective teacher enhances the student learning more than any other aspect of schooling that can be controlled" (Marzano, 2006, p.1). To achieve this objective, the most important element is to improve teacher performance. Changing teacher performance is not an easy task and cannot be done solely through traditional methods like summer workshops (Wiliam, 2007, p.184). Generally professional development is treated as a benefit rather than a requirement. Some schools especially MNE schools may have low budget for this kind of extra benefit. Because their teachers are already employed as teachers: they are supposed to be doing their jobs with what they are equipped with. One of the most important methods to improve student achievement is working on creating qualified teachers. Investing in teachers is very important therefore creating the varied professional development programs is critical.

Wiliam (2007) states that, "it is what teachers do in the classroom that really matters - not having teachers meet in workshops to talk about how to assess student work or what students' scores on tests mean for the curriculum" (p. 200). Formative assessment has very important effect on student achievement. Timperley (2008) states "Teachers need sophisticated assessment skills if they are to identify (i) what their students know and can do in relation to valued outcomes and (ii) what further learning they themselves need if they are to assist their students in learning. Assessment of this kind cannot take place outside of the teaching-learning process—it is integral to it. Teachers, therefore, need a variety of ways of assessing their students' progress, ways that include, but go beyond, standardized testing" (p. 13). According to OECD (2005), "the principles

of formative assessment may be applied at the school and policy levels, to identify areas for improvement and to promote effective and constructive cultures of evaluation throughout education systems. More consistent use of formative assessment throughout education systems may help stakeholders address the very barriers to its wider practice in classrooms" (p. 24). Therefore, the focus in this study has been on individual development of EFL teachers in relation to FA strategies in their everyday teaching via online platform.

### **1.3. Statement of the problem**

According to Rice (2003), raising student achievement in schools is key to success and student achievement has direct relation with the quality of teachers. As Wiliam (2007) states:

To successfully raise student achievement, we must improve the quality of the teachers working in our schools...specifically, we must work to improve the teachers we already have. We must look carefully at both the costs and the benefits of possible reforms. However, changing what teachers do, day in and day out, cannot be done effectively through traditional methods, such as the summer workshop. (p. 184)

Formative Assessment (FA) takes a place in pre-service and in-service teacher training, and it is a relatively new concept and approach for EFL education in Turkey. FA is very beneficial for students' learning process OECD (2005). Teachers are expected to acquire the FA skills to help their learning process. Yet, these workshops are not always effective, as Mısırlı (2001) underlines, "...the skills and knowledge gained at pre-service teaching can be outdated with the effect of developing technology and science on the curriculums of language teaching in time" (p. 17). Therefore abovementioned issues result in lack of capabilities of assessing students thoroughly. MNE occasionally organizes some in-service training programs for teachers to fulfill the gap. Yet, the effectiveness of these programs has been questioned. As Mısırlı (2011) states, "Nonetheless, it is a familiar actuality that language teachers do not get the benefit of this system as intended. One of the reasons for this lack of benefit is perhaps because teachers do not find the in-service training programs exciting enough to consider attentive" (p. 17). Teacher development models can be diversified in order to provide more practical and feasible results.

Another difficulty to be dealt with is locational disadvantage of the schools teachers work

at. Mitra (2007) in his talk about the remoteness and the quality of the education says as follows, "the remoter the school was, the worse the results seem to be." He also explains it:

Remoteness is in a normal sense, which means, as you go further and further from urban center, you get to remoter areas, what happens to education. The second kind of remoteness within the large metropolitan area in all over the world we have slums, shanty towns, and poor areas which are socially and economically remote from the rest of the city. So it "us" and "them" what happens to education in that context. Remote areas mostly do not have enough good teachers, or if they do have, they cannot retain those teachers.

This reality does not change for Turkey context. The current study deals with overcoming difficulties of disadvantages that participants are having with supplemental support apart from their ongoing professional development activities in their areas. Scutella&Horn (2009) said that: "Locational disadvantage is an important dimension of social exclusion. The framework proposed does include some outcomes to be examined that capture locational characteristics, such as neighborhood quality" (p.30). Schools situated in such locational disadvantage regions have difficulty to standardize the quality of education. They provide less quality service due to the inadequacies. Not only students but also teachers can be affected by locational disadvantages. Student achievement may reduce as the teachers are influenced by the lacking conditions. Therefore e-mentoring can be used as a developmental tool to complete this gap via supporting teachers online. It is not always easy to reach all teachers at MNE schools; and they need immediate responses for their instant challenges. Most of the teachers in my study work at disadvantaged schools.

Because of these aforementioned needs, leaders who are responsible for educational success are to make long-term successful plans to produce better results. Challenging developments have led to a paradigm shift in the development of EFL teachers.

#### **1.4. Aim of the study**

The aim of the research is mainly two-folds. The first aim is to identify the needs of English language teachers considering their professional development related to FA practices, and the

second one deals with the effectiveness of collaborative e-mentoring platform as a supplemental tool for professional teacher development.

There is a need for English language teachers to be supported in their teaching. E-mentoring has invigorated a fresh perspective on professional teacher development. To improve the quality of learning in schools, we can help teachers implement formative assessment practices in the classroom through collaborative online platforms. This thesis inquires how a professional development program can be designed and implemented online for EFL teachers in Turkey; using an action research perspective, reporting on the results, reflecting on the process, and developing a framework for future EFL teacher professional development programs.

### **1.5. Importance of the study**

Nowadays English language teachers all over the world show a keen interest in their own professional development. This can be observed through worldwide seminars, conferences and workshops. English language teachers working at MNE schools in Turkey need ongoing professional support for their teaching careers. Yearly or periodic training workshops can hardly provide the services for the needs they face on a daily basis. Although a large number of workshops and action research projects are being done on EFL teacher professional development in Turkey, there have been few practical solutions in the field of professional development in language teaching as a whole Karaaslan (2003). This study seeks to meet this need. A virtual network for language teachers may help teachers share their experiences as a basis for critical reflection on FA practices. Through online platform a range of activities can be presented to the EFL teachers working at different cities by an e-mentor who will facilitate the whole development process of the teachers. The study highlights the gap in professional teacher development of English language teachers at state schools in Turkey and questions to provide future directions for professional teacher development in ELT discipline in Turkey by promoting e-mentoring through social media.

This paper reached the conclusions in the context of online collaborative platform regarding the support that MNE may provide in order for their EFL teachers' development to be more economic and effective.

The study targeted EFL teachers working at MNE schools in Turkey where there are many underachieving students. Starting from the teachers at those institutions, educational success may increase with the positive results in student achievement. Teachers using formative assessment are expected to help underachieving students bridge the existing gap between them and their successful classmates. An OECD report (2005) defines FA “as a means to meeting the goals of lifelong learning builds students 'learning to learn' skills by placing emphasis on the process of teaching and learning, and actively involving students in that process, building students' skills for peer- and self-assessment, and helping students understand their own learning, and develop appropriate strategies for 'learning to learn' ” (p. 25).

Teachers are expected to develop assessment skills to help students use a variety of strategies to enhance their quality of learning. Greenstein (2010) claims, “Educators must be acting collaboratively toward a shared vision and believes that formative assessment is the nexus for educational improvement. If we work together to incorporate it as part of a balanced system of assessment, we should be able to monitor our progress and adjust our practice to achieve maximum learning for all students, which is the goal of educator” (p. 132).

Policymakers in education have largely focused on quick solutions that do not address the larger issue of improving student achievement. According to OECD (2005), "Quantitative and qualitative research on formative assessment has shown that it is perhaps one of the most important interventions for promoting high-performance ever studied " (p. 24). Focusing on what teachers do in classroom is essential in professional teacher development. There are not many EFL teachers in Turkey implementing FA practices actively in their daily teaching. There may even be a question whether they are trained to practice formative assessment or not. Therefore the best way to bring about the change in the classroom is by implementing FA practices. In short, in order to achieve more learning outcomes in education, educational authorities are to seek for alternative professional teacher development tools for improving teachers' performance. This research is designed to respond to this need and contribute to this gap by implementing an online teacher professional development aimed at eight EFL teachers. The intervention will be done through online tools such as Facebook and Skype to support and inspire teachers in their learning, professional development; as well as to develop collaborative practice, and to model breakthrough e-mentoring practices.

## **1.6. Research Questions**

Considering the purposes mentioned above, there are two basic research questions for this study:

1. What are the professional development needs of English language teachers at MNE schools in Turkey in relation to Formative Assessment practices?
2. How can I provide EFL teachers with an online collaborative program for the use of Formative Assessment?

## **1.7. Conclusion**

The first chapter of the study has presented brief summary of the literature about FA and information about e-mentoring. Additionally, it includes background of the study, statement of the problem, aim and importance of study, and research questions. The next chapter provides a more in-depth review of the literature on e-mentoring, professional teacher development. The third chapter presents information about the methodology of the study. It is comprised of the procedures for data analysis and the results of the survey study, including qualitative data gathered on online platform. The fourth chapter presents findings and discussion. The last chapter presents a conclusion for the study.

## CHAPTER 2

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter aims to review the relevant literature to light the way for theoretical framework of this study. The purpose is to give background information about the concepts mentioned in the study. The components that constitute this study are professional teacher development, e-mentoring, Web 2.0 tools, and Facebook. Accordingly, the literature was reviewed to explore professional development through e-mentoring; web 2.0 tools such as Facebook and implications of e-mentoring for professional teacher development.

#### 2.2. Teacher Professional development in EFL

Teaching is the most dynamic profession affected by many external variables. To cope with the change, development of teachers is a necessity. Quality educational institutions invest on their teachers as core elements by providing development opportunities for them in order to tackle with these goals and challenges. Warren and Little (2006) state, "Research has steadily converged on the importance of strong teacher learning communities for teacher growth and commitment, suggesting as well their potential contribution to favorable student outcomes" (p. 2). Strong learning and development community for teachers has gained much importance within years. Professional development has direct impact on teachers' performance and practices in their teaching and it also has direct effect on student achievement. Rice (2003) underlines, "Teacher quality matters: It is the most important school related factor influencing student achievement" (p.1). Professional development is very important to improve education quality and helps teachers continue their lifelong learning in their career. In response to the demands of the age of high-speed learning, educational institutions are in constant search for innovative solutions to improve the quality of teachers apart from traditional teacher training models. There seems to be a necessity to update former ongoing teacher development approaches. Eventually, the development of teachers is to be revised with the requirements of the speed of the information age. As Warren and Little (2006) claims, "the test of professional development lies on teachers' access to

professional opportunities" (p. 3). In this respect, there seems to be an urgent need for educational authorities to foster innovation in new technological approaches for teacher training models. Traditional professional development methods have hardly met the needs of teachers changing on a daily basis (Warren&Little, 2006). The dynamic nature of online professional development efforts may be helpful in addressing many of the shortcomings of traditional professional development programs (Warren&Little, 2006). The role of the teacher and learner are not dynamic in traditional professional development. That makes online teacher development more dynamic to cope with the challenges in education (Warren&Little, 2006).

There are some issues that teachers need to be aware of related to the needs of adult learners. Richards and Farrell argued that "traditional models of staff development often ignore principles of adult learning, such as that with adults development is linked to their self-worth and efficacy, they learn through active involvement, learning must connect with their current understanding, and that it is a continual process of identity formation and re-formation" (as cited in Cooper and Boyd, 1998, p. 58-59). Therefore, professional teacher development should be arranged according to the needs of adult learning.

Professional teacher learning community is helpful channel for developing teachers. Toole and Lewis, (2002) mentions about the professional teacher learning community as a term by defining as, "Professional learning community' may have shades of interpretation in different contexts, but there appears to be broad international consensus that it suggests a group of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice in an ongoing, reflective, collaborative, inclusive, learning-oriented, growth-promoting way" (cited in Bolam, 2005, p. 5). Unlike tradition-oriented communities, teacher-learning communities are dynamic environment for teachers who would like to develop their teaching skills. Warren and Little (2006) share the conclusion of researchers at Stanford's Center for Research on the Contexts of Teaching (CRC) based on the studies in public and private secondary schools (p. 16). In their words (2006):

McLaughlin and Talbert distinguish between two types of strong professional community. In tradition-oriented strong communities, teachers unite to preserve their preferred conceptions of subject and pedagogy even in the face of student failure. Teachers in these groups are held together by conservative views of a subject discipline, school curriculum, and instruction, but display little in the way of collective responsibility for student learning. Teachers in teacher learning



communities also share certain core views and commitments but take a more dynamic and flexible stance toward subject teaching and routinely question and challenge teaching routines when they prove ineffective with students. (p. 16)

Tradition-oriented teacher communities show conservative characteristics that hinder teacher development. Alternatively, there need to be flexible development communities for teachers to help schools increase the student success more fully.

Besides, teachers are unique and have their own personal way of acquiring, interpreting, and applying new information. Their individual experiences and personal and professional backgrounds affect receptivity to new pedagogical ideas and approaches. According to Marsick & Watkins (2001), "Informal learning is usually intentional but not highly structured. Examples include self-directed learning, networking, coaching, mentoring, and performance planning that includes opportunities to review learning needs. When people learn incidentally, their learning may be taken for granted, tacit, or unconscious" (p. 25). They also add that, " Informal and incidental learning take place wherever people have the need, motivation, and opportunity for learning" (p. 28). Therefore, learning-specifically adult learning- is in the control of learner (Marsick & Watkins, 2001). Creating informal online teacher development platform will enhance the intrinsic motivation of teachers as the control is in their hands. Marsick & Watkins, (2001) warn us in their conclusion paragraph as follows:

Finally, technology is changing the face of organizations and having an impact on the nature of informal and incidental learning. In fact, given the distributed, asynchronous nature of technology-facilitated interactions, more may be learned incidentally by learners reading between the lines. As we work to bring adult education to the Web, studies exploring how people learn in these settings are needed. Informal and incidental learning can be enhanced with facilitation or increased awareness by the learner. (p. 32)

The motives of adult learning provide solid ground for online professional development. As Mısırlı states (2011),

Online in-service teacher training programs may include building specific websites, uploading prepared materials and documents for teachers getting advantage of web 2.0. online tools facilitating participatory information sharing- including but not

limited to del.icio.us, yahoo, gmail, facebook,hi5, flickr, orkut, friendfeed, blogs and twitter groups, for instance- and setting up net classes though web-sites, sharing, podcasting and following academic journals on-line for the sake of teacher development (p. 26).

In this way, EFL teachers can now reach the information any time they need by saving time and energy (Mısırlı, 2011). In addition, teachers provide each other packed materials for specific subjects on the platforms specially designed for them. Various teachers from different cities of a country may develop a sense of development. That builds a learning community for teachers. Online teacher learning communities can provide a motivating environment for educators to break away from deeply set habits.

### **2.3. EFL teacher professional development**

Nowadays English language teachers all over the world show an interest in their own professional development. This is seen in the worldwide seminars, conferences and workshops. EFL teachers in Turkey are also keeping the track of development. Richards and Farrell (2005) stated in the preface of their book, "In most schools and institutions today, language teachers are expected to keep up to date with developments in the field, to regularly review and evaluate their teaching skills, and to take on new teaching assignments according to the changing needs of the institution" (par. 1). As they clearly framed in their brief preface, if language teaching institutions want to maintain high professional standards, they are to provide opportunities for language teachers to pursue professional development, and also they must to provide conditions where teachers cooperate to achieve higher levels of learning among their students (par. 1).

Pre-service education may not always meet the demands of the changing needs of language teachers as the language itself has a dynamic nature. Status quo in language teaching is not appreciated as the change has constant nature. Language teachers are especially in need of ongoing support to adapt the new developments in educational field.

"The need for ongoing teacher education has been a recurring theme in language teaching circles in recent years...Opportunities for in-service training are crucial to the long-term development of teachers as well as for the long-term success of the programs in which they work.

The need for ongoing renewal of professional skills and knowledge is not a reflection of inadequate training but simply a response to the fact that not everything teachers need to know can be provided at pre-service level, as well as the fact that the knowledge base of teaching constantly changes" (p.1).

New teachers are to be treated differently than other experienced teachers. Richards and Farrell (2005) state, "New teachers tend to have a fairly heavy teaching load and tend to get the more "basic" and less problematic courses. However, it is also generally the case that the pre-service courses they took were of a fairly general nature, somewhat theoretical, and not directly relevant to their teaching assignments, and thus much of what they need to know has to be learned on the job" (p. 10). Provided the subject is education even the experienced teachers are not in a safe zone either. Richards and Farrell (2005) criticizes that "After teachers have been teaching for some time, however, their knowledge and skills sometimes become outdated or there may be a lack of fit between the knowledge and skills the teacher possesses and what the school needs. Qualifications too soon become outdated as a result of changes in the field" (p. 10).

To sum up, as Richards (2005) framed in their preface of the book, "The field of language teaching is subject to rapid changes, both as the profession responds to new educational paradigms and trends and as institutions face new challenges as a result of changes in curriculum, national tests, and student needs. As a result, teachers need regular opportunities to update their professional knowledge and skills, that is, their opportunities for professional development". Especially in Turkey language teachers who are struggling with the negative effects of national exams and negative perceptions of students regarding education are to be supported constantly with professional development.

#### **2.4. From FtF mentoring to "e" Mentoring**

Since the study aims at understanding the impact of e-mentoring on teacher development, it is better to start with the current effect of face-to-face mentoring on teacher development.

The Children, Schools and Families Committee, appointed by the House of Commons of UK, published a report on teacher training (2010) underlining the following message,

"Teaching needs to be a learning profession. A vital aspect of this is teachers reflecting on their own practice and supporting colleagues. In particular, good quality mentoring for trainee teachers,

and newly qualified teachers, should be of the highest priority" (p. 4). Supporting one another and providing good quality mentoring has vital role in professional teacher development.

There are some significant researches on "mentoring on teaching". Different researchers have various definitions for mentoring on teaching area. According to Mısırlı (2011) mentoring is "a system where an experienced teacher helps a less experienced one develop on specific areas in teaching. Obviously this relationship is based on daily procedures, sharing experiences let him/her build self-esteem in teaching area" (p. 20). Karim also defines mentoring as, " a collegial relationship between an experienced (mentor) and less experienced teacher (mentee) to improve the mentee's professional as well as personal aspects of life, where not only the mentee develops but also the experienced teacher (mentor) as well" (as cited in Halai, 2006, p. 703). In addition to him, Mehta also defines mentoring as follows: "Briefly this (mentoring) involved team teaching, demonstration lessons by the mentor, collaborative planning and conferencing after the lesson. My role as mentor was to aid teachers to adopt a more reflective focus rather than telling, and instructing though at times that was also necessary" (as cited in Halai, 2006, p. 702). Halai, on the other hand, takes mentoring as "a nurturing process aimed at the personal and professional growth of the mentee" and he adds, "my role as a mentor required me to carry out functions like teaching, coaching, planning, observation, feedback and reflection on my own and the mentee's learning. I took care to behave in a supportive encouraging and non-evaluative manner. I also tried to create an environment which was safe for learning and professional growth" (as cited in Halai, 2006, p. 703). Teachers are in need of others' reflection and experiences to build their confidence in teaching.

Mentoring is a personal, professional ongoing relationship in a limited period of time between mentor (more experienced) and mentee (less skilled) on a specific developmental area. According to Murray (2001) "a true learning organization uses mentoring as a strategy for continuously upgrading the knowledge and skills of all employees" (p. xiii). Mentoring can be a tool to increase the efficiency of teachers as employees and for the school itself.

Murray (2001) highlights the outcomes of mentoring as follows: " whether the organization is for-profit or nonprofit, the bottom line is improved results, such as increased productivity, increased quality of service, reduced costs, stakeholder value, or fidelity to donors' purposes" (p. xiv). In short, the increased productivity and the improved results of the students would be the

central feature related to the study as the study deals with the productivity of teachers in their professional development.

The focus area of the study is simply on education and teacher development, yet it is quite crucial to utilize most of the components while preparing a research design. Even though these components are affiliated with business organizations, most of them can be applied to educational settings specially when creating a mentoring design for educational field. Semeniuk and Worrall (2000) state that mentoring could be a useful means of teacher development. Teachers, as key elements of education, need constant support to cope with the change in real life. Organizational and personal gaps in educational field can be overcome through mentoring. Semeniuk and Worrall (2000) highlights the importance of mentoring in teaching as follows:

Relationships which arise spontaneously, and gradually allow teachers to enter more deeply into considering what it means to be teachers, to teach better, and to engage more fruitfully with students. Because, these associations are more personally created, their likelihood of success may be greater. For these reasons it might be wise to eschew 'mentor' as an all-encompassing term and seek others which might reflect how teachers help one another to become sophisticated professionals. (p. 425)

Therefore teachers help each other within mentoring relations to become more sophisticated professionals. On the other hand, it is not always likely to reach the immediate support for teachers' needs. E-mentoring may provide economical and cost effective solutions for the teachers' challenges (Single & Single, 2005). By creating a sense of community among online participant teachers, online tools may provide ground for encouraging teacher reflection and supporting teachers on new information and skills. According to Lockwood and Gooley (2001), over the past several decades, online tools have started to gain more decisive roles in English language teacher development. In addition to that, Single and Single (2005) stated that, "Technology revolution has influenced all aspect of modern life- including mentoring. Out of this revolution emerged e-mentoring, a means for leveraging electronic communications to provide mentoring opportunities to wider and more diverse groups of people" (p. 7). Teachers from diverse backgrounds and locations are likely to be united through electronic communications. Teachers who participate in online development programs may "learn from the experience of others and encourage and evaluate educational innovation" (Gooley & Lockwood, 2001, p. 12).

Collaborative Online Platform is a platform where teachers are encouraged to share assessment and teaching experiences in their classes. Along with an e-mentor who provides materials, resources and moderates the collaborative development atmosphere, teachers are expected to support each other's progress (Anderson, 2004). In addition to modules for their needs, an e-mentor leads the whole process by facilitating the group and individual activities in the platform. E-mentor is constantly in contact with the participants through e-mails, private chats, Skype and telephone calls to keep them on development track. The instant support through online facilities help the teachers face with their assessment challenges in the class. Although some teachers may find the platform as extra load for them to deal with, some teachers may extend their insight and skills with the help of asynchronous communication technologies (Anderson, 2004).

E-mentoring, in other phrases: telementoring, cybermentoring, or virtual mentoring, is defined by Single and Muller (2001) as:

a relationship that is established between a more senior individual (mentor) and a lesser skilled or experienced individual (protégé), primarily using electronic communications, and that is intended to develop and grow the skills, knowledge, confidence, and cultural understanding of the protégé to help him or her succeed, while also assisting in the development of the mentor. (p. 108)

Additionally, Masullo and Tsantis (2004) describes e-mentoring system, "as a technology platform to support all aspects of automatic, personalized, sustained and longitudinally tractable online mentoring. It should support the delivery of just-in-time, just-enough, and just-for-you asynchronous and synchronous distance tutoring" (p.2)

According to Single and Muller (2001), e-mentoring has a revolutionary future in mentoring that will continue and expand through 21<sup>st</sup> century. The necessity of the era will have high demand on quick solutions for the challenges. They also state that: " By leveraging the growth in information technology, e-mentoring provides opportunities for mentoring that are prohibited by face-to-face mentoring programs. E-mentoring enables mentors and protégés otherwise constrained by time and geography to participate because e-mentoring programs connect participants through electronic communications" (p. 107). It is crucial to increase the variety of in-service training programs that may keep language teachers on track of development in their field.

According to Rutherford (2010), user-driven social media platform will possibly be supplemental tool for informal professional development. Resources or services can be reached to large amount of people via online tools that will break the borders sourced from the distance. Implementing an e-mentoring program will reduce the locational disadvantages since several schools situated in difficult areas have lack of many disadvantages compared to others.

Single and Single (2005) clearly underline that e-mentoring is a supplemental tool as "E-mentoring practitioners and researchers have not suggested that e-mentoring replace face-to-face mentoring, but have viewed it as a way to provide mentoring opportunities that otherwise would not exist" (p. 305). Muller (1997) says, " while e-mentoring may not be an effective substitute for more time-intensive and industrial personalized mentoring, it can be quite useful in the absence of mentoring" (p. 623).

According to Single and Single (2005) e-mentoring requires costly resources of technology and infrastructure (p. 306). Even though in many countries, specifically in Turkey, internet infrastructure is quite developed, reaching to many distant areas, there are still some people who may find it difficult to reach technological tools and internet connection. Although the equipments are costly, they are necessary and unavoidable for today's educational environment. It may be cost effective once the technological infrastructure is in place. According to Muller (1997) e-mentoring is highly cost effective opportunity which transcends the common constraints of time and space. She says, "there is good evidence that successful electronic communications lead to the development of strong communities among people who have never met face-to-face" (p. 622). In addition to that, she adds, " electronic communication is not just an exchange of information, but leads to the development of virtual communities" (p. 622). Resources are physically distant to many who need them urgently and constantly. Nationwide structured e-mentoring programs may overcome the natural inequality between teachers who deserve them equally by providing constant coaching, training, and sharing of content knowledge. Implementing this online format of mentoring requires less resources than face-to-face mentoring format. As Single and Muller (2001) highlights "e-mentoring may help facilitate the most effective utilization of the available resources" (p.108). In terms of teacher development, e-mentoring can be evaluated as a cost-effective way of supporting locational disadvantaged teachers. Muller made her research on another underrepresented female students who need e-mentoring support. She also adds "mentors will benefit from the satisfaction of helping to guide future professionals and contributing to the

success of women in fields where they are currently underrepresented" (p. 625). E-mentoring makes certain amount of impact on participants specially for the ones who may not have equal opportunities with the others. Bierema and Merriam stated that, "It was not surprising that the earliest e-mentoring programs, similar to the earliest mentoring programs, focused on creating educational and professional opportunities for underprivileged or underrepresented populations (such as women in engineering or underprivileged students), or focused on areas of national need (such as support for school-aged students' access to science and to scientists)" (as cited in Single Single, 2005, p. 302). The fact that face-to-face mentoring is not feasible for them, the impact on underrepresented populations means a lot. As Single and Single (2005) state, "Although interest in e-mentoring has been increasing, e-mentoring is not a panacea", and quotes from a leading e-mentoring researcher, Judi Harris, as "e-mentoring should only be done when face-to-face mentoring isn't available, feasible, or appropriate" (p. 305). His statements can be questioned in terms of the benefit of technology since it is widespread all educational settings. As technology is just one click away from teachers, e-mentoring may be used as an important tool for the teacher development.

Another significant reason why e-mentoring is crucial is time factor. It is recommended to seek ways to have real-time communication opportunities. Yet, sometimes one has to wait so long for a weekly meeting or a returned phone call. Contrary to face-to-face mentoring, it is easier to arrange the schedule on online mentoring. Single and Muller (2001) also states:

Electronic communications provide a flexible communication environment independent of time and space, and allow for asynchronous exchanges, thus making them a useful medium for mentoring. While e-mentoring may not be an effective substitute for more time-intensive and personalized face-to-face mentoring, it can be quite useful in the absence of such mentoring opportunities. The flexible communication environment provides connections independent of geography and alleviates the need to schedule synchronous meeting times. (p. 109)

Due to the fact that online communication removes the time constraints, it enables mentees and mentors to connect more spontaneously. Mentors can reach their mentees easily by scheduling flexible meeting times. Face-to-face mentoring has a big challenge with its physical distance that



keeps people away from each other. E-mentoring unveils this barrier and enables mentors and mentees to connect with each other any time they are available online.

According to Wheeler (2009), although how Web 2.0 tools are combined to create dynamic new learning environments is still less known, there is a growing interest about how social software tools can provide added value to the learning process (p. 4). The new concepts and tools may seem to be difficult for the ones who cannot adapt the change. To sum up, within this changing environment, e-mentoring is a strategic advantage especially for educational life.

## **2.5. E-mentoring in Turkey**

According to Ozdemir (2012), there are twenty-four thesis studies on mentoring in Turkey, accepted and registered by the Council of Higher Education, ranging from health to business issues. Inelmen (2004) as he discusses theoretical background of mentoring and technology interaction, he underlines the dissatisfaction with the way education institutions work. As he clearly states in his paper, “Mentoring is crucial as we seek to become a more integrated community”, and “it is more important to upgrade the computer skills of teachers, than the enhancement of hardware and software” (p. 185). According to him, in order to bridge the communication gap technology can be helpful. He clearly states in his paper, “To make the necessary changes in the educational curriculum proposed here we encourage all stakeholders to “join in” in this mission national and international organizations have the responsibility of creating the platforms where change be initiated” (p. 185). After eight years, another Turkish academician, Ozdemir (2012) states in his doctorate thesis that, "In our country, very few researches are carried out about theory and application of mentoring. While many theoretical researches have been implemented on e-mentoring, no practical applications are implemented " (p. 3). They are not about education field, especially teacher development area. Ozdemir (2012) investigates the benefits of e-mentoring model in maintaining the provincial state educational inspectors' and assistant inspectors' professional development by implementing an e-mentoring platform. He claims, "It is crucial to speed up shifting from mentoring to e-mentoring while our country has just started to apply mentoring”, and he adds, “Especially, the technological infrastructure of MNE is more developed than any other official institutions in Turkey" (p. 7). According to him, Turkish people’s level of adaptation to technology is quite high. Therefore, it

seems as though teachers as individuals will not have difficulty in adapting the e-mentoring for professional development. The same adaptation can be seen in MNE in institution level. According to Ozdemir (2012):

The quick adaptation of MNE with its existing technological infrastructure is an opportunity for the application of e-mentoring in education. The technological infrastructure, which is one of the most important problems during the application of electronic mentoring program, costs too much. The present infrastructure of MNE on information technology provides the essential part of required technological investments for electronic mentoring programs. (p. 7)

To sum up, in respect of the preceding citations, e-mentoring may not be difficult to be accepted and practiced in Turkey context. In order to incorporate new developments into EFL in a more practical and feasible way, the need for online teacher development e-mentoring platforms arises. It is crucial to increase the variety of in-service training programs that may keep language teachers on track of development in their field.

## **2.6. Web 2.0 tools: A paradigm shift in Teacher Professional Development**

The ELT field, these days, is facing the reality of the effect of Web 2.0 technologies such as blogging, wikis, podcasting, and social networking. According to Wheeler (2009) “Business and entertainment have capitalized on Web 2.0 tools, but teachers are only beginning to come to terms with using them in authentic pedagogical contexts” (p. 3). The widespread perception is that Web 2.0 is an important means of education (Thomas, 2009). With the rapid development of the Internet, new tools have been shaping the context of web-based information and building varied opportunities for developed classroom practice and professional development. Web 2.0 applications are particularly used as communication in a social context. Veletsianos, (2011) highlights:

The conversations that occur on web logs (blogs), Twitter, and other social networking sites are relevant and immediate, and by introducing students to the tools *and* the community that is using the tools to engage in meaningful conversations, educators can provide opportunities for transformation that exist outside of the classroom context, outside of regular teaching hours, and outside of educators' immediate control. (p.3)

These applications help learners and teachers who are geographically dispersed learn collaboratively through online interaction (Rutherford, 2010). Web 2.0 is a platform for social software and it enables groups of users to socialize, collaborate, and work with each other. (Price, 2006; Richardson, 2006). Web 2.0 tools allow users to create information actively, and these tools can enable users to be social orally, textually, aurally, and visually (Motteram & Sharma, 2009). Additionally, Web 2.0 is not defined as a web of textual publication, but a web of multi-sensory communication. It is a matrix of dialogues, not a collection of monologues. It is a user-centered Web in ways it has not been thus far (Maness, 2006). Web 2.0 encourages an interactive, collaborative, and creative sharing eco system for EFL teachers by helping them generate nonlinear authentic contents. Therefore Web 2.0 may encourage teachers become more active and responsible in their development by benefiting its chaotic and informal learning nature. According to O'Reilly (2005) Web 2.0 provide various visual and interactive tools such as videos, audios, photos designed by its users and encourage users to contribute, interact. O'Reilly (2005) defines it as collective intelligence. Moreover, teachers as responsible adult learners collaborate and interact to construct knowledge more efficiently (Nagy & Bigum, 2007). In other words, Web 2.0 tools enable teachers to access, create, edit, participate, and comment within a community interactively (Wheeler, 2009).

As the new world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is complex, ecologically vulnerable, diverse, chaotic, dynamic online tools, such as Facebook, provide a learning and development atmosphere for teachers in irregular and unpredictable circumstances (Begun, 1994). Chaos theory and complexity sciences provide insights into the nature of complex adaptive systems and nonlinear relationships in these systems to provide holistic explanations of the phenomena (Karakas, 1994). Thus worldwide web unites diverse people increasing interdependency between individuals, societies, and satisfies needs for new demands, teachers require more complex nonlinear understanding towards other teachers from distant location.

### **2.6.1. Quantum versus Status quo**

There has been a paradigm shift in all educational areas as a result of the radical developments in Quantum physics and chaos theory lately. Universe is not just a machine-based clockwork conception but a complex adaptive living system (Wheatley, 1994). The dominant

scientific paradigm which also made an influence on teacher professional development has been shifting from static, repetitive, predictable, clockwork and linear explanations toward fluid, organic, dynamic and biological theories and models (Waddock, 2006). Additionally Karakas (2009) draws the frame of that paradigm saying that:

According to this shift, the brain is no longer viewed as a computer to be programmed, but as a living, dynamic and self-adjusting neural network. Moreover, learning is no longer a passive knowledge accumulation process; instead it is described as a natural, active, dynamic, messy, and emergent process of pattern formulation and meaning construction in the paradigm. (p. 17)

It will surely have some implications on adult learning, especially Teacher professional development. Institutions especially MNE cannot ignore the fact that it is an ever-changing field.

### **2.6.2. Social Constructivism**

Development does not take place in isolation. Meaning is created when individuals construct and articulate what they know within a social construct, within a community of practice (Smith, 2003, Vygotsky, 1978). Palmer (1998) reveals a fact about constructivist models of knowledge acquisition when he writes, "a subject is available for relationship; an object is not" (p. 102). The implications for the field of professional teacher development are abundant. Thus, teachers as learners cannot be accepted bottles to be filled in, yet they are supposed to be responsible for their own development.

The social constructivist model of learning is applicable to Web 2.0 applications. Teachers support each other interactively within these tools. Moreover, Bull, et al (2008) underlines that Web 2.0 leads learners to learn in a chaotic environment informally, the learning occurs in the context of participatory media. In respect of that, teachers as adult learners, by the help of communicational technologies, and their autonomy, will be able to possess the content provided through online and make use of the experiences shared and be the most influential actor of their own development process.

### **2.6.3. Connectivism**

Connectivism, an outgrowth of social constructivism, is a learning theory taking into account the new digital learning landscape we find ourselves in (Siemens, 2004). Similar to social constructivism, a connectivist viewpoint ties the development concept with social setting. In accordance with that point of view, Talandis (2007) further adds that:

Learning is a holistic, natural process, self-regulating patterns of relationships. In a learning ecology network, technology serves as an enabler, helping create fluidity between knowledge and people. In this conceptualization, teachers induct learners into ecologies by teaching best uses of technology, the role of which is clearly placed as a servant to the learning process. Instructors are no longer experts--they are gardeners planting seeds of knowledge and skill. With connecting and community building fore-grounded, the learning ecology metaphor frames the use of technology in a humanistic light. (p. 800)

The citation above highlights the importance of learners' autonomy and online atmosphere. It may have implications when adapted and applied to teacher professional development field. Teacher professional development takes place far beyond the limits of workshops, schools, and meeting halls. Therefore teachers are able to improve their teaching quality willingly beyond the school calendar. That gives them the motivation and urge to grasp the knowledge they need.

### **2.7. Facebook as a learning tool**

According to McCulloch, McIntosh, Barrett (2011), "The 750 million users of Facebook generate one million photos, wall posts, status updates and other postings, every minute of every day". (p. 29). As Rutherford (2010) criticizes:

The public often perceives Facebook as being an adolescent playground ripe with juvenile gossip and social bullying. This negative perception might have dissuaded the academic community from becoming aware of the professional uses of this medium. While originally marketed to college students, Facebook has grown into a popular gathering space not just for students, but also for professionals who are

seeking an opportunity to network with others and exchange ideas and resources.

(par.1)

Kubicki (2011) claims in his educational blog, "Social media can be used by teachers by providing not just a national but a global network of teachers and educators who can share advice, ideas and learn from one another's successes and mistakes. This network helps overcome the problem of isolation and provides the unique opportunity to gain insight into how teachers from a diverse range of cultures worldwide use different techniques and methods to enhance their learning and that of their students" (para.1). Briefly, teachers from different locations gain the opportunity to interact with each other on professional ground. Moreover, difficulties encountered in class and how to sort them out can also be processed in such a multidimensional virtual environment.

McCulloch, McIntosh, Barrett (2011) claim that social media will be effective on every aspect of our lives, inevitably in teaching. Teachers adapt to the current improvements in social media via their experiences day by day (p. 29). Rutherford (2010) says in her abstract, "Within Facebook's gathering areas, thousands of teachers that can be observed engaging in discussions related to teaching and learning. Facebook provides teachers with an opportunity to engage in informal professional development that is participant driven, practical, collaborative, dynamic in nature and available 24 hours a day from any Internet connected location". Creating collaborative online platform for the teachers on Facebook can be seen as creating opportunities for teachers to engage in professional development that is ongoing, collaborative, easily accessible, and free (Rutherford, 2010, p. 1). Teachers from distant locations may have chance to collaborate, share ideas, experiences. They may also have opportunities for further communication with one another. Facebook provides education-related professional development platform by connecting teachers instantly and freely, regardless of the locational hinders among them. Incorporating chat, e-mail, document sharing, and video calls into teachers learning can enhance professional integration among teachers, and help them standardize the quality among teachers, regardless of inequalities (Rutherford, 2010, p. 1). Teachers regardless of inequalities can build new contacts, communicate with mentors to ask questions, get new ideas, and try them out in their class. Creating an online collaborative platform on Facebook will also have some considerable importance. Richards and Farrell (2005) underlines the importance of sharing results of inquiry with others in order to

strengthen the collaborative benefits of professional development activities. Experiences shared on the platform will possibly enable the teachers to gain a new perspective as well. Participants of online teacher development platform can present a brief written report, a comment, or an e-mail to let them know about the results (Richards and Farrell, 2005). Consequently, a kind of archive will be made up for future use. In that way, participant teachers will have chance to see their growth through these accumulated results on the platform.

## **2.8. Conclusion**

In this chapter, literature was reviewed to understand the components of the study that are professional teacher development, e-mentoring and online tool as Facebook. Each component was reviewed one by one to see the whole picture. With the developing technology there occurred a paradigm shift, leading to inevitable changes in educational settings in relation to professional development. In the following chapter, an action research based study will be presented.

## CHAPTER 3

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology of the study. The research design and procedures are explained. The participant group and setting are described. Finally, data collection and analysis are mentioned. In this chapter, all the processes while carrying out the study will be dealt with in a detailed way.

#### 3.2. Research Design

The main center of the study is an action research project involving an online mentoring program offered for eight EFL teachers working at MNE schools in Turkey. In order to identify the overall strengths and weaknesses of the participants on their FA practices, the first step is that a needs analysis has been done.

In order to analyze the data obtained from the survey, each participant was analyzed separately (see Appendix 9).

After analyzing the needs of participants, the second phase was the implementation process. In the second phase, an action research mode was applied.

Richard Sagor (1992) emphasizes this point by stating, "As action researchers, you don't need to worry about the generalizability of your data because you are not seeking to define the ultimate truth of learning theory. Your goal is to understand what is happening in your school or classroom and to determine what might improve things in that context" (p.8). Action research is direct to reach its goal that is to solve a problem (Tomal, p. 51). Since the aim is to contribute to solve a problem and make significant changes, action researchers deal with reflection and the practicality and feasibility of addressing a problem.

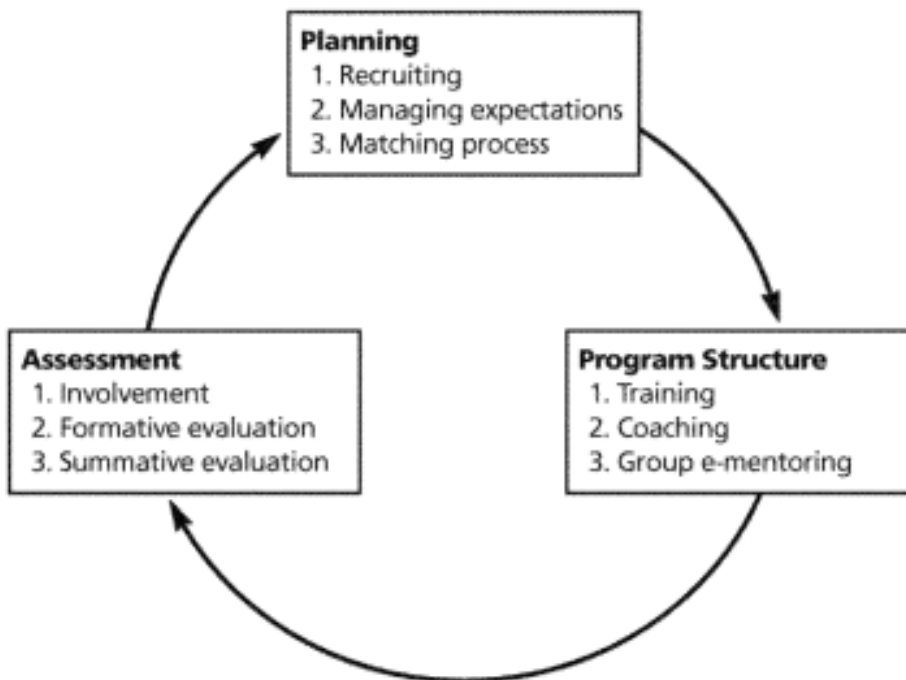
Action research was conducted online by the researcher who worked as an e-mentor to lead the process as well. The researcher acted as a catalyst in collecting data and worked with the participants in a collaborative effort to help the participants make significant changes. It was a process of gathering data through e-mails, comments, and chat records on Facebook, Skype. This



process was planned to collect data. So the researcher was active in the process as an e-mentor working with participants collaboratively to make improvements. Qualitative data was gathered through online interaction between the participants and e-mentor using Facebook and Skype after some time through some smart phone applications like “WhatsApp”.

### 3.3. Procedure

For an e-mentoring project like this, Single and Single’s e-mentoring model could be adapted (Single and Single, 2005). Their model of e-mentoring including three phases: planning, program structure, and assessment. It was designed for a large amount of mentees and mentors, yet the study used only some parts of the model. Proceeding illustration shows model of e-mentoring prepared by Single and Single (2005).



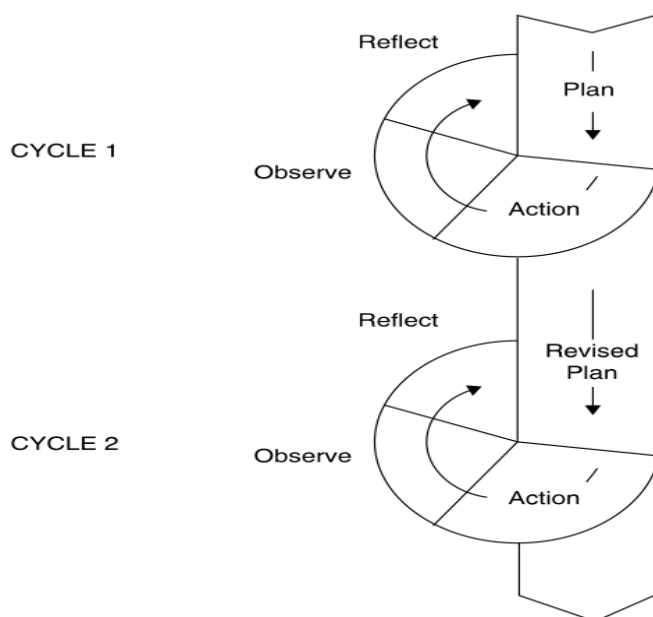
*Figure1. Model of e-mentoring (Single and Single, 2005,p.16)*

According to Single and Single (2005):

The planning phase includes developing program goals, recruiting, and managing the expectation of the participants, in addition to the process of matching mentors and

proteges. The program structure phase includes facilitated training, coaching, and group e-mentoring process. Assessment is the final element of the model of structured e-mentoring. Assessment consists of collecting and analyzing involvement data, formative data, and summative data. Involvement data includes information on the frequency and duration of exchanges between the e-mentors and proteges. (p. 16)

In designing a research plan for this e-mentoring project, a clear and simple model was a necessity. Therefore Single and Single's (2005) model was used. Action Research model is also very similar to Single and Single's (2005) e-mentoring model. In Action Research, there is very similar structure. Kemmis and McTaggart's (1988) model was used as it is best known and it appears often in the literature on Action Research, summarizing the essential phases of the Action Research process (Burns, 2009). I also preferred this model as its convenience for constructing the study for English Language Teachers. Proceeding diagram was illustrated by adapting from Kemmis & McTaggart (1988) showing clearly the cycles of action research.



**Figure 2. Cyclical AR model (Burns, 2009, p. 7) based on Kemmis and McTaggart (1988)**

The diagram illustrates the spiral of cycles: planning, action, observation and reflection.

It maintains their continuation until the action researcher has achieved satisfactory results (Burns, 2009).

I used Burns' (2009) Action Research formula as a guide for the study. For this type of research, there needed to be a guide specially designed for practitioners in the English Language Teaching field to use for the study. Burns (2009) clearly formulizes the action research in English Language Teaching (adapted from Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988, p.11-14) as follows,

1. Planning: In this phase you identify a problem or issue and develop a plan of action in order to bring about improvements in a specific area of the research context. This is a forward-looking phase where you consider: i) what kind of investigation is possible within the realities and constraints of your teaching situation; and ii) what potential improvements you think are possible.

2. Action: The plan is a carefully considered one which involves some deliberate interventions into your teaching situation that you put into action over an agreed period of time. The interventions are 'critically informed' as you question your assumptions about the current situation and plan new and alternative ways of doing things.

3. Observation: This phase involves you in observing systematically the effects of the action and documenting the context, actions and opinions of those involved. It is a data collection phase where you use 'open-eyed' and 'open-minded' tools to collect information about what is happening.

4. Reflection: At this point, you reflect on, evaluate and describe the effects of the action in order to make sense of what has happened and to understand the issue you have explored more clearly. You may decide to do further cycles of action research to improve the situation even more, or to share the 'story' of your research with others as part of your ongoing professional development. (p.8)

This quote clearly describes the phases included in planning, action, observation, and reflection. My study is an online action research, and shows similar characteristics in terms of these four phases. The study included i) planning phase: interacting with experts on FA field, finding the focus, identifying the needs of participants, preparing the materials and resources for Modules, ii) action phase: sharing the Modules, applying the interventions, providing an interactive atmosphere, iii) observation: collecting the data, observing their progress, keeping

written records iv) reflection: evaluating, and describing the effects of interventions, and reflecting on the collected data.

Because it was a project with time constraints, I had to plan everything ahead within exact time frames. In the proceeding table, steps of the two-month project are shown.

**Table 1. Steps of Research process**

| <b>Task to accomplish</b>                           | <b>Date</b>                |
|---|----------------------------|
| Literature review                                   | August 2012- January 2013  |
| Set-up online platform                              | 01-15 February 2013        |
| Searching for participants                          | February – March 2013      |
| Registration of participants to the online platform | February 19, 2013          |
| The end of implementation                           | April 19, 2013             |
| Data Analysis                                       | April 20, 2013-May 1, 2013 |
| Research Report                                     | May 2013                   |

Since it was a small-scale project including an e-mentor and eight mentees, there was no need for recruiting, matching parts for the study. In order to manage expectations of the participants, modules would be prepared in relation to the needs analysis based on their online survey results. Teachers from different cities could submit their document online and data was automatically gathered and turned into statistics by Google Docs. Fifteen teachers submitted their documents but only eight teachers participated in the platform voluntarily. Therefore the researcher focused on these participants. They revealed that they wanted to be supported on online social media platform prepared by an e-mentor.

As it is seen in Appendix 2, Appendix 3, Appendix 4 and Appendix 5, the researcher sent

e-mails and Facebook comments to his friends and the Facebook professional ELT groups such as ELT Turkey and MNE Group. A website called [ogretmentor.wordpress.com](http://ogretmentor.wordpress.com) was created to serve aid teachers find the whole FA module packages together.

Program structure of Single and Single (2005) showed similar characteristics with the current study: training, coaching, and group mentoring. The study was conducted through Facebook group called “*Collaborative Platform for FA Strategies*” where there were links about the content knowledge. Participants reached the information freely, and had chance to apply them in their classrooms. I supported the participants as a facilitator, and conducted the group.

Keeping a Reflective Journal: I kept a reflective journal where I reported on the e-mentoring process and results; I reflected on what works best and what does not, and where the learning and development needs of teachers lay, as suggested by Tomal (p. 43) and Hendricks (p. 33). I was not just the researcher in the study I was a participant as well as I was also learning how to conduct an e-mentoring project.

Apart from interaction on Facebook, the researcher conducted two interviews on Skype each of which took half an hour. Reflective comments helped teachers in an online group to get professional development. It has snowball effect seeing each other in different practices. As a teacher researcher, I also recorded my own classroom practices and uploaded them to the group. The study was affected by the teachers' needs and process of practice. So, I decided to use a collective case study with eight focal participants. I collected qualitative data, mainly through comments and chats to give us more depth of insight and especially to help me understand the attitudes and motives of the participants.

Online modules: Based on the needs analysis provided through, e-mentor picked the general areas to be covered and prepares modules. Modules about FA practices, provided by expert authors, are presented through the online platform. Online modules are learning materials related to learning content. The online modules included direct instruction, content knowledge of FA, required readings, and extension activities. They were decided in accordance with the overall needs of the participants of the study, were completed and uploaded on the web site called [www.ogretmentor.wordpress.com](http://www.ogretmentor.wordpress.com). Later the modules were shared on Facebook group called “*Collaborative Platform for FA Strategies*” by their links leading to website. In this way, the participants could reach the content and the collaborative platform to share ideas and feedback. The participants commented underneath the links. Because the modules are available online,

teachers do not have to feel limited by the time and location constraints. They felt free to ask any question any time they liked on the platform as well.

Based on the needs of the participants seven contents of learning were uploaded into [ogretmentor.wordpress.com](http://ogretmentor.wordpress.com). Then, those materials were shared on Facebook group: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Collaborative-Platform-for-Formative-Assessment-Strategies/287645194673871>

The assessment process of the study did not have to be very sophisticated as the model of Single and Single (2005) shows. Thus, the assessment part of the project was limited. After reading and internalizing the content of each module, participants were expected to write comments about them. In addition to them, participants wrote e-mails or Facebook messages including the evaluation of the whole study. The content analysis of their comments and e-mails was accepted to suffice for the assessment of the study.

This seemed to be an understandable intervention plan that could be used for multiple-participants. Before implementing the plan, the choice of participants was another challenge.

### **3.4. Participants**

A voluntary-based sampling method was chosen for the study. Participants were EFL teachers working at different state schools from Turkey who wanted to be a part of an online collaborative platform voluntarily.

I wrote on some Facebook groups like <https://www.facebook.com/groups/eltturkey/> or “MNE Facebook group” <https://www.facebook.com/TCMEBKN?fref=ts> I sent emails to my teacher friends in ELT MA group (Appendix 2), (Appendix 3), and left a ready-made messages on various Facebook groups (Appendix 4 and Appendix 5). I started writing on some Facebook groups’ walls like <https://www.facebook.com/groups/eltturkey/> or “MNE Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/TCMEBKN?fref=ts>. Teachers clicked on the links on the message to be a part of the study. To conduct needs analysis, teachers have completed an online form prepared on Google Docs.

To take a part in Facebook group: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Collaborative-Platform-for-Formative-Assessment-Strategies/287645194673871>

There was a minimum of selection criteria of the participants for the study. As long as they

were MNE school EFL teachers who voluntarily wanted to join the study, they were accepted. There was no pressure, agreement or contract to continue till the end of the study. Since it was a voluntary study, if they did not want to be active for the study, it would be also appreciated. Since they filled out the Google docs survey form (see Appendix 1) they accepted to participate in the study voluntarily. Even if they completed the survey, they did not have to join the group to participate in the study. For example, fifteen teachers submitted the survey but only eight of them joined the group. The participants of the in-depth online mentoring intervention included eight English language teachers working at MNE schools in Turkey. In terms of the Facebook group, there were forty-five 'likes' that showed that forty-five people had access the modules shared on the page and the comments underneath the modules. Yet, since it was a voluntary study, the study was conducted only through the teachers who chose to be active in their own learning. Everyone was aware of the fact that they could easily interact with the admin as e-mentor or the other group members.

### **3.5. Setting**

The setting was a collaborative online platform where EFL teachers from distant locations are encouraged to share assessment and teaching experiences in their EFL classes. Along with an e-mentor who provides materials, resources and moderates the collaborative development atmosphere, teachers are expected to support each other's progress. In addition to the website [ogretmentor.wordpress.com](http://ogretmentor.wordpress.com) which contains detailed modules for their needs- prepared from the well-known experts' books and resources - e-mentor leads the whole process by facilitating the group and individual activities in the platform. E-mentor is constantly in contact with the participants through e-mails, private chats, Skype and telephone calls, "Whassap" application on iphone to keep them on development track. The instant support through online facilities help the teachers face with their assessment challenges in the class. Some teachers may extend their insight and skills whereas others may find the platform as extra load for them to deal with.

### **3.6. Data Collection and Analysis**

It has been the most challenging part of the study to decide on the most appropriate data collection instruments and to organize the scattered data within a meaningful unity. Depending on the purpose of a research, data collection instruments vary. Process was carried out through

collection, coding, and analysis of data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Research used careful and systematic data collection and analysis to enable us analyze and understand the needs of EFL teachers related to FA practices and understand the feasibility of the e-mentoring platform to meet their needs. Online tools, such as Google Docs survey, e-mails, Skype interviews, chat records and comments on Facebook page, self-reflective journal are used.

For the first research question, data was collected through Google Docs Survey. In order to obtain data from the participants living in different locations, the most appropriate way of collecting data seemed to be online surveys. "Google Docs" provided the online survey service for this study. Talandis (2008), "For professional development or classroom project use, Google Docs (word processor, spreadsheet, and presentation suite) provide a good place to start for exploring the possibilities" (p.803). An online questionnaire (Appendix 1) was designed and it was composed of two main sections as background information and FA needs. The first section of the survey consisted of demographic information such as; name, surname, age, teaching experience, school name, subjects they teach, their degree, type of school they teach, average age of their learners, details about school they work, their title at school, during their pre-service or in-service training whether they have learned something about FA (Theory or Practice). The second section of the survey was adapted from the book "*Exploring Formative Assessment. The Professional Learning Community Series*" by Brookhart published in 2009. The aim was to understand the overall needs of the participants related to FA.

The second research question was about how I can provide EFL teachers with an online collaborative program for the use of Formative Assessment. Therefore, after needs analysis finished, eight focal participants were selected. Even though fifteen participants completed the survey, eight of them wanted to continue to be active in the group on Facebook. The data were collected through e-mails, Skype audio records, chat records and records from the platform: The data from various results were analyzed. The data was collected through e-mails, Skype audio records, chat records and Records from the platform: Mentor-mentee one to one records and all accessible records, reflection reports recorded and analyzed. In order to increase the viability of the themes, two separate academicians were asked. One is Dr. Fahri Karakaş Lecturer in Business and Leadership, Norwich Business School at University of East Anglia, and the other one is PhD Candidate Beril Tezeller Arik, Second Language Studies Program, at Department of English at Purdue University.



### **3.7. Conclusion**

This chapter presented the methodology of the study used to cover the whole study. The research design and procedures are explained. Finally, separate definitions of the instruments used to collect data are given. All the details were given about Research Design, Procedure, Participants, Setting, Data Collection and Analysis in the previous chapter. In the next chapter, findings and discussion will be presented.

## CHAPTER 4

### 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Introduction

This chapter deals with the findings of needs analysis in relation to the participants' FA practices. Later there will be discussion based on the comments and reflections of the participants, shared within two-month time on the platform, or online tools such as Facebook chat and Skype.

Before I started this study, I contacted with Laura Greenstein and Dylan Wiliam via e-mails, and started to discuss about the most suitable topics for this type of study in relation to FA. My plan was to use KLT in the study. Fundamentally, KLT is a sustained professional development program for teachers in relation to FA (Wiliam, 2007). Since KLT program was owned by Dylan Wiliam, and his partners, Dylan Wiliam wrote that he could not convince his partners to share the program. Instead, he was very generous to share his documents from his workshops and seminars (see Appendix 10). On the other hand, after reading her valuable book, Greenstein (2010), I sent an e-mail to Laura Greenstein for expressing my positive feedback about the book to which she replied. She wrote me back. Since then she has shared her documents, materials, and feedback about FA. She also happily sent her documents she used for workshops and seminars (see Appendix 11 and Appendix 12). Therefore, I had a valuable archive of FA for the study. I prepared some modules with the permission and full support of Laura Greenstein and used some of the materials Dylan Wiliam had sent to me via e-mails. I planned to work on the following topics about FA as the adapted survey in Appendix 1 shows:

- *Using formative assessment in my regular classroom practice*
- *Setting and sharing goals for students' learning,*
- *Eliciting/listening to students,*
- *Asking questions to encourage students to think*
- *Providing effective feedback on student work*
- *Encouraging students to use self-assessment and peer assessment*
- *Using formative assessment information in instructional planning*
- *Role of digital technologies for FA*

I prepared the modules. Content of the Modules were designed according to Brookhart (2009) survey on FA. For this study, an online survey was designed by on “*Google Docs*”. The online survey (see Appendix 1) was composed of two main sections as background information and FA needs. The first section of the survey consisted of demographic information such as; name, surname, age, teaching experience, school name, subjects they teach, their degree, type of school they teach, average age of their learners, details about school they work, their title at school, during their pre-service or in-service training whether they have learned something about FA (Theory or Practice). The second section of the survey was adapted from the book “*Exploring Formative Assessment. The Professional Learning Community Series*” by Brookhart published in 2009. The aim was to understand the overall needs of the participants related to FA. Participants from different locations filled out and the data were sent to my Gmail account-ogretmentor@gmail.com-.

#### **4.2. Survey Results**

To be concise about the findings, there need to be some generalizations drawn from the answers provided by the Google Docs survey (see Appendix 1). The majority of respondents indicated that there was no need for further development of the skills mentioned in some of the questions. Due to responses, they were comfortable with the topics: “*setting and sharing goals for students’ learning, eliciting/listening students, and asking questions to encourage students to think*”. The priority was not on these skills. Consequently not all modules were used. Therefore I chose some of the Modules in relation to lacking prompts in the survey. The focus of the study was on the questions regarding the following topics shown on Table 2 for the purpose of the study:

As Table 2 shows, for the topic ‘*using formative assessment in my regular classroom practice*’, Module 1 A-B-C were prepared and shared. They included the conceptual and overall information about FA. They also highlighted the importance of FA in new era.

**Table 2. Module Preparation Based on the Needs of the Participants**

| <b>Module Names</b>                                   | <b>Contents of the Modules</b>                                      |
|---|---|
| Module 1 A-B-C  | Using formative assessment in my regular classroom practice         |
| Module Feedback A                                     | Providing effective feedback on student work                        |
| Module 6 + Group feedback video + Peer feedback video | Encouraging student for self-assessment and peer & group assessment |
| Module 7  | Using formative assessment information in instructional planning    |
| Module 8  | Role of digital technologies for formative assessment               |

For the topic “*providing effective feedback on student work*” Module Feedback A was prepared and shared. It included effective feedback strategies. For the topic, “*encouraging student for self-assessment and peer & group assessment*” Module 6 Self Assessment, and 2 videos that I recorded from my own classes were prepared and shared. For the topic “*using formative assessment information in instructional planning*” Module 7 was prepared and shared. For the topic “*role of digital technologies for formative assessment*” Module 8 was prepared and shared.

Subsequently, I collated the results and implemented the Modules in the study. The data from various results was analyzed. The data was collected through e-mails, Skype audio & written records, Facebook chat records and comments on the platform: Mentor-mentee one to one records and all accessible records, reflection reports recorded and analyzed. In order to increase the viability of “the themes”, I obtained the views of two separate academicians. One is Dr. Fahri Karakaş Lecturer in Business and Leadership, Norwich Business School at University of East Anglia, and the other one is PhD Candidate, Beril Tezeller Arik, Second Language Studies Program, Department of English at Purdue University.

### **4.3. Findings**

#### **4.3.1. What were the challenges and why?**

This part is dedicated to analyze the main challenges that were met during the study. They are expected to light the way for further studies on online teacher professional development. This

action research project was a micro level project conducted on eight focal participants. Identifying the challenges before conducting bigger-scale-e-mentoring projects could lead new studies in Turkey. It may also help anticipate bigger scale problems. Accordingly, solutions could also be produced before facing with the same type of challenges. Basically, I preferred to define the challenges on three main sub-groups: “*challenging factors about the structure and organization of the study, challenging internal factors of participants’ active participation, and challenging external factors of participants’ active participation* “ They were the most common challenges I met during two-month time of the study. Examples and detailed explanations will be covered in the following.

#### **4.3.1.1. Challenging factors about the structure and organization of the study**

Mentees mentioned a couple of challenges about the structure of the e-mentoring project such as uniqueness of the problems in every school, and the feasibility of application of FA in their classes.

Firstly, the project had to deal with the uniqueness of each problem of the participants. Participants appreciated the difficulty e-mentor was having about the different challenges of each participant. The following extract is an example of the appreciation of one of the participants on the challenge e-mentor faced during the study in terms of uniqueness of the problems in every teacher.

Teacher 5: Mentoring the teachers of ELT you've come to take responsibility of seems a really hard thing; since all problems are unique in state schools and it is painful to reach all the English teachers, to meet their expectations at the same specific time.

Final report via e-mail

For example, Teacher 3 from Bitlis expanded on this situation in the schools by stating the apathy apparent in his students. He expressed the disappointment about ineffective meetings and workshops held in MNE. He explained that the workshops are not voluntary and mostly conducted on their holiday time. The meetings and workshops are forced upon them by the administration of their schools. He wrote,

Teacher 3: We discussed about language classes on branch meetings here in my region. But I'm not sure if we can put the decisions into practice. Some students have learned

helplessness and they do not care about anything.

Facebook Comment

In a separate conversation he added onto his previous statement with the following:

Teacher 3: My school has its own problems that should be considered. We do not have enough support from branch meetings and authorities. We are left alone with our own issues inside our classrooms.

Facebook Chat

Moreover, a number of participants indicated that there was a lack of support in solving their unique problems in normal avenues of professional development. Variety of problems specific for the schools indicated that unique solutions were required. So the platform dealt with the problems by individual support. Teacher 1 was happy to get the benefit of the e-mentoring support. She clearly stated the importance of online collaborative platforms in teacher development as follows:

Teacher 1: During the process, mentor gave us the necessary feedback and took an active role in coordination. ...The most important benefit of this study is that it showed me how teaching and assessment can go one step further and that I am not alone with the difficulties I encounter.

Final report via Facebook message

Teacher 8 also highlighted the specific feature of e-mentoring that was expected to create. E-mentoring was a combination of individual and collective support. He stated one of the benefits of e-mentoring as:

Teacher 8: I suppose this is going to be a turning point considering the problems we've been through as teachers. Personally speaking, I'm impressed by the way it works from individual to collectivity. I wish the ministry of education could carry out its own projects as such. For it's really impossible not to get a result.

Final report via Facebook Message

Secondly, although all participants found the content knowledge of FA was found beneficial, they had concerns about the feasibility of its application in their own classes.

Teacher 5: They might be beneficial but it is not as easy to apply as it is on paper. If it can be applied, it is beneficial.

Final report via e-mail

Teacher 3: I understood that I can help students more with the learning process and also I can take the role of the model. Due to the low level of education, I have observed that it is unlikely to apply FA strategies here. Considering the content knowledge, no big difference occurred in my life. Yet, I can say that my level of knowledge about FA has increased.”

Final report via e-mail

Preceding data showed that the participants believed the importance of professional development through e-mentoring, yet some stated the importance of the irreplaceable features of face-to-face interaction. Classroom observation would be perfect to complete this study. It was a lacking point indeed. Teacher 1 expressed the necessity of classroom observation, and she stated as follows:

Teacher 1: If people in a study had observed each other in classroom environment, it would have been more efficient. However, preparing such an environment was nearly impossible.

Final report via e-mail

Since the project was limited with time and location constraints, the e-mentor had to satisfy with the feedback he got through online interaction as evident of progress.

#### **4.3.1.2. Challenging internal factors of participants’ active participation**

Some challenging internal factors regarding the active participation of participants were feeling physical or mental exhaustion due to their workload, a lack of willingness to push the limits of personal comfort zones, the inability to deal with their learned helplessness.

To begin with, here is an extract from my reflective journal showing the reality of the workload the teachers had:

Some teachers have given up at the very beginning of the study. Many of the teachers told that they would like to spend more time to their professional development related to formative assessment strategies. Yet, they believed they could not continue the study because of their workload at school.

Researcher Reflective Journal, 22.02.2013

Firstly, almost all participants had heavy workload in their schools. Even though they were voluntary for the study, the project was extra and supplemental for them. Since they were

responsible for their own classes, and syllabus and extra paperwork, they had to prioritize their own schedule. Comments were as follows;

Teacher 3: The elements affecting active participation can be being busy and tired and having lots of paperwork to do.

Final report via e-mail

Teacher 4: I am a bit busy these days so I could not make time for that (using them in my classes), but I can spend time on Facebook normally.

Excerpt from Skype Interview

Secondly, some of the participants expressed their personal comfort was prior to the all kinds of learning activities no matter how beneficial they are. Here shows some excerpts as follows:

Teacher 2: I graduated from university in 2009; it has been very long since then. If you asked me how much of the things I learned at the university I hear, I would say about 15%. One forgets with time passing. I can also say that level of English we teach is not very high. The number of lessons we have for each week is very low; about 4-5 hours. I am also a bit complacent; I cannot do things on my own. I have internet connection, which I started using with you.

Excerpt from Skype Interview

From the preceding comment, it can be concluded that teacher development should be re-organized according to each teachers' ability to maintain their self-regulation. E-mentoring can keep him Sadly, there were some comments in the study show that the mood of EFL teachers at MNE schools is not enthusiastic about adapting to new challenges. For example, Teacher 1 openly uttered when we were talking about teacher development:

Teacher 1: I just passed the KPSS exam to be a teacher at MNE, and deserved to be there. Nothing could make me to force my limits to prove myself to be a better teacher.

In addition to that, in my reflective journal I jotted down these significant sentences as follows,

Teacher 1 today told me on the phone, " I am very lazy these days. I don't want to study anything. I even don't bring any lesson materials to the class. Yesterday I used student's book for the lesson. You should beat me if you want to motivate me to work on FA skills."

Reflective Journal



On the other hand, the very same teacher would show her appreciation in the end of the study as the voluntary nature of the professional development worked for her.

Teacher 1: The most important benefit of this study is that it showed me how teaching and assessment can go one step further and that I am not alone with the difficulties I encounter.

The third and the most challenging issue the study had to face was learned helplessness among MNE language teachers. At the beginning of the study, it could be read between the lines in the comments of some of the teachers.

Teacher 3: It's an effective article written on formative assessment however it's hard to put it into practice in state schools since the classes are crowded and profiles of students don't meet the expectations, it keeps us desperately helpless.

For one of the articles shared on Facebook group

Teacher 1 seconds the opinion as follows,

Teacher 1: While it's so hard to apply Formative Assessment even in universities, it sounds pretty hard to apply it in high schools in crowded classes.

*(referring to e-mentor's workplace-university-being suspicious about the feasibility of FA in her high school) (Facebook comment under a module)*

Teacher 6 was one of the most resistant teachers who had difficulty in her school due to the locational disadvantages. She stated

Teacher 6: Our school is a small school with 500 students. Families are nescient. They do not value teachers. There are nine classrooms but there is a projector only in 3<sup>rd</sup> graders' room. Other technological devices are lacking. Teacher brings them if they need anything.

Facebook message

She also stated:

Teacher 6: It is a village school with 500 pupils. I think we need to consider readiness in order to be able to do formative assessment. However, I could not even change students attribute towards English so I did not have the chance to draw their attention to lesson. This problem derives from responsibilities of parents and students because parents attribute towards English is bad. They think that English is not necessary for their children, which affects students' ideas. And also, there are students having difficulty

even in reading Turkish. As a result it takes a lot from me to struggle teaching them English. Besides this struggle, it also takes time, which we do not have as a consequence of the current curriculum.

Facebook message

The general attitude of students and parents furthers the feeling of the desperation of teachers. Therefore, solutions were needed.

Later on, as the synergy increased among the participants, the comments of some teachers started to become more accepting, especially those who had not believed in the practical benefits of Modules I had shared. Teacher 6 illustrates this perspective precisely,

Teacher 6: I am not trying to be pessimistic; as a matter of fact, I think whatever we can do is welcome and we should try but the reasons I mentioned earlier hinder me from doing them.

Although at first there was some hesitation, for some teachers such as Teacher 8, Teacher 5, Teacher 2 professional development through e-mentoring became a reality. Here are two teachers' making comments about the topic:

Teacher 8: One month ago, I told them (students) about formative assessment and we started to apply it in class. Results are very good. Most of them had English lessons before but they have never been able to talk, write or understand English as they wish. After we had started applying formative assessment, they can communicate in English well within a month. They say that they know what to do now thanks to the sub goals. Since they monitor and assess their and friends' learning process, they learn better; so they learn very quickly in contrary to their past experiences of learning. As a teacher I can say that it is great to have such groups. They enjoy learning together.

Facebook Message

Teacher 5 agrees on the issue:

Teacher 5: ...and one more thing; I give high importance to use a positive language, instead of criticize them harshly, I choose to say "I know you can do better" It has a very positive effect on their exam scores since they feel relieved and relax. Thanks for guiding me. I'll go on sharing positive conclusions with you as much as I can do. Please do not bother to explain lacking points and useful tips. Your ideas are of high importance to me.

Final report via e-mail

The collected data of the study suggests that possible reason that teachers have different performances on the platform is due to their unique and personal way of approaching to new information. Their active participation is highly influenced by their personal stories and experiences. Thus, it affects the way they acquire and receive the information shared on platform.

#### **4.3.1.3. Challenging external factors of participants' active participation**

Participants were having difficulties regarding to external factors such as location, and profile of the target learners. These factors played a significant effect on the efficacy of the e-mentoring project.

Location was the foremost external factor for the study. Scutella&Horn (2009) said, "Locational disadvantage is an important dimension of social exclusion. The framework proposed does include some outcomes to be examined that capture locational characteristics, such as neighborhood quality. However, a more basic issue is understanding the geographic composition of social exclusion" (p. 30). Some of the participants of the study are from places located in Eastern part of Turkey such as Bingöl, Ahlat, Patnos where are geographically far away from the big cities, some are village and slum areas of Niğde, Gaziantep, and shanty town in Tekirdağ. They are inaccessible regions because of geographical constraints. As the study deals with the need of constant professional development, the locational factors play an significant role on the issue. E-mentoring is thought to be an effective solution to decrease the inequalities among those separate regions by connecting teachers on a social and collaborative online network through sharing unlimited materials and experiences.

Teacher 5 from Kahramanmaraş had relatively better reflections about the conditions she was in compared to other teachers. Even she mentioned about the overpopulated classes:

Teacher 5: I work at a state school offering an education to 10000 students more or less.. We sure have some problems of limited technological equipment that somehow affect the methods I choose to teach, the route of learning. Classroom size is approximately 35 students.

Email Interaction

The rest of the teachers find their location less than ideal. For example,

Teacher 7: The school I work is a boarding school (in Niğde) and students come from villages...students need to learn much more things when we compare them with the students in the city center.

Facebook Chat

Teacher 2, working at a primary school in Patnos-Ağrı, mentions about his school as follows,

Teacher 2: My school is in a place where poor people live. There are not many successful students and most of the students just know some English words. It is not an easy job, but I am trying best. It's a state school that has more than 300 students.

Survey Background Information

He adds in his final report:

Teacher 2: I am an English teacher at a Secondary School in Patnos-Ağrı. It can be called suburbs; it is at the end of the city.

He also concludes on Skype interview as,

Teacher 2: Of course it should be noted that our school is not in a very good district so it is a bit neglected. We do not have many facilities; the only thing we have is blackboard.

In addition to him, Teacher 3 connects all the negative conclusions to his school's location. In every opportunity he expressed the locational disadvantages as his excuse for the success of the students and his development.

Teacher 3: Willingness and exposure to language is lacking as my workplace is in Eastern Anatolia.

Final report via e-mail

Teacher 3: If we take into consideration the student centered teaching, we can say that the project is quite beneficial, however it is not very possible due to the reality of the district.

Facebook message

Next biggest reason accepted as an external challenge is that student profile. The common feature those schools had was the students' lack of motivation on education. Here are some examples from findings,

Teacher 4: Most often less successful students choose the school. The school is the best option for them because they do not need to pass an examination to enter the school. That is the reason of the low success-rate.

Skype interview

Teacher 3 from Bitlis and Teacher 2 from Patnos state the reason why they cannot apply for FA strategies in their class as student profile.

Teacher 3: I must say it's common student profile. For instance one of my classes consists of 21 girls and 7 boys. Girls are mostly neighbors and among them are students that have no aim in life. Since they are not interested in lessons, it's hard to involve them in the lesson.

Facebook message

In addition to him Teacher 2 from Patnos-Ağrı states,

Teacher 2: I am an English teacher at a Secondary School in Patnos-Ağrı. It can be called suburbs; it is at the end of the city. Student success profile at our school is not very high, of course. There are not many students whose parents are interested in their children. The ones who have the opposite type of parents are successful at school but there are not many of them. ...If it were a good school, a school where the students have the basics of English language, the teacher can play a better role.

Skype interview

Teacher 8 from Tekirdağ also underlines the similar issues,

Teacher 8: I work in an industrial city. Therefore we have students with different backgrounds. Many of them are poor and unmotivated. Their families do not have enough time or knowledge to bring them up well. The most important thing in their lives is fun and money; so kids do not care about education.

Facebook chat message

Teacher 6 from Bağbaşı village in Gaziantep points out the parallel issues as,

Teacher 6: To be able to use my knowledge about teaching language would work. But to know this research could be done is perfect. In villages nearly we don't have any chance to teach language in a good way. But children don't give any importance to English. They ask every time why they have to learn this language. But we don't accuse them. Their parents think so. Therefore, they start learning without motivation.

Final report via e-mail

Last but not the least example about the student profile, Teacher 1, working at a high school in Gaziantep suburbs, describes the situation she is as,

Teacher 1: My students are all originally from villages of Şanlıurfa, Mardin, and Eastern part of Turkey. Their parents migrated here to find a better life, and they carried their own background as well. Their expectations towards education and language learning are not so high. That also affects my will of professional development.

Telephone conversation

Preceding comments and statements show that participants have a lot of external issues to overcome in order to motivate themselves to develop in their own areas.

#### **4.3.2. What worked?**

As the following statements demonstrate nearly all of the teachers stated that they were satisfied with the study in varying levels. 2-month e-mentor and mentee interaction became effective to make them aware of the concept and the need of the content knowledge. Their concerns and questions about FA were answered with online collaboration and sharing atmosphere energizing the more reluctant teachers who showed resistance to utilize the content knowledge. Although some teachers had some doubts about applying the concept in practice within their school environments, they agreed with the value of the content and appreciated the e-mentoring support provided on the platform. After some initial reluctance, most of them mentioned that they would be eager to implement this method of Formative Assessment even though there are challenges to be dealt with. It is the effect of e-mentoring process that made a difference for their improvement.

##### **4.3.2.1. Awareness and learning content knowledge**

Awareness of content knowledge consists of the participants' acceptance and feeling the importance of the content. Content includes: using formative assessment in regular classroom practice, providing effective feedback on student work, encouraging student for self-assessment and peer assessment, using FA information in instructional planning, role of digital technologies

for FA. Proceeding extracts are from the mentees' comments on Facebook and Skype interviews.

Teacher 7: FA is one of the requirements of contemporary education system....It means assessing students in a process and then reaching a conclusion. The aim is not to compare students but evaluating them in their own learning process.

Teachers contacted with me through various ways such as chats, comments, emails etc. soon after they were introduced the content on the platform. Some of them were very enthusiastic about being responsive instantly, and some of them were acting passive about sharing their feedback. I as e-mentor felt the urge to trigger their schemata to observe what they understood and learnt. After getting feedback I took another action to make possible changes for individual solutions.

Teacher 5: I think what is most impressive about these modules is that they draw a route and Show us where we can start. Seen from this aspect they are really useful.

Facebook message

Teacher 5: Let me say that I found suggestions of Laura Greenstein -you shared on your page- very useful because she offers simple techniques that won't cost so much time.

Final report on Facebook

She was not alone feeling happy to get benefit from the platform. Teacher 3 also states as follows,

Teacher 3: In terms of the topic of the study, I had a chance to acquire more knowledge.

Facebook Comment

He adds on his statements as follows,

Teacher 3: I think putting even half of these matters into practice would help us to make progress.

Facebook Comment

Looking at the comments of Teacher 3 working at Bitlis, the chance of acquiring content knowledge led him to develop him professionally.

Teacher 1: Self-assessment is the hardest one among the other types of assessment because one can see other's mistake better whereas assessing oneself is analogically difficult. Once this module is applied in classes; the difficulty can be lessened.

Facebook comment under a Module

Teacher 5: In terms of marking an excellent point, at first glance; let me say that I like the way it differentiates some words that have very close meanings in the Alphabet Soup part. Measurement, Evaluation and Assessment all have the same issues but now I can clearly see

that assessment is like the result of all, like gathering all the information in the end and making a decision. Also it sets a basic route to evaluate the students and offers us to create our own example of formative assessment not by only monitoring them but also by involving the students in the process. One thing that's very clear in the article is that involving the students shouldn't mean judging them but means setting the missing points and describing how to fix.

Final report via e-mail

Based on the comments under separate Modules on the platform, it shows that teachers became aware of the importance of the content knowledge. Teachers felt convinced as to the need to make progressive changes in their classrooms.

Teacher 5: First of all, I've been following your suggestions on Assessment for Learning for a couple of weeks and find it useful a great deal. As a member of your group on social media I try to keep in touch with the latest modules you've shared and I suggest the page to my colleagues.

Final report via e-mail

This comment illustrates that the teacher found modules useful. She even took the initiative to tell her coworkers. The study also naturally urged to use technology in their classroom and personal life. There were some teachers stating that they were not using computers before the study, and along with the study the frequency of using technology increased for their own development.

Teacher 2: It's really nice. I believe it would be beneficial for us to take the advantage of technological facilities with maximum level while even the computer labs meet our expectations. In the simplest term, we used to have video lessons when we were students at prep class. We had cassettes and CDs and they helped us improve in every aspect. (With this module) We had a chance to observe how the use of smart boards and computers would help us in every respect.

Facebook comment under a Module

The comment shows teacher's enthusiasm to use the digital technologies in the classroom after realizing the importance of content of the last module that was about role of digital technologies for FA.



#### 4.3.2.2. Application through e-mentoring

E-mentoring enabled the participants to be familiar with FA, which resulted in understanding their strengths and weaknesses in terms of the way they assessed their students. The participants utilized the modules to make their students know what their goals were, so they could help their students improve their learning. They also used FA strategies in instructional planning, applied them with new technological tools. To illustrate:

Teacher 5: ... but thanks to you I've figured out how important to make assessment in class and I've been taking my time (one hour a week) to apply some assessment techniques.

Final report via e-mail

This study allowed teachers to act like researchers in their classrooms as well because teachers conducted the modules for supporting students' learning. Comments as follows:

Teacher 8: I began to use Formative Assessment in a class and I got very favorable results. We are in the second week as of now and the route we've covered is remarkable. We do what we are told to. Firstly, we express our goal and then we determine sub goals and put forward them clearly. We study as to our goal and we evaluate the results both individually and as a group. The result is perfect. It ends up with highly motivated students who know what they're doing.

Final report via e-mail

I also requested performance data from participants to get feedback about their practicing the modules I provided them. There were some notable successes.

Teacher 8: ...however, when I was given the chance to apply Formative assessment to my class, I am happy to say that it worked. Most of the students gained aims and started to study. With formative assessment we could create a good, friendly and respectful classroom atmosphere. I witnessed that if you give people a clear goal and tell them sub-goals clearly, they become willing to go and reach the goal since they can see where they are going and where they are. As for myself, I had the chance to learn and to use Internet effectively.

Facebook message

Teacher 8: I can say that FA works 😊 I have tried first attribute so far and I am surprised

that my students are more motivated and active than before. When goals are clarified for them, their self-confidence is higher and they feel safer; so we have more enjoyable lessons now☺.

A comment left on researcher's website [www.ogretmentor.wordpress.com](http://www.ogretmentor.wordpress.com)

Teacher 8 claimed that he not only understood the importance of the modules but also applied them to his classroom practices. According to his comments, his students became more responsive to his assessment methods. He also states the positive effect of FA in his classroom atmosphere. Teacher 2 also shared his positive views of materials shared and the content being discussed on the platform:

Teacher 2: I have checked them as well and I think they are applicable. Materials have been shared. They are applicable, as they do not require electronic environment much. If I devoted myself as well, it could be done even though my course schedule does not allow me much. Reasonable things are discussed there.

Facebook comment

Teacher 2: I have learnt some testing generator sites from the videos I watched here and I prepared some tests straight away and applied on my students in computer room. As I asked about it to my pupils, they said they liked it. They realized it would be useful when studying for SBS exam and that they can see and fix their mistakes soon after since the assessment is done fast. I think it's much more effective than the test papers we use in classes.

Facebook comment under a module

The comments show Teacher 2 found the modules applicable and he went so far as to put them into practice immediately.

#### **4.3.2.3. Helping and sharing one another virtually**

Participants showed varying levels of willingness to help or share with one another virtually. Although interaction among the participants did not seem to be appropriate to the nature of “the collaborative platform”, there were enthusiastic, inspiring comments about the future e-mentoring platforms. Occasionally there were some hot debates and critics on the possibility of using FA in their classrooms on the platform. E-mentor was the main channel that provided the

content knowledge for the participants. They were mostly pleased to be assisted by the e-mentor. E-mentor shared the documents with the mentees as they asked for personal support for their personal challenges they faced with in their classes (See Appendix 10). That provided instant support for their instant challenges. Since I have iPhone that has Facebook and Skype application, it was not difficult to be informed about their questions.

In addition to that, the study showed after some teachers also took initiative to support each other.

The following extract from a Facebook chat record of a mentee to the e-mentor shows apart from modules shared on the platform there were many one to one interaction between mentees and the e-mentor:

Teacher 8: I have a couple of problems in my class. I need one to one coaching, could you spare me some time on Skype or online chat?

Facebook chat

Proceeding comment shows the appreciation of one of the mentees about the availability of e-mentoring assistance provided by the platform:

Teacher 2: Nobody comes to (Ağrı) Patnos to give a seminar. I studied at Anadolu University (in Eskişehir). Chomsky came to our university. My friends attended that seminar. He told everything he knows. We used to learn about him and his ideas from course books... It would be very good for us, as I cannot go to big city. It is very reasonable because there are not such kinds of education programs at MNE.

Skype interview

Later on, he was happy to write on his Facebook message as follows:

Teacher 2: As mentioned before, I believe in the power of sharing. And we saw that it can be helpful when we try to improve ourselves online. As we live in an age that is called 'Age of Technology', we should use its beneficial sides as much as we can do. And also I have learnt lots of things from your page and other teachers that share documents about their teaching and assessment experiences. Thanks for your help and hope to keep in touch and want to learn more on your page.

Final report via Facebook message

Some participants seemed to be enjoying the social nature of sharing but some did not. At the first weeks of the study, Teacher 5 was expressing her discontent over the lack of synergy of some participants when they were just mentioning about the negative external factors:

Teacher 5: ...on your page I haven't met motivated teachers. They're just complainers. All I get comes from your efforts as a mentor. I have learnt lots of things from you. Thank you.

Facebook message, starting weeks

Later she shared the link of the platform with some other English language groups on Facebook. In order to create a better synergy, she invited on her own volition, some more enthusiastic participants. In other words, she developed a sense of responsibility for the platform, not letting the whole decision making process remain under the control of the e-mentor. It was actually one of the desired outcomes of the platform.

Teacher 5: As a member of your group on social media I try to keep in touch with the latest modules you've shared and I suggest the page to my colleagues. Hope you reach more people and I'm sure it will end up in a very beneficial platform where everybody can share their ideas. Thanks for triggering this.

One of her e-mails

I experienced the role of e-mentoring ought to be facilitator by giving constant reflection not dictating people. As an e-mentor, I try not to seem to be authoritative for the teachers by letting them leadership roles to the ones who wanted to speak loud about their experiences, or wanted to take personal initiatives for decision making on the platform. As Tomal (2010) puts it:

Once people have a clear understanding of the purpose of the change and feel there is credibility in leadership, the next step is ensure that everyone has a feeling of ownership in the change effort. If people feel a personal ownership in the change effort, they will likely be more willing to be actively involved in the change process.  
(p. 128)

Teacher 5 shared her pictures, newspaper, magazine articles related to the modules from time to time. I was very happy to see her energizing the group, as the e-mentor does not have to be the one who is highly dependent upon.

Teacher 5: I'll go on sharing positive conclusions with you as much as I can do.

Facebook message

As participants developed a better sense of community among each other, they were also expected to the responsibility to maintain group spirit and collaborative leadership.

Teacher 1: The biggest benefit of this process is that it provided me a chance to share ideas with people who work in similar conditions like me throughout Turkey. Otherwise it would be very difficult to provide such an environment.

Facebook message

Since they experience the same challenging conditions in different locations they can support each other effectively and instantly across great distances. For example, on one of the discussions over a module, when Teacher 4 from Bingöl expressed his discontent regarding his condition of the school he works at, and the kinds of students he is dealing with, the other teacher (Teacher1) who work under similar conditions in the suburbs of Gaziantep, 400 km from Bingöl, showed her support. Their exchange went as follows:

Teacher 4: I feel successful if I manage to keep them under control during my lessons because all the efforts for their motivation is in vain. If I encourage and ask them to work independently, probably less than 5 % will try to do something. But, well If I were a teacher in a “standard” school I would apply AFL (FA), it would work there.

Teacher 1: Dear Teacher 4, if your students are convinced to learn immediately, you can be more successful by wasting less effort. I also work in a state school. It seems hard but it's not impossible.

As it is read on preceding Facebook messages under a Module, there were some hopeful messages about the collaborative sharing and development through online platform, enabling participants support each another. Reflection was the most important process for the study. Synergy created by participants from diverse locations was a great value for their professional development. It was the e-mentoring effect what made a difference for them.

## CHAPTER 5

### 5. CONCLUSION

Overall, the study revealed that most of the teachers believed in the importance of having professional development support through e-mentoring. Social media, especially Facebook may be used as a learning and development tool for professional purposes. I was expecting to see that I could break down the locational barriers between teachers from various schools by using an effective tool for teacher development support. English Language teachers who voluntarily work in collaboration with other teachers have improved their FA strategies through e-mentoring support. Although there were some difficulties regarding online collaborative teacher development - such as the inability of teachers to meet simultaneously or to arrange their schedule to work consistently- it still has implications for broader expressions for professional development. According to the participants' views, it was concluded that they obtained important benefits and experiences in spite of their heavy workload and shortage of time.

In my study, it was important to see that teachers found FA worth trying. Evidence for these ideas has also emerged from the findings. Büyükkarcı (2010) in his Phd Dissertation mentions that FA does not get enough interest from language teachers in Turkey. He counts three reasons for the lack of interest in FA:

- 1- FA requires individual attention to students which might be very difficult for teachers in large classes.
- 2- The view that accepts FA as an addition to teaching, rather than an integral part of it.
- 3- The most important reason is the need to focus on summative assessment in classes, which is considered to lead students to success in national exams which students have to take for their further education. (p. 6)

In my study also large classes, perception of FA, expectations of parents and the system itself were the main obstacles in front of acceptance of the developmental area I was focusing on. In Turkey the students feel anxious through challenging period before the national exams. It creates certain burden for the teachers as well. Language teachers especially feel useless after a

while as the system leads students to reach "the desired result" which is just evaluated by summative assessment. As Ruland (2011) concludes in his discussion:

If schools want to have an impact on student academic performance, they need to shift their philosophy to one that increases the use of formative assessments, encourages teachers to utilize formative assessment attributes in the classroom, and decrease the amount of summative assessments. Education should not be about the collection of “rights” and “wrongs”, but should rather be about students learning. (p.126)

Students, parents, even schools focus mostly on visible outcomes of the education rather than the process of learning. English is not a highly appreciated subject to be taken into much consideration by students. Therefore language teachers are negatively affected by students' lack of motivation. If there were more focus on process rather than product, students would have less anxiety over results and enjoy the process of learning, and teachers would improve the quality of learning through FA practices.

Apart from the modules, I also shared my own videos recorded during my own lessons and the practical strategies that have been developed by some prestigious FA developers. The ultimate goal of the study is fostering student achievement in foreign language learning by enhancing the quality of EFL teachers through e-mentoring. Online platforms designed for teacher development may help isolated teachers who try to survive with their own current knowledge. Teachers from various backgrounds may have common ground for sharing techniques and methods to increase their learning and construct their own self-development. In other words, it can bring teachers together and create a momentum among them by providing a platform where teachers can collaborate nationwide. Although the participants in my study seem to have less frequent conversation and collaboration with each other, it was visible that the e-mentoring platform provides an stepping stone to share instant feedback and see different perspectives from other teachers.

Findings illustrate that e-mentoring can be used for professional development to meet the needs of many teachers who are faced with the challenges of working at schools with locational disadvantages. Those teachers surely complain about their circumstances they are in. As Single and Muller state (2001), “E-mentoring provides a new medium for mentoring, allowing additional mentors and protégés to participate in mentoring programs where participation in a FtF program

would be difficult or impossible. Unique qualities of electronic communications foster the development of mentoring relationships online” (p. 119) Surely, MNE gives face to face opportunities for teacher development to a certain extent, yet there appears to be some locations where the service is not viable or lacking. E-mentoring was seen as an encouraging support for teachers working at these locations to handle at least some challenging areas.

In Turkey it is not always easy to reach teachers who need professional development support. So e-mentoring seems to solve the problem in an easier and practical way. The field of professional development may turn its focus toward more practical solutions for the teachers who need instant support to deal with the problems they face. It should be cost effective to make more feasible for everyone. As clearly stated in the review of literature, Teacher Professional Development should be designed for Student Achievement. If there occurs a paradigm shift in teachers’ self-regulation, there may be a significant achievement in student success. Meetings and workshops may be supplemented by e-mentoring to check the changing challenges that teachers deal with. Namely, if a teacher requires a kind of support, he or she does not have to wait for the meetings or workshops held in specific locations. E-mentoring provides instant support regardless of geographical and time constraints. From the two-month interaction with teachers from MNE schools, it is clearly deduced that teacher development to adapt teachers to the current changes of the information age is a missing part in the whole picture of success in education. The answers to these needs are searched in one-dimensional solutions with yearly workshops, or meetings where teachers are not satisfied with the practical effects. Policymakers and decision-makers who are responsible for success are expected to adapt new technological tools to vary the teacher development models. Therefore, there needs to be more innovative and practical studies to supplement the ongoing teacher development in MNE schools. EFL teachers who especially are in need of constant progress in their fields are to be supported by these innovative and multi-dimensional approaches.

Although traditional teacher development models have roots and strong foundation, and e-mentoring is a new concept for teacher development with its possible drawbacks, the quality of teachers can be increased via various tools including online collaborative tools. That does not mean excluding the continuing traditional development models but updating the former models to the demands of every teacher. In view of the needs of the age, MNE may diversify teacher development models by putting e-mentoring into their agenda.



Regarding the e-mentoring platform especially designed for language teachers at state schools, participants may show tendencies to have diverse reactions to it based upon their personal backgrounds. These diverse reactions may be also due to their being used to old and ineffective traditional teacher training workshops forced upon them by their school administration. When they cannot find practical solutions from authorities, and their close environments, they start to develop the feeling of learned helplessness. In addition to that, level of job satisfaction decreases as they feel burn out. As it is read from the findings, one can come across many sentences conveying fatigue including, "If the conditions were better, that would work."

According to Tomal (2010) " A common resistance to change for some people is the inherent feeling that any deviation from the status quo will result in a personal loss" (p. 125). If a teacher from a MNE school faces with a new approach like FA, she or he may feel inadequate. Therefore that new change will not make him or her happy facing it. As Tomal (2010) puts it, there are five reasons for resistance to change, " Threat to security, fear of unknown, lack of understanding, desire for status quo, potential loss of power" (p.125). According to the examination of data, it can be concluded that establishing FA can be difficult because educators are going against all traditions. The idea of doing something untraditional is challenging in the educational context of Turkey and innovative teachers will have a difficult time in changing their methods. The biggest obstacle to FA is the process of implementing change as many people think that change is risky and tiring. FA provides an atmosphere where change is consistent and habits are broken.

The next point on which we are clear is that some teachers' own comfort has priority for them. According to the study, initially some teachers were hesitant about reading the modules, and using the modules actively in their classes, as it was a new change for them. As Tomal puts it into words, it was because of the fact that "they might feel that the benefits will not outweigh the risks of the change" (p. 126). MNE is a state institution where teachers are employed in with the KPSS exam result. KPSS is a nationwide exam for selecting MNE teachers. Actually, it is the safest workplace to work for a teacher in Turkey. There is status quo there and it affects the whole entities of the institution including teachers. Teachers follow certain teaching habits. They are comfortable with their current state of their career. They do not seem to be enthusiastic about a change. As Tomal (2010) states, "Change often requires a degree of initiative and work, and people might not want to exert the effort" (p. 126). Change is a challenge for almost all the

teachers to take. According to Greenstein (2010):

Taking the steps to make change happen is the challenge facing teachers and educational leaders. He continued to explain what is required for cultural change: high-quality curriculum, high-quality assessment information about student learning, and teachers working together to innovate and improve teaching practices. When change in our assessment practice and policy can effect such meaningful change for our students, how can we not take up this challenge? (p. 167)

In addition to that, Tomal says, "...one of the surest ways to undermine a change effort is to fail to make the purpose of change clear. People need to have a logical, well defined reason for the change" (p. 127). Having asked on our Skype interviews about the impact of e-mentoring on their professional and personal development, research provided the following remarks:

Teacher 2: E-mentoring is a reasonable solution. It can be good for us as we do not have opportunity to go to big cities. There are no such trainings at MNE institutions here as well. I mean it is reasonable.

Skype interview Teacher 2 working in Patnos/Ağrı

E-mentoring has positive effects for both mentor teacher and mentee teachers. On e-mentoring platform specifically designed for professional development, mentor teachers may find chance to beat the feeling of burnout and feel refreshed. They may feel on the track to learning as they mutually interact with the less experienced teachers. While supporting mentees, an e-mentor may overcome the burnout feelings towards the job accumulated over the years, after having been following the same routine for such a long time. I, as a researcher and an e-mentor, have been teaching for over 10 years time at various schools and in different countries. As years passed, I felt the need to energize myself. While conducting this research, I felt that I went back to earlier years before when I was excited about developing my teaching skills as an educator. That was what I have learnt through this action research journey.

### **5.1. Limitations to the Study**

This study is limited by the size of the study, and location of the participants. The data is collected from eight focal participants. Without a large sampling from various schools with

varying demographics, the results are only applicable to similar situations. The data is representative of eight school settings in Turkey where most of them had locational disadvantages. Participants were chosen from EFL teachers working at different MNE schools in Turkey who would like to be a part of the online collaborative platform on a volunteer basis. These teachers had no institutional pressure to be a part of the study. The participants have a heavy workload and frequently overworked. They are surrounded by a working environment that does not encourage self-improvement. They are often busy within their own difficult schedules.

The study was limited by the data collected within the framework of the study. While the results are promising for many teachers, additional data may need to be collected to apply these results to different schools and different contexts.

The study was also limited by the time frame. Implementation of the study took only eight weeks. An increase in the duration of time may have shown a significant change in the quality of the study results. Teacher mentoring requires a longer periods of time. A two-month period is a limited amount of time for developing relationships in such a development program. Once a participant joins the project, it takes some time to adapt to the online atmosphere. The adaptation time may vary from one participant to another.

The researcher was known as the admin for the online group and e-mentor, and it was also known that he worked at a private university as an English instructor where the educational facilities are much more developed than the participants' schools. The researcher shared his videos to show that FA can be widely applicable. There may have been the perception that the modules and videos only applied to the schools where the standards are better. Conducting a research project for a university teacher may act as a barrier for MNE teachers, curbing their learning and sharing.

Another limitation of the study is reactivity since the participants knew that they were participating in a research study. If it were presented in a different way, they might have participated with different motives than they had. Büyükkarcı (2010) in his Phd Dissertation claims that:

Formative assessment does not get enough interest from language teachers in Turkey. One reason might be that formative assessment requires individual attention to students which might be very difficult for teachers in large classes. Another cause might be the view which accepts formative assessment as an

addition to teaching, rather than an integral part of it. However, it seems that, the most important reason is the need to focus on summative assessment in classes, which is considered to lead students to success in national exams which students have to take for their further education. (p. 6)

In the study there was much data showing teachers' initial inner reactivity for their personal development rooted in their current working environment. National exam preparation was the priority for almost all schools that hinders the process of learning. The pragmatic and practical results were favorable.

It is important to keep in mind that not all techniques will work for every teacher. Establishing FA can be difficult because educators are going against all traditions. The idea of doing something else is unheard of and those teachers will have a difficult time in changing their methods. As mentioned earlier, the biggest obstacle of FA is implementing change as many people may think that change is risky and challenging. FA provides an atmosphere where change is consistent and negative habits are broken. That may create a resistance for the nature of the study as well.

The study was also limited by the limited amount of content that e-mentor provided. The content was gathered through Dylan Wiliam and Laura Greenstein after having e-mail interaction (See Appendix 10, 11,12).

In addition to that, participants in an e-mentoring program may sometimes fail to follow through or ignore e-messages from either the program staff or other group members in an e-mentoring platform (Kasprisin, Single, Single, Muller, 2003), or they may pretend to follow the instructions just to seem to be a part of the group. Therefore, the researcher had to rely on the data provided from online tools.

## **5.2. Suggestions for Future Research**

Future practical researches can be done in order to search for better results. The collected data from this study suggests that MNE are expected to consider about their teachers' professional development as well the students' achievement. For example, from teachers' comments it was interesting to read about the FATIH project that is for students themselves. Teachers mentioned about the future project. FATIH is a technological innovative project that is

beneficial for students. To exemplify the need for professional development from MNE authorities, an example is as follows,

Teacher 5: I think with the help of FATIH Project nearly all the technological barriers will be removed in education. It offers equality of opportunities. It would make the teacher follow the latest digital information and keep up with the pace. We have already been using smart boards in classes and some of them have internet connection and ninth grade students are given tablets. I hope when that happens, learning would be much more easier and fun. Thank God we live and we teach in a digital age. I give high importance to the quality of teaching. I think all the teachers should go through Professional development. It doesn't end with the graduation its an ongoing process till the end of life. Ministry should support teachers in Professional learning and refinement of teaching.

Final report via e-mail

Due to the limitations of demographic information, it is recommended that this study be replicated using a variety of participants and diverse settings. The data was collected from eight focal participants. It is recommended to replicate the study within other contexts. Further studies may investigate additional social factors, including environmental settings.

The duration of this study was approximately eight weeks. It is recommended to continue the study for a longer period of time - at least a school term. Due to the time constraints of the study, I was unable to focus on all the questions in the survey; however, some of the respondents indicated a desire for further mentoring on topics not discussed in this study. Further research could be done taking these topics into consideration.

The longer period of time may allow for a positive change in e-mentor-mentee relations, and the effect of the platform's dynamics. The participant teachers may show more willingness to make use of the platform. They may use more time to internalize the information shared on the platform. Additional studies should be conducted to see the practical impacts of the study on teachers and their classes. It is recommended to use more Skype interviews and online focus group interactions to get more quality feedback. Gestures, mimes, body language may give more ideas than the written records on the platform. Suggestion for further studies:

It is important to highlight that the aim of the study was to find a temporary supplemental solution for EFL teachers working at disadvantaged schools. The study helped us see the effect of

e-mentoring as a teacher development device. This may give us a good basis to create authentic examples of professionally worthwhile teacher development tools that we could use in the ELT development area.

The study shows that a flexible teacher development model through e-mentoring that respects MNE teachers, and recognizes locational distances and challenges may be an alternative model in the teacher development area. Using the same type of collaborative nature of the social e-platform, further studies may rejuvenate older teachers and give the novice ones an energetic sense of professional teacher development. Especially designed websites for teacher professional development including rich content, may provide support for the teachers working at schools with locational disadvantages.

In conclusion, my study had to be manageable. I needed to have the right amount of participants to conduct the research effectively. My dream has always been to reach as many teachers as possible in Turkey to trigger a collaborative synergy among them. My current effort could serve as a pilot study for bigger future projects. Once I learn to be an experienced action researcher, I would be able to commit to larger projects with a larger amount of participants or groups. Effectiveness and the long-term benefits of e-mentoring should be practiced within bigger groups of participants with a higher promotion of the program. Considering the importance of using effective supplemental online tools for teacher professional development that the respondents identified, MNE may decide to implement innovative strategies to develop teachers. Providing that teachers work smarter rather than harder, student achievement can also be increased.

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## 7. APPENDICES

### 7.1. Appendix 1: Adapted Survey from "Exploring FA" by Susan M. Brookhart

Formative Assessment Questionnaire

1. Part: General Information (Background Information)

Name - Surname \* Age \*

How many years have you been teaching? \*

Which school are you teaching at? \*

Which subjects do you teach? \*

Which is your highest degree? \*

1. BA

2. MA

Type of school you teach \*

Primary School

High School

Average age of the learners \*

Details about school you work \*

Please give some information about school you teach in detail

Your title at school \*

1. Teacher

2. Head of the department at school

3. Mentor

4. Other:

During your pre-service or in-service training, have you learned something about Formative Assessment (Theory or Practice)? If yes, please specify? \*

Part 2. Formative Assessment

Choose one that best represent how do you feel about each of the topics. There are no right or wrong answers.

Using formative assessment in my regular classroom practice \*

|  |  | not much | somewhat | very |  |
|--|--|----------|----------|------|--|
| How much do I know about this?                   |  |          |          |      |  |
| How skilled am I at doing this?                  |  |          |          |      |  |
| How often do I do this?                          |  |          |          |      |  |
| How important is this to me?                     |  |          |          |      |  |
| How interested am I in learning more about this? |  |          |          |      |  |

Setting and sharing goals for students' learning \*

|  |  | not much | somewhat | very |  |
|--|--|----------|----------|------|--|
| How much do I know about this?                   |  |          |          |      |  |
| How skilled am I at doing this?                  |  |          |          |      |  |
| How often do I do this?                          |  |          |          |      |  |
| How important is this to me?                     |  |          |          |      |  |
| How interested am I in learning more about this? |  |          |          |      |  |

Eliciting and listening to students' comments, answers, or problems related to learning goals \*

|  |  | not much | somewhat | very |  |
|--|--|----------|----------|------|--|
| How much do I know about this?                   |  |          |          |      |  |
| How skilled am I at doing this?                  |  |          |          |      |  |
| How often do I do this?                          |  |          |          |      |  |
| How important is this to me?                     |  |          |          |      |  |
| How interested am I in learning more about this? |  |          |          |      |  |

Providing effective feedback on student work \*

|  |  | not much | somewhat | very |  |
|--|--|----------|----------|------|--|
| How much do I know about this?                   |  |          |          |      |  |
| How skilled am I at doing this?                  |  |          |          |      |  |
| How often do I do this?                          |  |          |          |      |  |
| How important is this to me?                     |  |          |          |      |  |
| How interested am I in learning more about this? |  |          |          |      |  |

Asking questions to encourage students to think \*

|  |  | not much | somewhat | very |  |
|--|--|----------|----------|------|--|
| How much do I know about this?                   |  |          |          |      |  |
| How skilled am I at doing this?                  |  |          |          |      |  |
| How often do I do this?                          |  |          |          |      |  |
| How important is this to me?                     |  |          |          |      |  |
| How interested am I in learning more about this? |  |          |          |      |  |

Encouraging student for self-assessment and peer assessment \*

|  |  | not much | somewhat | very |  |
|--|--|----------|----------|------|--|
| How much do I know about this?                   |  |          |          |      |  |
| How skilled am I at doing this?                  |  |          |          |      |  |
| How often do I do this?                          |  |          |          |      |  |
| How important is this to me?                     |  |          |          |      |  |
| How interested am I in learning more about this? |  |          |          |      |  |

Using formative assessment information in instructional planning \*

|  |  | not much | somewhat | very |  |
|--|--|----------|----------|------|--|
| How much do I know about this?                   |  |          |          |      |  |
| How skilled am I at doing this?                  |  |          |          |      |  |
| How often do I do this?                          |  |          |          |      |  |
| How important is this to me?                     |  |          |          |      |  |
| How interested am I in learning more about this? |  |          |          |      |  |

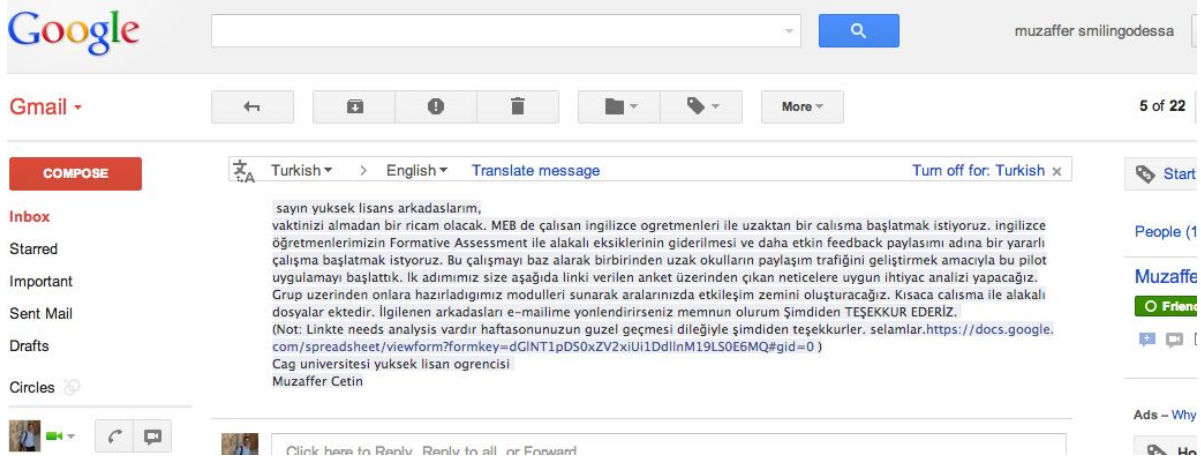
Role of digital technologies for formative assessment \*

|  |  | not much | somewhat | very |  |
|--|--|----------|----------|------|--|
| How much do I know about this?                   |  |          |          |      |  |
| How skilled am I at doing this?                  |  |          |          |      |  |
| How often do I do this?                          |  |          |          |      |  |
| How important is this to me?                     |  |          |          |      |  |
| How interested am I in learning more about this? |  |          |          |      |  |

*Adapted from the book "Exploring Formative Assessment" by Susan M. Brookhart*



## 7.2. Appendix 2: Searching for participants: e-mails to MA Friends



The screenshot shows a Gmail inbox with a search bar at the top containing the text "muzaffer smilingodessa". The email is from Muzaffer Cetin, dated 12/24/12. The subject is "güzel bir çalışmaya destek olmak istermisiniz?". The body of the email is in Turkish and discusses a research project on formative assessment in English Language Teaching. It mentions a survey and a pilot study. The sender's name is Muzaffer Cetin.

Google  
muzaffer smilingodessa

Gmail 5 of 22

COMPOSE

Turkish > English Translate message Turn off for: Turkish x

Start

People (1)

Muzaffer

Friend

Click here to Reply, Reply to all, or Forward

## 7.3. Appendix 3: Searching for participants: e-mail invitation to participants



The screenshot shows a Gmail inbox with a search bar at the top. The email is from Muzaffer Cetin, dated 12/24/12. The subject is "güzel bir çalışmaya destek olmak istermisiniz?". The body of the email is in Turkish and discusses a research project on formative assessment in English Language Teaching. It mentions a survey and a pilot study. The sender's name is Muzaffer Cetin.

COMPOSE

Inbox

Starred

Important

Sent Mail

Drafts

Circles

Search, chat, or SMS

Rebecca Reichel

Hasan Savaş

nura nur

buğra kaç

dilek payman

EBRU ER

Holly Formolo

Rabia Kulpu

Muzaffer Cetin

güzel bir çalışmaya destek olmak istermisiniz?

12/24/12

muzaffer smilingodessa <muzaffercetin77@gmail.com> to humaozkaya

Sayın hocam,

English Language Teaching alanında tez yazıyorum. Amacım e-odaklı mentoring tercih sebebi: ülkemizde ELT trainingde locationally economically disadvantaged teacherlara mentoring ile katkı sağlamak. (Özellikle locationally disadvantaged okullar ve öğretmenleri bulmalıyız. "zor şartlarda çalışan hocalari elindeki imkanlari kullanarak how to do formative assessment destek? Ing ogretmenleri için e-mentoring sistemi nasıl hayata gecirilebilir, her yeni öğretmen eğitim ihtiyaclarını giderebilmek noktasında birebir kişisel customized approach / learning çözümleri oluşturmaya çalışıyorum. E-mentoring using social media nasıl daha iyi systematize edilebilir?)

How can we help English language teachers develop Formative assessment strategies to promote self-regulated learning at state schools?

Promoting teacher autonomy (her birisi kendi problemleri üzerinde çalışacak ve ona göre moduller üzerinde duracak) üzerine kurulu

Formative (Process based Assessment not Product-based) Bunlar ile alakalı e-mentoring, teacher training hizmeti vereceğiz. Interview through skype, recorded, transcribed and analysed. 5 archetype case her bir öğretmeni case study olarak belgeleyeceğiz, contextual description -geçmiş-demografisi-needs yazılacak. Teachers as researchers: no matter how

## 7.4. Appendix 4: Searching for participants: Facebook Group Invitations

facebook Search for people, places and things

Niğde Milli Eğitim Müdürlüğü Timeline 2013

Like · Comment · Share 28 2 2

28 people like this.

M Tunahan Altay okul sütü büyüklerde yaramış.  
February 15 at 2:20pm · Like

Ogret Mentor English Language Teaching alanında tez yazıyorum. Amacım e-odaklı mentoring tercih sebebi: Ülkemizde ELT trainingde locationally economically disadvantaged teacherlara mentoring ile katkı sağlamak. (Özellikle locationally disadvantaged okullar ve öğretmenleri bulmalıyız. "zor şartlarda çalışan hocaları elindeki imkanları kullanarak how to do formative assessment desek? Ing öğretmenleri için e-mentoring sistemi nasıl hayata gecirilebilir, her yeni öğretmenin eğitim ihtiyaçlarını giderebilmek noktasında birebir kişisel customized approach / learning çözümleri oluşturmaya çalışıyorum. E-mentoring using social media nasıl daha iyi systematize edilebilir?) How can we help English language teachers develop Formative assessment strategies to promote self-regulated learning at state schools?

## 7.5. Appendix 5: Searching for participants: Facebook Group Invitations

ELT TURKEY ( A group dedicated to teachers of englis... About Events P

Write Post Add Photo / Video Ask Question Add File

Write something...

RECENT POSTS

Muzaffer Çetin

vaktinizi almadan bir ricam olacak. MEB de çalışan ingilizce öğretmenleri ile uzaktan bir çalışma başlatmak istiyoruz. ingilizce öğretmenlerimizin Formative Assessment ile alakalı eksiklerinin giderilmesi ve daha etkin feedback paylaşımı adına bir yararlı çalışma başlatmak istiyoruz. Bu çalışmayı baz alarak birbirinden uzak okulların paylaşım trafiğini geliştirmek amacıyla bu pilot uygulamayı başlattık. İlk adımımız aşağıda linki verilen anket üzerinden çıkan neticelere uygun ihtiyaç analizi yapacağız. Grup üzerinden onlara hazırladığımız modulleri sunarak aralarında etkileşim zemini oluşturacağız. Kısaca çalışma ile alakalı dosyalar ektedir. İlgilenen arkadaşları e-mailime yönlendirirsen memnun olurum. Şimdiden TEŞEKKUR EDERİZ.  
(Not: Linkte needs analysis vardır haftasonunun güzel geçmesi dileğiyle şimdiden teşekkürler.)  
selamlar. <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/viewform?formkey=dGINT1pDS0xZV2xiUi1DdlN19LS0E6MQ#gid=0>)

Formative Assesment Questionnaire  
docs.google.com

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## 7.6. Appendix 6: Facebook Chat sample



## 7.7. Appendix 7: Acceptance of a teacher to be participant at the group (via e-mail)



## 7.8. Appendix 8: Acceptance of a teacher to be participant at the group

The screenshot shows a Facebook Messenger chat window. The contact is Muzaffer Çetin. The messages are as follows:

- Muzaffer Çetin** (4:34pm): size atayımı...
- Muzaffer Çetin** (4:35pm): [Image of a document] download
- User** (4:37pm): woww bunu ilk fırsatta çevremdeki tüm sesleri susturup okumak istiyorum
- Muzaffer Çetin** (4:38pm): amacım ileride tum MEB deki hocalara ucretsiz mentoring ama once bişiler yapmalı masterda anketi bitirince burdayım gelyrm 2 dk
- Muzaffer Çetin** (4:54pm): geldim hcam sizi ogret mentor olarak da ekledim anketi bitirince oradan chat yapabiliriz

The user's response to the last message is:

merhaba hocam çok guzel ve geniş kapsamlı bir çalışmaya benziyor..tebrik ederim paylaşım trafğini geliştirmek derken ortak bir paylaşım platformu mu kurulması amaçlanıyor..seve seve iletirim

The user's next message is:

evet saygı n hcm linkteki survey doldurup en alttaki submit butonuna basınca direk bana geliyor ben sizin eksiklerinize uygun modulleri facebook grubumuza atıyorum

The chat interface includes a search bar, a 'New Message' button, and a 'Write a reply...' input field. The user's profile picture is visible in the top right corner of the chat window.

## 7.9. Appendix 9: Research Question 1 Needs Analysis Results of each participant

### 7.9.1. Teacher 1 Survey Results

Teacher 1

Personal information: Age : 23 Experience: 1 , Gaziantep, High School

| Questions<br>Topics  | how important<br>is this to me? | how much<br>do I know about this? | how skilled<br>am I at doing this? | how often<br>do I do this? | how interested am I<br>in learning more about this? |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| using formative assessment<br>in my regular classroom practice   | not much                        | not much                          | not much                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| setting and sharing goals<br>for students' learning  | very                            | very                              | very                               | very                       | very  |
| eliciting and listening to students'<br>comments, answers, questions, or<br>problems related to learning goals | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| providing effective feedback<br>on student work  | very                            | very                              | very                               | very                       | very  |
| asking questions<br>to encourage students to think   | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| encouraging student for<br>self-assessment and<br>peer assessment  | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| using formative assessment<br>information in<br>instructional planning   | not much                        | not much                          | not much                           | not much                   | not much  |
| role of digital technologies<br>for formative assessment   | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |

## 7.9.2. Teacher 2 Survey Results

Teacher 2

Personal information: Age : 27 Experience: 2 , Ağrı/Patnos, Secondary School

| Questions<br>Topics  | how important<br>is this to me? | how much<br>do I know about this? | how skilled<br>am I at doing this? | how often<br>do I do this? | how interested am I<br>in learning more about this? |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| using formative assessment<br>in my regular classroom practice   | somewhat                        | not much                          | not much                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| setting and sharing goals<br>for students' learning  | very                            | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| eliciting and listening to students'<br>comments, answers, questions, or<br>problems related to learning goals | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | not much                           | not much                   | somewhat  |
| providing effective feedback<br>on student work  | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| asking questions<br>to encourage students to think   | very                            | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | very  |
| encouraging student for<br>self-assessment and<br>peer assessment  | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | very                       | very  |
| using formative assessment<br>information in<br>instructional planning   | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | very  |
| role of digital technologies<br>for formative assessment   | very                            | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | very                       | very  |

### 7.9.3. Teacher 3 Survey Results

Teacher 3

Personal information: Age : 24 Experience: 1 , Bitlis, Secondary School

| Questions<br>Topics  | how important<br>is this to me? | how much<br>do I know about this? | how skilled<br>am I at doing this? | how often<br>do I do this? | how interested am I<br>in learning more about this? |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| using formative assessment<br>in my regular classroom practice   | somewhat                        | not much                          | not much                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| setting and sharing goals<br>for students' learning  | somewhat                        | not much                          | not much                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| eliciting and listening to students'<br>comments, answers, questions, or<br>problems related to learning goals | very                            | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| providing effective feedback<br>on student work  | very                            | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | very                       | very  |
| asking questions<br>to encourage students to think   | very                            | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | very                       | somewhat  |
| encouraging student for<br>self-assessment and<br>peer assessment  | very                            | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| using formative assessment<br>information in<br>instructional planning   | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | not much                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| role of digital technologies<br>for formative assessment   | very                            | somewhat                          | not much                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |

## 7.9.4. Teacher 4 Survey Results

Teacher 4

Personal information: Age : 25 Experience: 3 , Bingöl, Technical & Vocational School

| Questions<br>Topics  | how important<br>is this to me? | how much<br>do I know about this? | how skilled<br>am I at doing this? | how often<br>do I do this? | how interested am I<br>in learning more about this? |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| using formative assessment<br>in my regular classroom practice   | not much                        | not much                          | somewhat                           | very                       | very  |
| setting and sharing goals<br>for students' learning  | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | very                       | very  |
| eliciting and listening to students'<br>comments, answers, questions, or<br>problems related to learning goals | very                            | somewhat                          | very                               | very                       | very  |
| providing effective feedback<br>on student work  | somewhat                        | very                              | very                               | very                       | very  |
| asking questions<br>to encourage students to think   | somewhat                        | very                              | very                               | very                       | very  |
| encouraging student for<br>self-assessment and<br>peer assessment  | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| using formative assessment<br>information in<br>instructional planning   | not much                        | not much                          | not much                           | somewhat                   | very  |
| role of digital technologies<br>for formative assessment   | not much                        | somewhat                          | not much                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |



## 7.9.5. Teacher 5 Survey Results

Teacher 5

Personal information: Age : 31 Experience: 8 , Kahramanmaraş, High School

| Questions<br>Topics  | how important<br>is this to me? | how much<br>do I know about this? | how skilled<br>am I at doing this? | how often<br>do I do this? | how interested am I<br>in learning more about this? |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| using formative assessment<br>in my regular classroom practice   | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | very                       | very  |
| setting and sharing goals<br>for students' learning  | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | very                       | very  |
| eliciting and listening to students'<br>comments, answers, questions, or<br>problems related to learning goals | somewhat                        | not much                          | not much                           | somewhat                   | very  |
| providing effective feedback<br>on student work  | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | very  |
| asking questions<br>to encourage students to think   | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | very  |
| encouraging student for<br>self-assessment and<br>peer assessment  | somewhat                        | very                              | very                               | very                       | very  |
| using formative assessment<br>information in<br>instructional planning   | not much                        | not much                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| role of digital technologies<br>for formative assessment   | not much                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | very  |

## 7.9.6. Teacher 6 Survey Results

Teacher 6

Personal information: Age : 24 Experience: 3 , Gaziantep, Bağbaşıköy Primary School

| Questions<br>Topics  | how important<br>is this to me? | how much<br>do I know about this? | how skilled<br>am I at doing this? | how often<br>do I do this? | how interested am I<br>in learning more about this? |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| using formative assessment<br>in my regular classroom practice   | not much                        | not much                          | not much                           | very                       | somewhat  |
| setting and sharing goals<br>for students' learning  | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | very                       | very  |
| eliciting and listening to students'<br>comments, answers, questions, or<br>problems related to learning goals | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | very                               | very                       | very  |
| providing effective feedback<br>on student work  | very                            | somewhat                          | very                               | very                       | very  |
| asking questions<br>to encourage students to think   | very                            | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | very                       | very  |
| encouraging student for<br>self-assessment and<br>peer assessment  | not much                        | somewhat                          | not much                           | very                       | very  |
| using formative assessment<br>information in<br>instructional planning   | not much                        | not much                          | not much                           | very                       | very  |
| role of digital technologies<br>for formative assessment   | not much                        | not much                          | not much                           | very                       | very  |

### 7.9.7. Teacher 7 Survey Results

Teacher 7

Personal information: Age : 25 Experience: 6 , Niğde/YBO, Boarding Primary School

| Questions<br>Topics  | how important<br>is this to me? | how much<br>do I know about this? | how skilled<br>am I at doing this? | how often<br>do I do this? | how interested am I<br>in learning more about this? |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| using formative assessment<br>in my regular classroom practice   | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | very                       | very  |
| setting and sharing goals<br>for students' learning  | very                            | very                              | very                               | very                       | very  |
| eliciting and listening to students'<br>comments, answers, questions, or<br>problems related to learning goals | very                            | very                              | very                               | very                       | very  |
| providing effective feedback<br>on student work  | very                            | somewhat                          | very                               | very                       | very  |
| asking questions<br>to encourage students to think   | very                            | very                              | somewhat                           | very                       | very  |
| encouraging student for<br>self-assessment and<br>peer assessment  | very                            | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | very                       | very  |
| using formative assessment<br>information in<br>instructional planning   | very                            | very                              | very                               | very                       | very  |
| role of digital technologies<br>for formative assessment   | very                            | very                              | very                               | very                       | very  |

### 7.9.8. Teacher 8 Survey Results

Teacher 8

Personal information: Age : 36 Experience: 13 , Tekirdağ, Primary School

| Questions<br>Topics  | how important<br>is this to me? | how much<br>do I know about this? | how skilled<br>am I at doing this? | how often<br>do I do this? | how interested am I<br>in learning more about this? |
|--|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| using formative assessment<br>in my regular classroom practice   | very                            | very                              | somewhat                           | very                       | very  |
| setting and sharing goals<br>for students' learning  | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| eliciting and listening to students'<br>comments, answers, questions, or<br>problems related to learning goals | very                            | very                              | very                               | very                       | somewhat  |
| providing effective feedback<br>on student work  | very                            | somewhat                          | very                               | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| asking questions<br>to encourage students to think   | somewhat                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | not much  |
| encouraging student for<br>self-assessment and<br>peer assessment  | very                            | very                              | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |
| using formative assessment<br>information in<br>instructional planning   | very                            | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | very                       | somewhat  |
| role of digital technologies<br>for formative assessment   | not much                        | somewhat                          | somewhat                           | somewhat                   | somewhat  |

## 7.10. Appendix 10: Email interaction with Dylan Wiliam (Leading expert on FA)

Following illustrates the interaction and material share between Dylan Wiliam and e-mentor.

From: Dylan Wiliam  
Subject: **Re: From Zirve University**  
Date: January 20, 2013 2:55:33 AM GMT+02:00  
To: Muzaffer Çetin  
▶ 1 Attachment, 112 KB Save Quick Look

Have you read my latest book, "Embedded formative assessment"? That and the attached chapter should give you what you need.



[Chapter X \(K....doc \(112 KB\)\)](#)

Best wishes

Dylan

## 7.11. Appendix 11: Email interaction with Laura Greenstein (Leading expert on FA)

From: Laura Greenstein  
Subject: **RE: hello again**  
Date: February 27, 2013 1:24:23 AM GMT+02:00  
To: Muzaffer Çetin

Hello My Friend Muzaffer,

You are focusing on a significant topic and following a logical sequence. It seems to me that you will be answering these important questions:

1. What types of professional development do EFL teachers need to best support their students and develop effective classroom practices?
2. Why is using best practice in formative assessment an essential strategy for achieving this?
3. How can an online collaborative platform support the use of formative assessment by teachers and be used to strengthen student's learning outcomes?

I congratulate you on your progress and encourage you to keep working at it. All this work will be worth it!

Best Regards,

## 7.12. Appendix 12: Email interaction with Laura Greenstein (Leading expert on FA)

From: Laura Greenstein  
Subject: **RE: hello**  
Date: March 29, 2013 9:07:51 PM GMT+02:00  
To: Muzaffer Çetin

Hello Muzaffer

There are some emerging technologies where students record their answers and the data becomes immediately visible to the teacher. In general, these use selected choice responses such as True/False, and Multiple Choice rather than completion items, collaborations, and projects. I'm not very familiar with them but you could check into companies like [i-clicker](#), [Smart Technologies](#), and [Turning Technologies](#)

There are also platforms where students can work collaboratively and their progress is visible to the teacher:

<http://www.socrative.com>, <http://www.padlet.com>, and <http://www.infuselearning.com>

I think I send the links below last week and as I said you are forging new territory combining formative assessment with e-learning:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/Formative.aspx> This is a link the Rhode Island Department of Education. They are one of the states in the U.S. making progress with formative assessment and professional development through on-line modules

[http://map.mathshell.org/static/draft/pd/modules/1\\_Formative\\_Assessment/html/index.htm](http://map.mathshell.org/static/draft/pd/modules/1_Formative_Assessment/html/index.htm) This is a collaborative project from the University of Nottingham, England, and the University of California, Berkeley, U.S.A.

It sounds like you are making fine progress.

Best,

### 7.13. Appendix 13: E-mentoring interaction through Facebook Chat

Following is an example extract illustrating how e-mentor and mentee exchange ideas and materials (3 march Sunday 18.10).

**Teacher 5:** In terms of marking an excellent point, at first glance; let me say that I like the way it differentiates some words that have very close meanings in the Alphabet Soup part. Measurement, Evaluation and Assessment all have the same issues but now I can clearly see that assessment is like the result of all, like gathering all the information in the end and making a decision. Also it sets a basic route to evaluate the students and offers us to create our own example of formative assessment not by only monitoring them but also by involving the students in the process. One thing that's very clear in the article is that involving the students shouldn't mean judging them but means setting the missing points and describing how to fix.

**Ogret Mentor:** Size self ve peer assessment ile alakalı bir dosya atayım mı; sınıfta kullanımlık bi incelemeye deger.

**Teacher 5:** olur sevinirim.

#### *Self-assessment and peer-assessment strategies*

##### INVOLVING PUPILS IN MARKING

Pupils can mark their own work and that of others against clear criteria and learning intentions. The criteria can be developed as a class activity; this clarifies the teacher's expectations and involves the pupils in reflecting on how far their work fulfils these expectations. The aim of the activity should be to identify ways that the pupil whose work is being marked can move forward. (Good examples of this strategy are provided in the AALA publication 'Pupils Learning from Teachers' responses' – see [http://www.aala.org.uk/\\_members/pdf/feedback.pdf](http://www.aala.org.uk/_members/pdf/feedback.pdf).)

##### MARKING IN GROUPS

An alternative to marking individually is for pupils to do this as a group. The focus should be on a recently completed piece of work and members of the group should help one another to assess the work against agreed criteria and suggest ways in which the work could be improved.

##### MARKING AGAINST ANNOTATED EXAMPLES

Another useful marking strategy is for groups to work together to see how closely their work measures up against an 'ideal solution'. Whilst it will be important to emphasise that there could be many 'ideal solutions', group discussion should aim to help each pupil understand the extent to which their response achieves the criteria and what they can do to improve.

##### INDIVIDUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT SHEETS

These can be developed for some elements of a programme and invite pupils to reflect on the extent to which their work has achieved identified criteria. In the light of this they have to indicate what they need to do to improve.

##### TRAFFIC LIGHTS

This has proved a popular strategy and invites pupils to reflect on the current state of their learning in relation to a particular task or activity. If they feel confident that they

**E-mentor:** bu dosyalar “Learning how to learn” kitabından (sayfa 45- 46) ,10 kişilik bir FA takımı tarafından hazırlanmış.

**Teacher 5:** teşekkürler..ilk fırsatta okuyacağım

**E-mentor:** ben tesekkür ederim yazdıklarınızı ve benim bu paylaştığım seyleri hemen reflective journalıma kaydettim.belki bir gun sınıfta bu paylaştığım seylerin ısıgında kucuk bir tecrube yasarsanız feedback yazarsanız onu da eklerim

**Teacher 5:** olur tabiki seve seve paylaşırım

#### 7.14. Appendix 14: Skype Interview Transcripts

Skype Interview (19.03.2013) Teacher 2 (Ağrı/Patnos Tes-iş Primary school)

**E-mentor:**You finished your classes for today; are you tired?

**Teacher 2:** Of course, I mean, it has been four hours since I finished them. I am an English teacher at a Secondary School in Patnos-Ağrı. It can be called suburbs, it is at the end of the city. Student success profile at our school is not very high, of course. There are not many students whose parents are interested in their children. The ones who have the opposite type of parents are successful at school but there are not many of them. Of course it should be noted that our school is not in a very good district so it is a bit neglected. We do not have many facilities; the only thing we have is blackboards. We also have a computer lab and we built it ourselves. We have 20-21 computers that work.

**E-mentor:** How do you feel about the English teaching?

**Teacher 2:** I graduated from university in 2009; it has been very long since then. If you asked me how much of the things I learned at the university I hear, I would say about 15%. One forgets with time passing. I can also say that level of English we teach is not very high. The number of lessons we have for each week is very low; about 4-5 hours. I am also a bit complacent; I cannot do things on my own. I have internet connection, which I started using with you.

**E-mentor:**Do you think there is a need for Online professional?

**Teacher 2:** Of course! Nobody comes to Patnos to give a seminar. I studied at Anadolu University. Chomsky came to our university. My friends attended that seminar. He told everything he knows. We used to learn about him and his ideas from course books.

**E-mentor:** If some friends who are far away came together online and shared, how would that be? How beneficial would it be if teachers at MNE came together and an online seminar was given?

**Teacher 2:** It would be good. I see that a teacher gives online lessons. He is getting prepared for exams but he is teaching online. It would be very good for us as I cannot go to big city. It is very reasonable because there are not such kinds of education programs at MNE.

**E-mentor:** We have founded a group, shared modules and the friends check them. How beneficial do you think they are?

**Teacher 2:** I have checked them as well and I think they are applicable. Materials have been shared. They are applicable as they do not require electronic environment much. If I devoted myself as well, it could be done even though my course schedule does not allow me much. Reasonable things are discussed there.

**E-mentor:** You checked the modules; do you think they are beneficial?

**Teacher 2:** They might be beneficial but it is not as easy to apply as it is on paper. If it can be applied, it is beneficial. If it were a good school, a school where the students have the basics of English language, the teacher can play a better role. However, we have a curriculum to follow; we arrange the lessons according to exams. We have such students that will not be able to respond when you ask what a 'table' is. Thus, we work on the vocabulary but this time they do not have time to repeat the lessons. We have a very limited time; only four hours. I remember myself learning English, we had 24 hours of instruction in a week but even so we were not very successful. Now it is very difficult to teach students English and evaluate their learning. Thank you very much! Let's keep in touch through Skype when you have free time.



## 7.15. Appendix 15: Final report sample

(Following sample is Final report written by Teacher 5)

From: Muzaffer Çetin  
Subject: AFL  
Date: March 19, 2013 6:47:07 PM GMT+02:00  
To: Muzaffer Çetin

Hi,

First of all, I've been following your suggestions on Assessment for Learning for a couple of weeks and find it useful a great deal. As a member of your group on social media I try to keep in touch with the latest modules you've shared and I suggest the page to my colleagues.

Mentoring the teachers of ELT you've come to take responsibility of seems a really hard thing; since all problems are unique in state schools and its painful to reach all the English teachers, to meet their expectations at the same specific time..Hope you reach more people and I'm sure it will end up in a very beneficial platform where everybody can share their ideas..Thanks for triggering this.

I work as an English teacher in a state high school that consists of ten thousand students ap proximately..The class size is nearly 35 students. I work in Kahramanmaraş city..Here we dont have student oriented behavioral problems like the rest of teachers on your platform..But we sure have some problems of limited technological equipments which somehow affect the methods i choose to teach, the route of learning..I also have difficulty in some time issues, the syllabus we are ssupposed to follow is so complex and intense that I hardly find time to make assessment and to carry out complex tasks.. But thanks to you I've figured out how important to make assesment in class and I've been taking my time (one hour a week) to apply some assessment techniques.

Let me say that I found suggestions of Laura Greenstein -you shared on your page- very useful because she offers simple techniques that wont cost so much time.. For example nowadays I teach the subject of Health and Nutrition..We discuss what are healthy foods and what should we do to overcome obesity, what shou ld we do to lead a healthy life and so on..Students write down their own eating habits and share with the rest of the class..They form groups and argue if the foods mentioned are healthy or not and give marks from 1 to 10..Afterwards they decide what should it be like and offer each other tips to lead a healthy life..This is just a simple example of peer assessment. I make sure that they correct each other's mistakes..sometimes they play games such as bingo or jumbled words and sometimes they do brainstorming activities..At the end of the lesson I ask them to write down what they have learnt, what's new and sometimes I ask them to prepare their own quiz papers," if you were a teacher what would you ask to you" activities and so on.

And one more thing; I give high importance to use a positive language, instead of criticise them harshly, I choose to say "I know you can do better" It has a very positive effect on their exam scores since they feel relieved and relax. Than ks for guiding me. I'll go on sharing positive conclusions with you a s much as I can

## 7.16. Appendix 16: Video sharing

Videos were taken in my own classes to show sample lessons about feedback.

You are posting, commenting, and liking as Collaborative Platform for Formative Assessment Strategies — Change to Ogret Mentor

Collaborative Platform for... Timeline Now Admin Panel

Collaborative Platform for Formative Assessment Strategies  
March 7

**Group Feedback**  
I also try the modules in the classroom. Here is the video i recorded in the class today.  
The students enjoy giving feedback as there is no authority over them to make corrections. If there is friendly /respectful/ healing atmosphere in the class, students may enjoy assess each other with pleasure based on some success criteria given before.



Like - Comment - Share 2

**Peer Feedback**  
Here is the video taken from my class for you. I would be happy to watch your works as well  
By suitable matching peers can provide good feedback to each other. Of course that does not mean teachers will let them spend their time in vain. There will be always facilitating role for the teachers in the classroom assessment.



Like - Comment - Share 5

Formative Assessment Feedback Module A

## 7.17. Appendix 17: Facebook comments under modules

**Feedback Module A.**  
ogretmentor.wordpress.com

Feedback Module A.

Like - Comment - Share 7

 ... u the way she illustrates the article worths praise.  
March 7 at 10:56pm · Like

 **Collaborative Platform for Formative Assessment Strategies** This module was sent by Laura Greenstein by e-mail to us. She has been using such modules in her workshops in US schools.  
March 7 at 10:59pm · Like

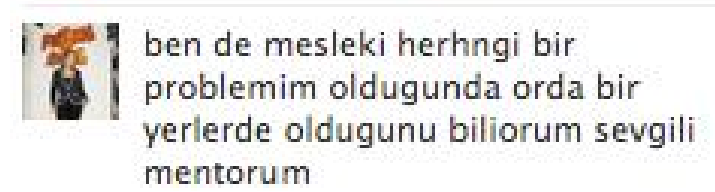
 ... they are very effective ways  
March 13 at 5:44pm · Edited · Like

 **Collaborative Platform for Formative Assessment Strategies** The social constructivist perspective emphasises the role of others in constructing understanding. Dialogue and collaboration are seen as key to learning success. Assessment would involve group tasks and assignments, sometimes with individual contributions being assessed. This perspective emphasises that feedback is not just teacher-provided but must be rich and varied, deriving also from peers during collaboration and discussion.  
March 29 at 9:09pm · Like

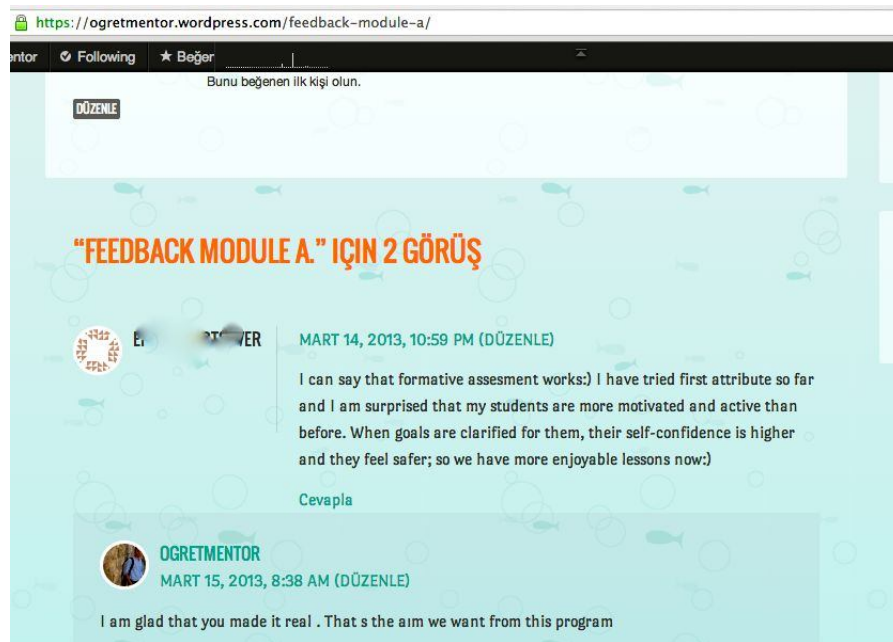
 ... bir sınıfta Formative assessment ı kullanmaya başladım ve çok olumlu sonuçlar aldım. Şu an itibariyle 2.haftadayız ve katettiğimiz yol çok fazla. Aynen söylendiği gibi yapıyoruz: önce hedefimizi açıklıyoruz,daha sonra ara hedefleri belirleyip bunları net bir şekilde ifade ediyoruz. Hedeflere dönük çalışıyoruz ve sonuçları hem bireysel hemde grup halinde değerlendiriyoruz.Sonuç harika: ne yaptığını bilen, kendine güvenen ve çalışma şevki yüksek

## 7.18. Appendix 18: Evidence of building trust among e-mentor and mentee about instant support

Participant here says: “ I also know that if I have any professional problem, you are somewhere there, my dear mentor.”



## 7.19. Appendix 19: Message on www.ogretmentor.wordpress.com for the Module in the archive



## **8. CURRICULUM VITAE**

He is 12-year experienced English Teacher, worked at three different countries and six schools. He has been working at Zirve University for three years. He has been reading on the topic “mentoring” for 10 years.

Muzaffer ÇETİN

E-mail: [muzaffercetin77@gmail.com](mailto:muzaffercetin77@gmail.com)

0507 403 34 41