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***Investigating Teachers' Use of Formative Assessment in EFL
Classes***
***The Case of Didactics and Applied Languages at Abdelhamid
Ibn Badis Mostaganem***

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Didactics of Foreign Languages

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Dedications

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Abstract

Teaching English as a foreign language is crucial in the higher education in Algeria since it is an international language nowadays. Achieving a satisfactory level in learning and teaching English is the primary aim of both foreign language learners and teachers. One potential way of improving the learning and teaching environment in higher education (HE) is by encouraging teachers to consider the use of formative assessment in EFL classes. This research study attempts to investigate what hinders the use of formative assessment. Furthermore, the present research aims at exploring the types of assessment most used by teachers and the advantages that formative assessment may bring to the classroom. A mixed methods research design has been chosen to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from the selected sample, in addition to the adoption of a multiple approach to validate or invalidate our hypotheses. The different data collection tools that have been chosen encompass a questionnaire and interview. The results indicate that formative assessment brings some advantages to the classroom including enhancing learning and teaching English. The study reveals the challenges facing teachers when they consider the use of formative assessment to take into account in their practice.

Key words: Higher Education, Formative Assessment, hinders, challenges, advantages

List of Abbreviations

FA: Formative assessment

HE: Higher education

DA: Diagnostic assessment

SA: Summative assessment

Q: Question

ELC: English language classes

EFL: English as foreign language

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General Introduction

The field of education has always been one of the significant aspects that deal with human development. Many researchers and scholars in the field of language learning and teaching are paying more attention to teaching the English language successfully and achieving higher level of learners in EFL context.

The main goal of higher education is opted for the success of learning and teaching English as a foreign language through achieving appropriate use of formative assessment in ELC. It has become obvious that the importance of using formative assessment is increasing in the teaching and learning process.

Formative assessment is one of the three types of assessment (diagnostic, summative and formative assessment). It is an ongoing process to track students' progress overtime. Then, it is a kind of an ongoing assessment to evaluate students' performances and re-adjust the learning and teaching process accordingly. It describes learners' feedback in formal situations and the teacher builds on it to improve his teaching.

Hence, improving this productive assessment is one of the crucial achievements of higher education in an EFL context. In recent years, there has been a major shift in perspectives in practicing assessment in English language teaching especially in formative assessment which has become the main issue to discuss among researchers when dealing with the main challenges that hinder teachers in utilizing formative assessment.

Accordingly, many scholars and teachers claim that there are many ET-in our context, we are referring to Algerian university, learners, teachers who are able to use the summative assessment in EFL classes simply, but they cannot utilize the formative assessment appropriately. The majority of teachers find obstacles when it comes to use formative assessment inside the classroom and they do not prefer to be engaged in formative assessment 'strategies. Learner 'involvement in the classroom can be as supportive technique to teaching and learning. Moreover, using formative assessment effectively is regarded as being a cradle of language teaching and learning. It is indeed a shared responsibility among both teachers and teaching progress (higher education). In this prospect, supporting the effective use of formative assessment by teachers in foreign language classes has become crucial because using formative assessment is essential for EFL learners.

However, a series of problems are encountered while using this assessment. These obstacles have a significant effect on the enhancement of learners and teachers in developing their level. Thus, in this study we have raised many issues related to a number of hinders that may Cause the avoiding of use formative assessment with the aim of providing our readers with a maximum of solutions.

In this respect three center questions are to be asked to during our investigation. They are cited as follow:

- Which type of assessment is more used by teachers in ELC?
- Why is formative assessment avoided by teachers in higher education?
- what are advantages that formative assessment may bring to the classroom?

As tentative answers to these questions we suggest the following hypotheses:

- Teachers tend to use the summative assessment in ELC.
- formative assessment is not used in ELC because of some difficulties including time constraint. Teachers have not enough time to exercise formative assessment since they have to finish the syllabus.
- formative assessment brings many advantages including: knowing where students are in the learning process. It helps teachers to check students 'understanding and it increases the knowledge and the level of students. So we can say that formative assessment plays a role in enhancing learning and teaching English in higher education.

The general aim behind this study is to raise teachers' awareness of achieving the effective use of formative assessment to exercise it with their students at Mostaganem University. Specifically, the main objective of this research is to investigate hinders that teachers face during using the formative assessment. It aims also to explore what types of assessment is more used by teachers in EFL classes. The final attempt is to explore the advantages that FA may bring to the classroom.

To undertake this research, the selected population includes teacher of second year master students of didactics and applied languages since they have an experience in teaching English as a foreign language at the department of English at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University. Concerning the research methodology, a mixed methods research design is conducted to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. For the purpose of increasing the credibility to

this research and reaching it, a mixed approach is opted for by using multiple data collection instruments. The first tool to be used is a questionnaire which is submitted to teachers in order to obtain teachers' views regarding the extent teachers use all types of assessment with their students. After getting the answers of questionnaire, an interview is conducted with same participants to check hindrances teachers face during using formative assessment in ELC. Finally, it is important to reveal the teachers' perception towards the achievement of effective use of formative assessment and its advantages through a qualitative investigation.

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter provides an review of literature of the examined topic. First, it gives an insight into formative assessment including its definitions from different perspectives, the main components and its benefits in education (learning and teaching). Then, it tackles the feedback assessment. The second chapter is devoted to provide an insightful description of research methodology, the methods and approaches followed in undertaking this research in addition to the different data collection tools used to investigate the use of formative assessment in EFL classes. The last chapter concerned with the analysis and the discussion of the obtained results followed by a set of suggestions that may enhance the adoption of using formative assessment.

Chapter One:
Review of Literature

1. Introduction

The first chapter presents the main subtitles and the essential concepts which have a relation with the term formative assessment. Firstly, it gives the assessment definition and describes its types. Then, it focuses on the formative assessment starting with definition, kinds, strategies, stages and the comparison between traditional assessment and formative assessment. Also; it mentions how can teachers and students use the formative assessment. To add, it describes the role of teachers, students and internet in formative assessment. Finally, the definition of formative feedback and impact is important characteristic in formative feedback in context of higher education take place in the first chapter.

1.1 Definition of Assessment

In fact, research and experience tell us very forcefully about the importance of assessment in higher education. So, the term assessment has been used so differently. Assessment is defined as it always goes hand in hand with teaching. In other words, teaching and assessment are interrelated (Brown, 2003 & Regier, 2012). In addition, assessment in higher education shows impressive depth in its treatment of assessment as a field of inquiry. In their recent assessment essentials, Polomba & Banta define assessment as “... *the systematic collection review, and use of information about educational programs for the purpose of improving student learning and development*” (P.07) (cited in Heywood, 2000). Briefly, assessment is the gathering of information about the student’s ability to perform learning task. Additionally, Cano & Lon (2016) argue that “within *pedagogy for autonomy assessment is not only as a tool for measuring learner’s achievement, but also, to improving the quality of their learning*” (P.19). Assessment is a process to know about students’ progress and level in a given area. It consists of getting to know students’ learning and adopt the teaching content according to their levels, needs and expectations. It can include all types of tests, exams, homework either oral or written that quantify students’ knowledge and measure the degree of their understanding- and information absorption –during a definite period of lessons attendance.

1.2 Types of Assessment

According to Regier (2012) & Brown (2004), there are three types of assessment diagnostic assessment, summative assessment and formative assessment.

1.2.1 Diagnostic Assessment (DA)

Diagnostic assessment is a kind of an assessment that enables teachers to evaluate students' level, strengths, weaknesses ...etc. Regier (2012) argues that the diagnostic assessment aims at collecting information about students. It is about defining the needs and weaknesses of the learners. Moreover, it is the one done before the teaching process to locate willingness level of students and to cognize instruction. Then, Ana & José (2016) consider it as "assessment of the student's, weaknesses, knowledge and skills beyond hand, so as to prepare the teaching pattern and provide base to keep track of the learning progress throughout the course" (P .24). As a result, it intends to test students 'proficiency level in a given area and so make decisions accordingly.

1.2.2 Summative Assessment (SA)

The summative assessment is related to assessment of learning. It is a kind of evaluating and ranking students learning, and it is generally done at the end of a project or semester. It aims to measure or summarize what a student has grasped and typically occurs at the end of a course or a unit of instruction (Brown, 2003). Also it is used at the end of a lesson or unit of study. Teachers use the summative assessment in many forms such as tests, exams... etc. Summative assessment shows the learning that students have. In words of Ana & José (2016), it is "... *the final assessment or evaluation of a student's performance, which is used to make judgments and decisions about the overall knowledge and skills of an individual*" (P.07). The summative assessment is done to furnish argument of what students learned.

1.3 Formative Assessment (FA)

In contrast to summative assessment, formative assessment aims at collecting information about student's learning. It is utilized during a lesson or unit of study (Regier, 2012).

1.3.1 Definition of Formative Assessment

The formative assessment is generally defined as taking place during a course with the expressed purpose of improving students learning. Heritage (2007) describes it as "... *a systematic process to continuously gather evidence about learning*" (P.140). Moreover, it is an evaluation done by the teacher during the teaching process to see whether they are grasping the teaching input or not. Its goal relies in passing students' progress and to make changes to instruction. Formative assessment is a practice teachers do with and for students. The primary

purpose of using formative assessment is providing an immediate feedback to improve the students' learning. Cowie and Bell define it as *“the process used by teachers and students to recognize and respond to student learning in order to enhance that learning during the learning progress”* (P.26) (cited in Andrade & Cizek, 2010). Thus, Formative assessment is an assessment in which promoting his/her knowledge and skills. Learners use this assessment in a voluntary manner to check their knowledge and to enhance their performance as it does not influence their final assessment (Ana & José, 2016). Therefore, it is an ongoing process to track students' progress overtime and collect data about how students are going on with learning. So, the information gathered is more of a qualitative nature. Therefore, formative assessment is a kind of assessment which aims to enhance the learning process along the course when giving continuous feedback. Yorke (2003) suggests that the basic principles behind formative assessment is to *“contribute to student learning through the provision of information about performance”* (P.478). Thus, Sadler's (1989) focuses on the concept of using formative assessment to mould students *“formative assessment is concerned with how judgements about the quality of student responses (performance ,pieces, or works) can be used to shape and improve students' competences by short circuiting the randomness and inefficiency of trial and error learning”* (P.21) (cited in Irons, 2008)

1.3.2 Kinds of Formative Assessment

The central purpose of formative assessment is to contribute to student learning through the provision of information about performance.

In order to acquire a better understanding of the nature of formative assessment, scholars review that formative assessment tend to fall into two categories included: formal and informal formative assessment. These two categories are generally distinguished as follows:

1.3.2.1 Formal formative assessment

Formal formative assessment can be defined as those assessments that take place with reference to a specific curricular assessment framework. They involve activities required of the student and of the assessor (Yorke, 2003). According to Own & Ryan (2001) formal formative assessment can provide detailed feedback on a child's progress if this child has clearly misunderstood something as well as indicating the next stage for larger groups. Moreover, when dealing with the formal formative assessment usually begins with students engaging in activities designed or selected in advance by the teacher with the direct purpose

of collecting assessment information. They focus on some specific aspects of learning, but they may also be direct questioning and generation of question (Scott & Webber, 2015). The later discusses “A formal formative assessment activity enables teachers to step back at certain points during instruction, allows them to check student understanding and plan on the next steps that must be taken to move their students learning acting” (P.180).

In the formal formative assessment, the teacher might prepare and pose to the whole class a question designed to challenge their thinking and make a more explicit according to Andrade & Cizek (2010). In addition, formal formative assessment often documented and may or may not carry grade points. They encompass quizzes, papers, presentation and written surveys.

1.3.2.2 Informal Formative Assessment

“Informal formative assessment is assessments that take place in the course of events, but which are not specifically stipulated in the curriculum designed according to Yorke (2003, P.479). Then, Owen& Ryan (2001) argues that “*informal formative assessment takes place an integral, unplanned part of everyday teaching*” (P.137). When dealing with the informal formative assessment, a teacher can gather information about student –teacher interaction at the whole class, small –group, it can arise out of ant instructional learning activity at hand, and it is embedded and strongly linked of learning and teaching activities. “*the information gathered during informal formative assessment is transient and many times goes unrecorded*” according to Scott &Webber (2015, P.180). Additionally, Yorke (2003) reviews that informal formative assessment data is not useful for gaining an overview of the overall level of attainment or of the curriculum as a whole, since its focus is on what has just been learned and what is about to be learned. Therefore, informal formative assessment has less documented and often more performance-based like: quick checks for understanding, questioning, discussion, observation and interviews.

Whether they are formal or informal, formative assessments are embedded regularly into every step of the learning process, not just administered at the end of an instructional period. And every formative assessment should do one important thing: Inform teaching and learning.

1.3.3 Formative assessment strategies

Regier (2012) provides teachers –through his book- with a variety of strategies to gather information about their students during instruction. Some of them are the following:

- Analogies

The powerful method in formative assessment is to ask students to create an analogy between something they are familiar with and the new information they have learn. when the teacher asks their students to create an analogy for an atom, students may come up with autonomy like a community. So asking students to explain their analogies will show the depth of their understanding about a topic (Regier, 2012).

- Check List

Class check lists are a great tool for collecting data about students during a unit of study. Before beginning a new unit, teachers makes a list of all the skills students will need to demonstrate mastery of the unit’s outcome(s). They may list the student’s names down the left hand side and the skills across the top. While students are participating in various learning opportunities, teachers observe the students and check off the skills they see students demonstrating with proficiency. Individuals check lists can also be used to gather data about students ‘learning (Heritage, 2007).

- Choral response

If the teacher needs a quick assessment of student understanding, He/she may ask students to respond to a series of questions” as a class. when listening carefully to the number and content of responses, they will get an idea of whether or not the students are clear on what the teacher is presenting. Choral response encourages all students to be actively engaged in the assessment process (Regier, 2012).

- Short quizzes

Students respond to a prompt or a few targeted questions. They receive feedback promptly with directions for what they will do as a result the outcome (Yorke, 2003).

- Computer Surveys

Computer surveys are a quick way to determine what students have learned about a topic of study. Teachers may create ten short response questions –true false, multiple choices or word completion questions (Surgenor, 2009).

- Discussion

Having a class discussion can provide the teacher with valuable information regarding what students know about the subject. The teacher need to focus the discussion on higher level thinking skills and give students a few minutes to reflect on their learning before beginning the discussion. Teachers need to encourage students to share what they have learned and how that knowledge may have an impact on their responses given by students (Jabber, 2016).

- Email Questions

Technology is a response for teachers and a medium that most students are familiar with and comfortable using. In case of school provides its students with email addresses, the teacher can send questions to students. The questions should focus on higher level thinking skills and demonstrate their learning during a current unit of study. Then, the teachers have to encourage students to think about all the learning opportunities they have participated and how those activities fit in with their own back ground knowledge and experiences (Regier, 2012)

- List 10 things

About mid-way through a unit of study, teachers may instruct students to list ten things they have learned during the unit. The teacher can collect these lists and read through them to get an idea about students and their understanding.so, looking for gaps in learning or misunderstanding can be addressed in future lessons (Regier, 2012).

- Observation

Observing students gives valuable information about how students ‘progress and what strategies they use to learn. recording information can take several different forms the teacher can use sticky notes to jot down his observation .at the end of the day these sticky notes can be easily filed in to individual student file folders or branders (Irons, 2008).

- Examples / non examples

Encourage students to provide the teacher with examples and non –examples of a topic being studied. The examples and non- examples provide the teacher with information regarding the depth of understanding of the students (Regier, 2012)

- **Think –pair share**

The teacher presents a question (higher level, standard targeted). Students have 20-30 seconds to think on their own on a signal, they turn to a partner and discuss their thoughts for approx. a minute, and finally they share with the class for discussion (Greenstein, 2010)

- **Conferences**

Students’ understanding can be formatively assessed using one –on-one conference with each student or by selecting for whom the teacher the teacher wants to further asses their learning determine their target questions a head of time ensure gathering information related to goal or outcome. He has to take notes during the conferences to refer to later when planning instruction (Regier, 2012)

1.3.4 Stages of Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is every day teachers’ task. It means; it may occur during all stages of the lesson plan.

1.3.4.1 Formative Assessment before Instruction

The role of teachers during this period is to organize instruction based on pre-assessment tasks. The later gives enough information about students’ background knowledge of the subject matter to be taught before instruction. Therefore, pre-formative assessment helps teachers to sit down their instructional goals based on the outcomes of these assessments for future planning. Moreover, pre-assessment helps students to enhance their learning using prior knowledge to adjust the new one comprehensibly (Greenstein, 2010).

1.3.4.2 Formative Assessment during Instruction

It is any assessment that occur during the state of teaching and learning in classroom situation. classroom assessment during instruction seeks to provide information about how well students are progressing and to decide whether to move forward or back ward instruction. Also, it helps teachers discover the ability of each individual that needs future explanation and practice than other ones. Similarly, according to Greenstein (2010)

assessment during instruction helps teachers identify students who are struggling with particular concepts or application. In addition, its aim is focusing instruction on point of strengths and weaknesses of skills, knowledge and language development. Then, assessment during instruction serves to as an effective strategy that encourages students 'self –assessment as they receive teachers' formative feedback.

As a result, students' motivational sense will be raised via learning new knowledge and skills. The use of formative assessment during instruction relies on many strategies as questioning, for example, according to Greenstein "asking students to demonstrate their knowledge in the difference ways increases the changes that you will take an accurate picture of their understanding"p.36.So,questioning strategies are used in all parts of instruction (before ,during ,after).It is a much reliable way to identify concepts of misunderstanding gives teachers the opportunity to correct subjects .Moreover, questions should be integral components during instruction because teachers are in need for the information they provide through answers to know if they have understood what is presented by McMillan (2007).

1.3.4.3 Formative Assessment after Instruction

Traditionally, when instruction has finished, students assessment reveals in a form of grade that is to provide them with a final decisions of learning.in contrast, according to ibid with formative assessment teachers still have opportunity to improve learning before it is over(summative assessment take place them).furthermore it is an agreed upon definition that formative assessment come to fill the gap of misunderstanding after the instruction has been completed .post instruction strategies reviews summaries of all what has been taught so far , as it involves questioning strategies to highlight elements of weak or confusing ; in order ,to be avoided in summative conclusions.

1.4 Teachers and Students Use Formative Assessment

Teachers use formative assessment information to assess how their current instructional strategies are working with their students. Regier (2012) argues that if there are students who are struggling, teachers may need to work individual with a student, present information other ways or adapt their current instructional strategy. students who have appeared to master the outcome or goal being formatively assessed, may need to further assess or have learning opportunities planned that challenge them and are designed at their level understanding. Teachers are also able to identify misunderstanding. Therefore, according to Heritage (2007),

the teachers use on going frequent formative assessment. So they are able to determine what the next steps in learning should be anticipating that adjustments to teaching and learning made on the basis of the evidence should result in improved learning. If it does not, they will use other formative assessment strategies to figure out why no improvement has occurred. Similarly, students can use formative assessment information to determine what they need to the goals or outcomes of the unit. Students may need to adopt or to change their learning to master curriculum outcomes. If students are not achieving at an expected they can look at the strategies, they are using for learning and decide whether they need to change their current learning strategies or adopt new was of learning the information provided by formative assessment strategies can also be used to help students reflect or current learning goals or set new goals according to Greenstein (2010).

1.5 Six Steps to Formative Assessment Success

Jabber (2016) brings to high the specific steps and regulation that leaders can do to support teachers in integrating formative assessment in their daily routines. In order to help shape this process and make it more efficient, he has developed the key strategies presented earlier by Dylan Williams and come up with a list of six keys to formative assessment success in the classrooms. These steps comprise the following details:

1. Choice

Teachers have the right to decide which strategies they should use in their classroom conducting level of their students (Dyer, 2016).

2. Flexibility

Learners can encourage teachers to modify the strategies to become more applicable relevant to their own context (Dyer, 2016).

3. Small steps

Since learning is gradual, accumulative and needs time to change certain practices and habits, teachers should be supported with the time, resource, and coaching to help them make educational transformation (Jabber, 2016)

4. Responsiveness

A major component of collecting data and testing to build an action plan and act on it. Teachers and students have to be responsive in using their data to improve education not just to get grades (jabber, 2016)

5. Collegial support

Peer collaboration is very crucial to both teachers and students. Just as learners benefit from their peers' comments and help, teachers should be given time to meet and reflect on the challenges they face the strategies that work and the efficiency of their action. Also they can give and receive feedback from colleagues (Dyer, 2016).

6. Supportive answer ability

To achieve meaningful change in their practice, teachers are held accountable for their work but they are being supported by responsive leaders (Jabber, 2016)

1.6 Traditional vs. Formative assessment

This quote has been used to explain the difference between formative and summative assessment “*when the chef tastes the sauce it is formative assessment, when the customer tastes, it is summative*” (cited in Surgeenore, 2009).

According to Surgenor (2009) the main differences between summative and formative assessment is the purpose of conducting the assessment.

Summative assessment is assessment of learning. It is type with most people is familiar, it is conducted at the end of semester, or few weeks in forms of tests & exams) to see what students have learned. Besides, it is any assessment activity which is subsequently used as a judgment on student performance. Ultimately, judgment using summative assessment marks will be used to determine the classification of award at the end of course or programme.

Formative assessment is assessment for learning. It does not deal with grad of students but it is used to provide feedback to improve learning and understanding. Therefore, it is any task or activity which creates feedback (or feed forward) for students about their learning. FA do not carry a grade which is subsequently used in a summative judgement (Irons, 2008).

1.7 The Role of Teachers, Students & Internet in Formative Assessment

1.7.1 Teachers' Role

Heritage (2007) argues that to use formative assessment correctly, teachers will need to optimize their knowledge in their domain area, pedagogical content assessment knowledge, and knowledge of students' previous learning. These skills border on mastery level teaching, but in many ways these are expectations of quality formative assessment practices. Also, in classrooms the teachers play a great role in using formative assessment continuously. Hence, they assess, make adjustments, assess again, and make adjustments and so on.

1.7.2 Students' role

In fact, Students play a very important role in the formative assessment. They are not only targets under the research, but also the main body to give assessment that means students' classroom performance can not only be analyzed by teachers, but also by their classmates. All the students can get actively involved in the assessment to evaluate each other. "Students should be integral partners in the formative assessment process". They may be the key factor in optimizing its successful implementation. For ex: students have to make decision if they want to learn and improve academically. If they are unsure of the path to follow do not have the necessary information to improve or lack the confidence to succeed or even, try. (Heritage, 2007)

1.7.3 Internet' Role

Formative assessment can be done through internet which becomes a new and effective tool. It is observed that it is possible to discuss and speak about academic performance and execution on line. New communicating channels like email carry with great comfort for teachers and students' tasks and answer questions, give group discussion and provide estimation to each other through the network. With the help of internet, students can set their academic goals, control the whole learning process and giving appropriate help and guidance tests can be made after each unit, and topics are arranged discussion online (Greenstein, 2010).

1.8 Feedback

1.8.1 Definition of feedback

Formative feedback can be defined from various perspectives. Cano & Lon (2016) describes it as “the information communicated to a student in regard to their understanding of shared learning objectives of a given task against an agreed set of criteria. This information will include guidance on how to improve” (P.20). additionally, it is conceptualized as information provided by an agent (teachers ,books, parents ...etc.) regarding aspects of one’s performance or understanding .Moreover, feedback is an important component of the assessment process upon which students learning can be chanced .Then, formative feedback is “any information ,process ,or activity which affords or accelerates students learning based on comments relating to either formative assessment or summative assessment activities” according to Irons (2008) .It can be said ;it represents information communicated to the learner that is intended to modify the learners thinking or behaviour for the purpose of improving learning. To end, feedback is a term used across many fields and is a set of processes in which learners make sense of evaluative information about their work to improve future performance (Henderson, Ajjawi & Boud, 2019). furthermore, jabber (2016) suggests that the type of feedback that helps learners move forward with their learning and improve their skills. Each learner responds differently to the same type of feedback; some might feel motivated to improve while others feel frustrated. Therefore, he mentioned that teachers are the best ones who know their students. Consequently, they can make better judgments about when to provide feedback and when to back off. That is why teachers should provide their students with a positive feedback because it can change the life of these students not just only their learning.

1.8.2 Impact is an Important Characteristic in Feedback Assessment

Impact is a necessary characteristic of effective feedback. It is an essentially any changed state within learners as a result of feedback processes.so the impact of feedback in higher education is very important and many scholars discuss it as follows:

- ❖ Feedback can be usefully understood as a process in which information about a learner’s performance somehow influences their future capabilities or actions (Henderson, Ajjawi & Boud, 2019).

- ❖ “Feedback is not just the way in which it is delivered but how students are inducted in to the academic community so that they are able to make the most of the feedback that they receive “(Merry, Price, Carless & Taras, 2013, p.29).
- ❖ Feedback is an immensely powerful engine for improving learning (Heritage, 2007).
- ❖ “Feedback is information communicated to the Lerner that is intended to modify his/her thinking or behaviour for the purpose of improving learning “(shute, 2008 as cited in heritage, 2007, P.79)
- ❖ Feedback is the information which provided by an agent e.g. (teacher, peer, book, parents) regarding aspects of one ‘s performance or understanding (Heritage, 2007).
- ❖ Feedback which is relevant, and includes clear goals (Jabber, 2016).
- ❖ Feedback provides opportunity for students to advance and includes comments not only grades (jabber, 2016).

1.9 Conclusion

Assessment is very important in informing teachers about the effectiveness of their strategies of instruction; it shows the students their strengths and their weaknesses. This happens through the feedback their teachers give them. For this reason, we highlighted in the first chapter of our research the essential concepts related to the term formative assessment, including its definition, its strategies and its stages. we mentioned also the comparison between summative and formative assessment and the role of teachers and students in formative assessment. All that information gathered for inviting and motivating teachers to use formative assessment in their classroom for enhancing learning and teaching.

Chapter Two: Research Methodology

2. Introduction

The previous chapter has tackled some theoretical issues linked to formative assessment. The present chapter attempts to provide a thorough description of the practical phase of this research work. It focuses on the research methodology followed in the collection of data including the approaches and methods that were chosen to undertake this research. The next step is devoted to population of the study, together with sampling technique used to choose the sample and the context. Finally, it highlights the data collection tools employed including a teacher questionnaire and teacher's interview, their advantages and their limitations.

2.1 Research Methodology

Research is scientific and systematic search for knowledge and truth on specific topic. It is a process used to collect and analyze information to increase the understanding of a topic or an issue. It consists of three steps:

1. Pose a question
2. Collect data to answer the question
3. Present an answer to the question

Kothari (2004) notes that the term research is related to find the information and knowledge on a particular topic or subject. In other words, research is an art of systematic investigation. It is an academic activity and as such the term should be used in a technical sense. According to Clifford Woody (as cited in C.R. Kothari, 2004) "research comprises defining and redefining problems, formulating hypothesis or suggested solution, collecting, organizing and evaluating data; making deductions and reaching conclusions to determine whether they fit the formulating hypothesis" (p.01). On the other hand, Goundar (2013) defines research as "*an investigation of finding solutions to scientific and social problems through objective and systematic analysis*" p.03. Moreover, research is composed of two words "re" and "search", which means to search again, or to search for new facts or to modify older ones in any branch of knowledge according to Mohajan (2018). Then, Research involves collection of data from primary and secondary sources and expresses them in quantitative and qualitative terms. The research should be objective and logical, applying every possible test to verify the data collected and the procedures employed.

Accordingly,” *research methodology is the approach in which research troubles are solved thoroughly*” (Mishra & Alok, 2017, P. O1). Additionally, it is a science of studying how research is conducted systematically. The scientific approach which is adopted for conducting a research is called methodology (Kothari, 2004). Furthermore, Goundar (2013) argues that research methodology is a collective term for the structured process of conducting research. It seeks to inform: why a research study has been undertaken, how the research problem has been defined, in what way and why the hypothesis has been formulated, what data have been collected and what particular methods has been adopted, why particular technique of analyzing data has been used. Besides, research methodology is a set of systematic techniques used in research, it means a guide to research and how it is conducted. Part of the research methodology is concerned with the how the research is conducted. This is called the study design and typically involves research conducted using questionnaire, interview, observation or experiments (Igwenogu 2016). Then, he adds that the term RM which prescribe the research methods to use, usually encompasses the procedures followed to analyze and interpret the data gathered. As a result, it can be said that the system of collecting data for research projects is known as research methodology. Leody &Ormrod 2001(cited in Williams 2007) define it as “*the general approach the researcher takes in carrying out the research project*”. p.66

2.1.1 Advantages of Research Methodology

According to Gounder (2013), research methodology has many advantages sense of it is very important in any research, they are:

- It is used to give a clear cut idea on what the researcher is carrying out his/her research.
- It drives the researcher in the right track while selecting the topic.
- The entire research plan is based on the concept of right research methodology.
- It describes and analysis methods.

In other hand, Igwenogu (2016, p.05) summaries the advantages of research methodology in:

- Provision of tools for carrying out the researcher.
- Develops a critical and scientific attitude, disciplined thinking to observations.
- Inculcates the ability to learn to read and think critically.

2.1.2 Methodology

As it has already been stated in the beginning of this work, the research is an attempt to investigate the use of formative assessment in EFL classes. To fulfill our objective behind the study, it was necessary to design a method to rely on.

Selecting the choice of research methodology is based largely upon the subject of the research, its aims behind the study, and the sample investigated. According to Burns (2001, P.44) a method is “... *A range of approaches used in the educational research to gather data which are to be used as a basis for inference and prediction* “. In other words, methods are a set of procedures and techniques used to collect data. Since our aim is to examine and diagnose the difficulties faced by teachers when they use formative assessment, the descriptive research is going to be used. Baiche (2001) views that the descriptive research depends largely on observation as tool of collecting data. He adds “*it attempts to examine situations in order to form what is the norm, i.e. what can be practiced to happen again under the same circumstance*” (P.91)

01-Researchquestions

The study at hand is conducted for the sake of answering three research questions in order to fulfill the objective of the work. The major ones are as follows:

1. Which type of assessment is more used by teachers in ELC?
2. Why is using formative assessment avoided in higher education?
3. What are the advantages that formative assessment may bring to the classrooms?

02- Research hypotheses

1. Most teachers tend to use summative assessment in English language classes.
2. Formative assessment is not that used by teachers because of time constraints because teachers have to finish the syllabus so the time is not enough to do formative assessment.
3. Formative assessment brings many advantages including knowing where students are in the learning process .it helps teachers to check students’ understanding and it increases the knowledge and the level of students. .so we can say that it plays a role in enhancing learning and teaching English in higher education.

In order for these questions to be answered accurately, a both qualitative and quantitative approach were used to extract results from the participants numerically and in terms of personal points of view. It is called mixed methods research. As a result, these three types are including in term of research approaches.

2.1.3 Research Approaches

According to Mohajan (2018),” *a research approach is a plan of action that gives direction to conduct research systematically*” (P.03). Therefore, Creswell (2009) argues that there are three main research approaches quantitative approach, qualitative approach and mixed methods research (as cited in Mohajan, 2018).

Firstly; Quantitative approach (research) is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participant’s setting, data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretation of the meaning of the data. The final written report searches that as a flexible structure. Those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation according to Creswell (2009). Moreover, Williams (2007) says “*quantitative approach to respond to research questions requiring numerical data*” (P; 03) (as cited in Mohajan, 2018). Thus, the quantitative approach was used in order to give this study the required accurate numerical answers. “*quantitative research gathers data in a numerical form which can be put into categories, or in rank order, or measured in unites of measurement. This type of data can be used to construct graphs and tables of raw data*” (McLeodS, 2017, P.46).

Secondly, Creswell (2009) asserts that qualitative approach is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables. These variables, in turn, can be measured, typically on instruments, so that numbered data can be analyzed using statistical procedures. The final written report has a set structure consisting of introduction, literature and theory methods, results and discussion. Like qualitative researchers, those who engage in this form of inquiry have assumptions about testing theories deductively building in protections against bias controlling for alternative explanations and being able to generalize and replicate the findings. Parkinson & Drislane (2011) discuss qualitative research in which “*...using methods such as participant observation or case studies which result in a narrative*

descriptive account of a setting or practice". P.02. Then, in the words of McLeod (2017), the aim of qualitative research is to understand the social reality of individuals, groups and cultures as nearly as possible as its participants feel it or live it. Thus, people and groups are studied in their natural setting.

Finally, mixed methods are an approach to inquiry involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data. Integrating the two forms of data and using distinct design that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks. The core assumption of this form of inquiry is that the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches provides a more complete understanding of research problem than either approach alone.

2.1.4 Description of Methodology

In fact, this study presents a descriptive methodology, which aims at describing and explaining a certain population in organizing way by answering the which, why and what questions.

Accordingly, both methods are appropriate for conducting the current research, and each method can contribute greatly to the scientific research. For this reason, the relevant study uses the mixed methodology approach which includes quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative approach employed the teachers' questionnaire that aimed at knowing which type of assessment that is more used by teachers in EFL classes. On the other hand, the qualitative approach took place in our study in which we wanted to elicit why teachers avoid using formative assessment in their classes and the advantages that FA may bring to the classroom. This was done through exercising of the teachers' interview in order to validate or invalidate our hypotheses. As a result, teachers are the population which was chosen to acquire the needed data in conducting this research.

2.2 Procedures

This study was conducted in teaching English as foreign languages at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University Mostaganem. It took place during the academic year 2020/2021. The present study has opted for varied research tools so as to gain data needed for a sound investigation of types of assessment teachers utilize, teachers' use of formative assessment in ELC and teachers view points towards hinders when using formative assessment effectively. Conventionally, information can be gathered via a number different means or the called research instruments such as interviews, questionnaires and the present research work aims to

reach the mixed method approaches through the use of both questionnaire and interview. The first instrument used was teachers' questionnaire which aims at discovering which type of assessment is more used in ELC. On the other hand, teacher' s interview also took place in this study, so we conducted it with seven of teachers online in order to investigate the causes of avoiding formative assessment and its advantages in improving learning and teaching English.

2.3 Context:

The relevant research was carried out with teachers of second year master students of didactics and applied languages at the department of English at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University Mostaganem, because this place serves the needs of our investigation under certain conditions such as time. In addition, the teachers of this department are very helpful and cooperative; as a result, they could fit and supply us with data needed in order to provide solutions to the issue discuss.

2.4 Identification of the target population

As you continue planning your research project you need to think about how you are going to choose your participants. Population is defined by Polite (2001) as the entire aggregation of cases that meet a specified set of criteria. To gain more credible information, there were seven teachers (male and f female) from the department of English teachers. The teachers come from different ethnic background and had several teaching wants socially and academically, etc. However, a series of obstacles did hinder us from obtaining information from all participants.

It can be said that making decision about sampling should be carried out earlier in the overall planning of any research work because of the difficulties stated before (time, expense. etc.) So, any researcher needs to gather information from a particular small group; this group makes the sample of the study which considered as the important element to conduct our research. It is known as the group on which information is obtained. In addition, the sample is defined by Polite (2001) as follows: “*sampling includes selecting a group of events, people, behaviors or other parameters with which we do a study*”. P.35. That is, it is necessary to choose the group of participants that fits one 's study and aims of research.

2.5 Data collection instruments

In dealing with any real life problem it is often found that data at hand are inadequate, and hence. So, in any piece of research, the data collection instrument is required. It becomes necessary to collect data that are appropriate. There are several ways of collecting the appropriate data which differ considerably in context of money costs, time and other resources at the disposal of the researcher.

For this study, we employed multiple data gathering instruments. These include: a teachers' questionnaire and interview with teachers of EFL classes.

2.5.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires are one of the basic data collection procedures that minimize time and efforts. It is not only tooled to manage, but give also a gist overview of the investigated issue which may be seen hard to gain by other tools of investigation. According to Mathers, Fox & Hunn (2007), a questionnaire is "*a very convenient way of collecting useful comparable data from a large number of individuals*" p.19. Probably, the questionnaire is the first tool we have nominated for to collect quantitative data. It is a set of questions which are asked in the same way to different people. As result, it is considered as a key to most survey research and an important element in its success. Brace (2008) defines it as "... *the medium of communication between the researcher and the subject, albeit sometimes administered on the researcher 's behalf by an interviewer*" (P.04). In adding, questionnaires provide and suggest the gist overview of the discuss problem which is difficult to gain by other instruments of investigation. Brown (2001) point out "*questionnaires are any written instruments that present respondents with a series of questions or statements to which they are to react either by writing out their answers or selecting from among existing answers*" (p.06). Then, it is considered as a good method which helps researchers to ask questions and receive responses without talking to members of a given sample. Furthermore, it is one of data collecting and it includes all items about which researcher considered information was needed. Furthermore, the questionnaire is a flexible tool which should be deal with carefully in order to fulfill the needs and requirement of a research. Most researchers choose that instrument (questionnaire) to gather data which is well organized and accurate, it is why, and it is considered as a useful tool. The questionnaire can be closed-ended, open –ended or a combination of both. In other hand, it is commonly agreed upon that whenever any given data collection tool is long, the participants are going to feel bored and will not probably provide the researcher with accurate

and reliable answers. “*Respondents may answer superficially especially if the questionnaire takes a long time to complete. The common mistake of asking too many questions should be avoided*” (Milne, 1999, P.18) as a result, it affected the results data negatively.

2.5.1.1 Description of Teachers’ Questionnaire

Being a significant instrument that researchers in the field of education utilize to substantiate their studies’ claims, the teachers’ questionnaire was a necessity that was ought to be employed in the common study. The sample of informants who agreed to answer our questionnaire consists of ten English teachers of master two didactics and applied languages at Abdelhamid Ibn Badis University.

The questionnaire aims at getting to know which type of assessment is more used by teachers in English language classes. We wanted to know what all types of assessment teachers know are and to what extent they use them in their classes with mention their importance in learning and teaching English. We also wanted to discover what are hinders of using formative assessment and their supporting to achieve the use of formative assessment in higher education. This is why, seven copies of questionnaire are sent online to English teachers

The types of questions that were prominently used in our survey are both open –ended and close –ended questions to achieve quantitative data. Close-ended questions intend at acquiring exact answers by providing the participants with yes/no questions or a set of suggested items to choose the appropriate answers (s) through ticking the right box (es), in other hand, open –ended questions are aimed to provide personal opinions and to give space to participants to add needed explanation.

To achieve our well organized questionnaire, we divided it into five sections and each section includes number of questions (see appendix....).

➤ Section one: personal information (Q1-Q3)

The first section is devoted to the participant’s personal information to have background knowledge about their gender, the university system they belong to, and their level.

➤ Section two: Types of Assessment (Q1-Q3)

The second section targets types of assessment that teachers use in English language classes. The first question aims at enquiring whether teachers are familiar with the term assessment. The second question investigates whether teachers have an idea about all types of assessment. After that, they have space to mention what are they in order to know what teachers use in English language classes. The last question of this section is intended to reveal the types of assessment which are more used by teachers in their classes. The suggested answers include: diagnostic, summative and formative assessment.

➤ **Section three: Diagnostic assessment in English Language classes (Q1-Q5)**

In this section, teachers are asked about their opinions and attitude concerning the diagnostic assessment. Question (01) attempts to know whether or not teachers can define the diagnostic assessment which aims to give them the freedom to define it from their understanding. Then, question (02) asked teachers if they use diagnostic assessment or not in their ELC. Question (03) discovers when and where teachers use that type of assessment. On the other hand, question (04) gives space to teachers to tell whether or not DA is important, allowing them to justify their answers. The last question of this section is intended to reveal what is diagnostic assessment is about. The suggested answers encompass: knowing the student and knowing the student' knowledge. At last, an open –ended question is given to provide other definitions of diagnostic assessment they know.

➤ **Section four: Summative assessment in English Language Classes (Q1-Q5)**

The present section is concerned with summative assessment in ELC. Question (01) attempts to determine whether or not teachers are familiar with the term summative assessment. Thus, question (02) aims to know if teachers use this type of assessment with their students. Question (03) is intended to reveal how often teachers use SA in classrooms. The suggested answers include: every day, every month, and every semester. Next, question (04) seeks to discover the forms teachers use summative assessment in. This question gives three choices including exams, tests and quizzes. After that, the space is given to them to mention other forms they use. The last question in the section attempts to determine whether or not summative assessment impacts on learners' level, as they are requested to give an explanation according to their experiences.

➤ **Section five: Formative Assessment in English Language Classes (Q1-Q6)**

The last section consists of several questions concerning formative assessment in English language classes. The first question gives teachers the freedom to define formative assessment in reference to their own understandings in order to know if teachers are aware of their formative assessment use. Then, question (02) intends to enquire whether or not the curriculum includes formative assessment which aims to explain whether or not teachers are obliged to employ formative assessment as a method of teaching in EFL classes. Question (03) aims to investigate the extent to which teachers give importance of formative assessment in their classes. On the other hand, question (04) gives space to teachers to tell whether or not formative assessment affects teaching and learning as they requested to mention any shortcomings according to them. Thus, question (05) gives teachers the freedom to share their ideas about hinders while using formative assessment in order to know the causes of avoiding FA in EFL. The last question (06) in this section is an open –ended question, it tries to gather teachers’ suggestions to support the use of formative assessment.

2.5.1.2 Advantages of questionnaires

Questionnaires have a considerable role and effectiveness; the chief contribution of questionnaires their efficiency. It needs less effort and do not consume time, in addition to financial sources. By distributing a questionnaire to group of learners, can obtain a massive amount of data in less than an hour. Hence, if the questionnaire is well –prepared the data process can be also fast and simple, particularly when using some digitalized tools such as computer software, this cost helps a lot and very important.

Questionnaires are again likely to be versatile, that is to mean that they can be used with a varied people in different situations targeting a variety of subjects. (Gill ham, 2000 cited in Dornyei, 2003) states that a questionnaire can also save time.

The greater the number of participants, the more economical of time it is to take ... to interview 50 people for only ten minutes will take ten hours, and probably much more once travelling, etc., is taken to account. But with this number, a questionnaire can be relevant and an appropriate choice. Other selected advantages are summarized by (Beiske, 2003) in the following points:

- Almost people are familiar with questionnaires, so they can deal with them.
- The participants’ ideas are not affected by the researcher ‘s opinions and suggestions.
- The informants can complete their questionnaire at their existence place.
- Questionnaires are easy to complete by respondents

- The investigator can discuss and analyze questionnaire easily.

2.5.1.3 Limitation of questionnaire

Technically speaking, the virtue of questionnaires tends to be the appropriate research tool. However, using them have certain limitations; hence, we can summarize them in the following points:

- Written questionnaires lack supporting characteristics such as gestures and other visual signs.
- Sometimes, questionnaires are not answered by the informants we want.
- Some participants may take a long time to answer or not give questionnaire back.
- Limited response allowed by questions, and may be not the right questions are asked
- The percentage of non-response can be very high.

2.5.2 Interview

The interview was the second instrument used in this study. It aims at collecting qualitative data by asking questions and getting answers from the participants. Akbayrak (2000) defines it “...is a kind of conversation” p.1. It is the conversation between the two persons which is initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research relevant information and focused by him on content specified by research objectives of systematic description or explanation. In words of Kabir (2016), interview is considered as a method for conducting qualitative research, it is a technique used to understand the experiences of others. Therefore, Catherine (2002) notes that interviews can be conducted face-to-face or over the telephone. He adds in social research there are many types of interview. The most common of these are unstructured, semi-structured and structured interviews. The later one was opted for to obtain detailed data from our informants for validating or invalidating our questionnaire ‘s findings. Indeed, structure interview are the interview in which the interviewer asks each respondent the same series of questions. Additionally, the interviewer has an opportunity to ask further questions in order to obtain further explanation, by the interviewees. As far as, our research is concerned, we conducted interviews with English teachers to increase the credibility of our research findings.

2.5.2.1 Description of the teacher’s interview

In this study, the teacher’s interview was an important method to conduct our research. The teachers’ interview was the second instrument used in this study to collect

qualitative data and to obtain information about the hindrances of using formative assessment faced by teachers in EFL and the advantages of this type of assessment that may bring to the classroom in order to enhance learning and teaching English. It also attempts to discover what teachers can suggest to achieve effectiveness in the use of formative assessment in higher education. The participants who accept to do our interview and answer its questions consist of ten English teachers of didactics and applied languages.

The type of questions that was prominently exercised in our interview is open-ended questions which consist of ten questions (see appendix...). To justify one's choice, open-ended questions can provide the enquirers with genuine, reliable data from the informants. They provoke their intellectual repertoire in a sense that requires them to answer in well-formed, thoroughly thought of sentences." ... *open-ended questions are more suitable than closed-ended questions for measuring knowledge, because they not only minimize the likelihood that respondents will try to guess the right answer but also of ten yield more reliable and valid information*" (Züll, 2016, P.08). The ten questions of our teacher's interview are as follows:

Question (01) seeks to discover what ideas the teacher has about the term assessment and its definition according to the teacher's point of view.

Question (02) aims at knowing what types of assessment the teacher uses in his classes.

Question (03) investigates whether or not the teacher knows about the term formative assessment and explores how he can define it according to his experience in teaching.

Question (04) is an attempt to know whether or not the teacher uses formative assessment in EFL. After that, this question explores how often and why the teacher uses formative assessment.

Question (05) enquires what are the causes (hindrances) that make the teacher avoid using formative assessment in the classroom.

Question (06) is concerned with the teacher's thinking about the necessity of formative assessment.

Question (07) investigates whether or not formative assessment has disadvantages according to his experience in teaching as he is requested to mention them.

Question (08) is intended to see to what extent teachers should use formative assessment with their students.

Question (09) seeks to explore the advantages of formative assessment that help teaching and students' learning.

Question (10) examines whether there are any suggestions the teacher can employ in order to achieve effectiveness formative assessment' use and they are asked to mention them according to their point of view.

2.5.2.2 Advantages of interview

- The interviewer has the opportunity of explaining difficult questions.
- The investigator does not wait for the answers a long time; he takes information after he asked the question, i.e. the information is taken directly from the respondents.
- *“We can introduce necessary changes in the interview schedule based on initial results which is not possible in the case of a questionnaire study”* (Abawi, 2013)

2.5.2.3 Disadvantages of interview

Interviewing is not a perfect method for all types of research, it has its disadvantages:

- There can be complication with the planning of the interview.
- More time is required to collect, discuss and analyze information.
- A large number of interviewers and respondents are involved resulting in an increasing the problem of definition, interpretation of the concept.
- Incompleteness may arise as a result of lack of interest shown by some members of the population.
- *“People may need differently into each question and therefore reply based on their own interpretation of the question-i.e. what is ' good 'to someone may be poor to someone else, therefore there is a level of subjectivity that is not acknowledged.”* (Kabir, 2016, P.211)

2.6 Ethical reflection

Ethics is an important characteristic in any research. In this study ethics are maintained by keeping the answers acquired strictly confidential. We have taken prior permission from the respondents before conducting the research, and no false information was given in the study.

In the theoretical analysis we have given proper references in the research. We have maintained the ethical formalities throughout research.

2.7 Conclusion

Throughout the present chapter, a synoptic description of the study 's methodology has been provided and explained briefly. Description of research approaches which is used in this study including qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods was also referred to in this chapter due to its importance to the present study. We have also highlighted the procedure, context of study and participants who help us measure the validity of the hypotheses. We have unveiled the main instruments that have been utilized in the practical part of our Study. We have described the teachers' questionnaire and the teacher' interview to clarify the importance of the questions. The results of the both teachers' questionnaire and interview are going to be further mentioned in details in the next chapter.

**Chapter Three:
Data Analyses and
Discussion**

3. Introduction

After accumulating the data from the appliances that employed in conducting the practical phase of this study, it was decided to move on the next stage which is data analysis and the process of proving or disproving the hypotheses. Throughout this chapter, we will discuss the main points that we found interesting when receiving the both of teachers' questionnaire and interview. The present chapter is concerned with the analysis and the discussion of the obtained data through this investigation to answer the previously stated research questions.

3.1 Data Analysis

The present section is concerned with analyzing the data that we have congregated during the practical part of the study. We attempt now to analyze the data that we have received from the teachers' questionnaire and the teachers' interview and discuss them highlighting the several shortcomings and limitations that were faced along the common study. However, data analysis will cover only the most important questions that are linked directly to the research questions in order to substantiate or invalidate our hypotheses.

3.1.1 Analysis of teachers' Questionnaire

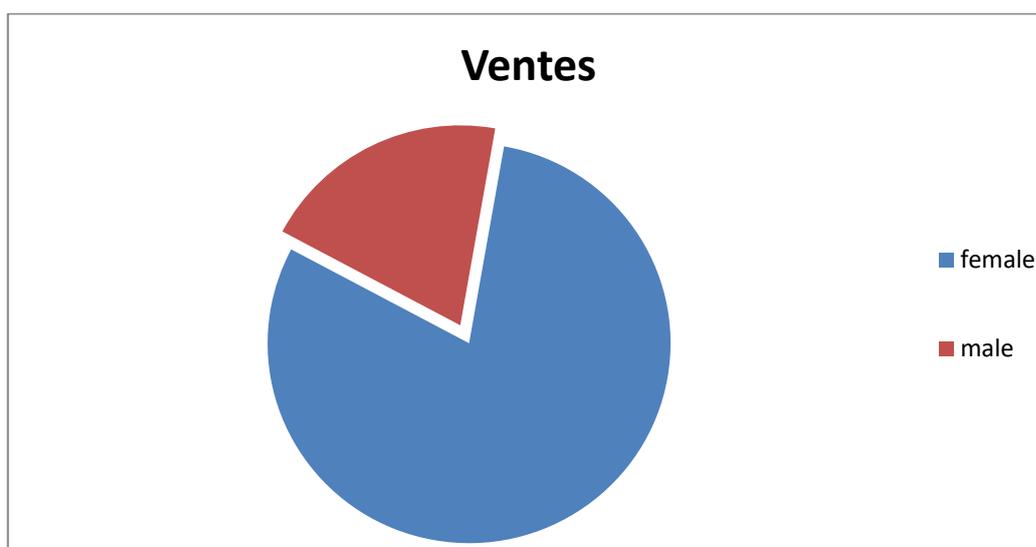
The analysis of the teachers' questionnaire aims at discovering which type of assessment is more used by teachers in ELC. For this reason, it is important to discuss and analyses the responses that were collected directly from teachers through an online questionnaire concerning their opinions and attitudes regarding the types of assessment and the most one is more used by them in their classes. As mentioned earlier, we have chosen the most important questions to be analyzed, we will report the related comments teachers provided to answer the research questions. last; the acquired answers are classified into three main elements that are closely relevant to our hypotheses. It has to be method that some teachers did not answer the questionnaire, which may affect the results in a way or another.

The first question to be analyzed is Q 1 in section one from the questionnaire (see appendix 01) which aims to know the gender of our participants.

Gender	Number	Percentage%
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female	8	80%
male	2	20%
Total	10	100%

Table 3.1: Teachers' Gender



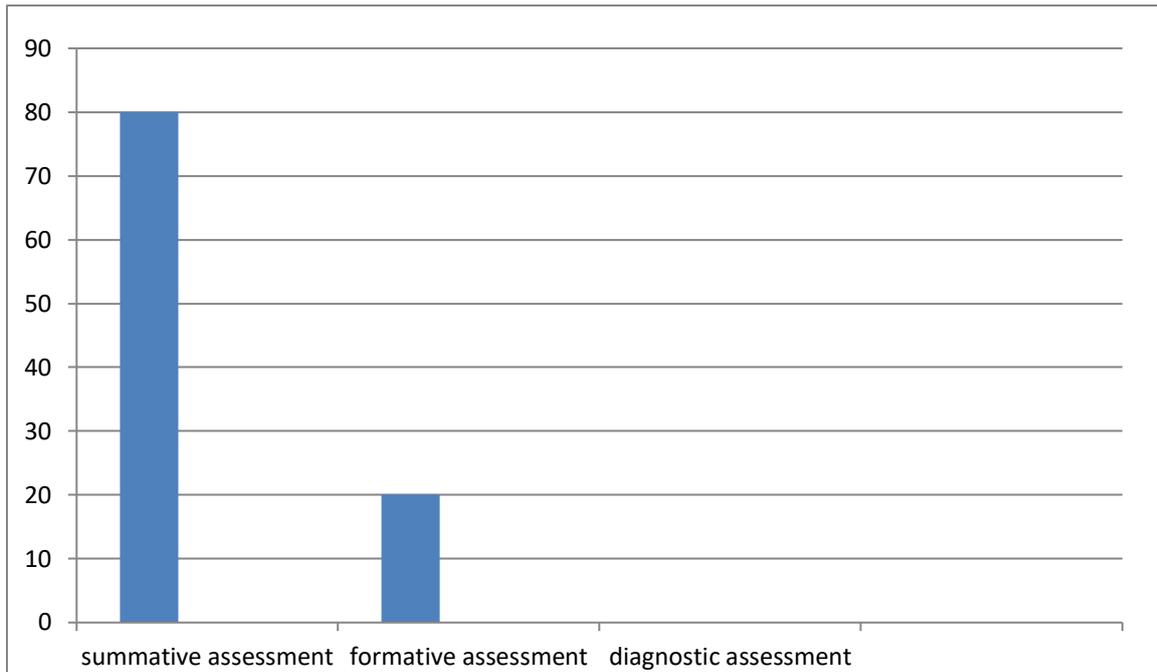
Graph 3.1: Teachers' Gender

The table and the graph show us that our population consists of ten teachers with a rough female majority (80%) and male take only (20%).

✓ **Types of Assessment**

The second question to be analyzed is question 03 in section two from the questionnaire (see appendix 01) which seeks to know which type of these assessments (summative, diagnostic and formative) is more used by teachers in ELC.

The graph below illustrates teachers' responses.



Graph 3.2: Most Type of Assessment More Used by Teachers

The graph reveals that the majority of the teachers (80%) do use the summative assessment more than others in ELC. Few teachers (20%) opt for using the formative assessment more other types. And (00%) use the diagnostic assessment.

✓ Diagnostic assessment

The questions to be analyzed under this category belong to section three in our questionnaire (see appendix01). The first question was about whether or not teachers are familiar with the term diagnostic assessment. The following table presents teachers' attitudes towards diagnostic assessment.

Option	Number	Percentage (%)
Yes, I am familiar	10	100%
No ,I am not familiar	00	00%

Table 3.2: Teachers' attitudes towards diagnostic assessment

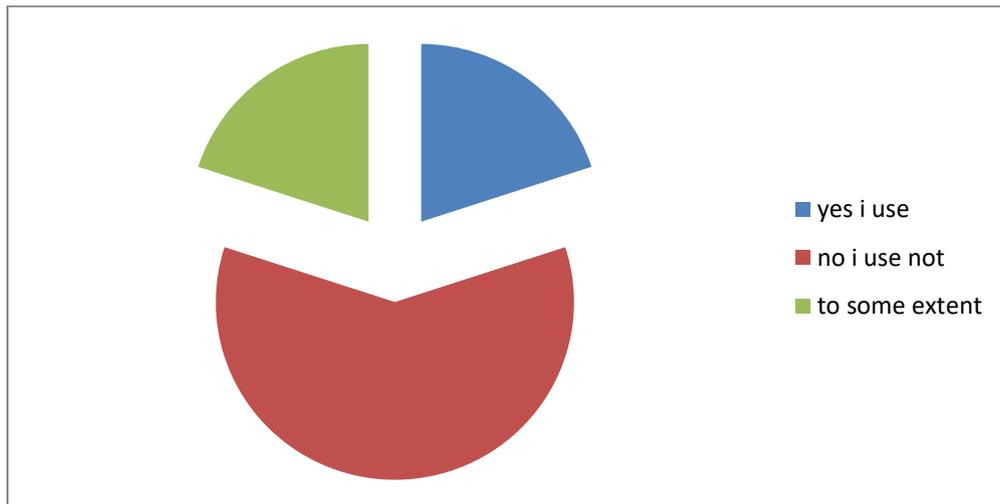
The common shared idea among teachers (100%) is that they are familiar with the term diagnostic assessment and (00%) are not familiar. Hence, they could define it as follows:

“To check the level and the prerequisite of students”

“It is about defining the needs and weaknesses of the learners”

“It is the one done before the teaching process”

The following graph shows responses to question two about whether or not they use this type of assessment with their students.



Graph 3.3: Teachers’ Use the Diagnostic Assessment in EFL Classes

It is observed from the graph that few teachers (20%) use the diagnostic assessment. The only (20%) of teachers use it to some extent while the remaining ones (60%) replied “No” which means that they do not use the diagnostic assessment in EFL classes.

Clearly, Teachers who are answering by (yes), they mention when and where they use it in the next question from the same section, as follows:

“In the beginning of the academic year”

“First years and new classes”

✓ Summative assessment

The questions to be analyzed under this category belong to section four in our questionnaire (see appendix01).

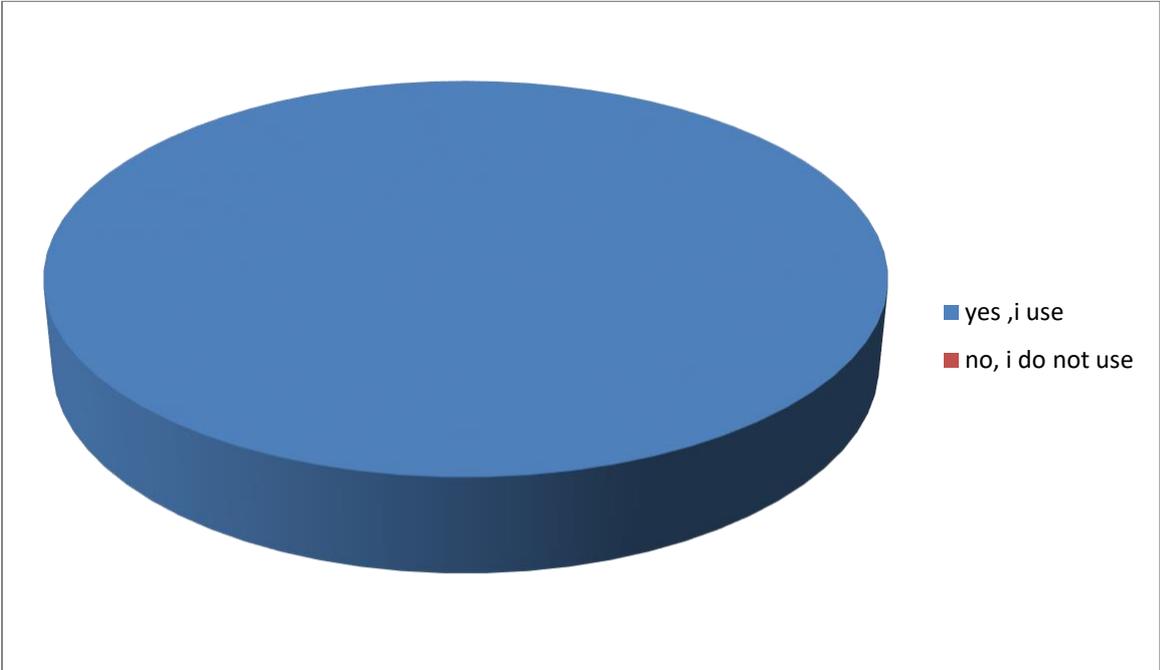
The first question was about whether or not teachers are familiar with the term summative assessment. The following table presents teachers awareness of summative assessment.

option	number	percentage
Yes, I am	10	100%
No, I am not	00	00%

Table 3.3: Teachers’ awareness of summative assessment

We can observe that all of the teachers answered this question similarly (yes).

The following graph shows teachers’ opinions to question two about whether or not they use summative assessment in EFL classes.

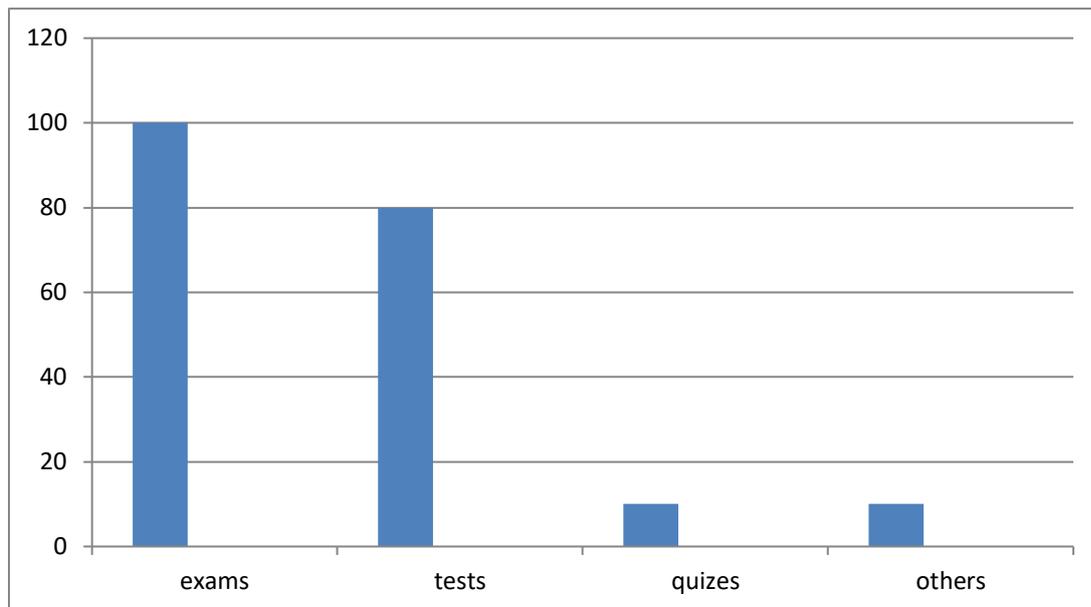


Graph 3.4: The use of summative assessment by teachers

Clearly, respondents (100%) share the same idea. They all agree that they use the summative assessment with their students. They mention that they exercise it every semester.

The next question belongs to the section four concerning which forms teachers use summative assessment in.

The following graph represents what teachers use in the summative assessment:



Graph 3.5: The forms teachers use in doing summative assessment

Reading the above results, we find out that all teachers (100%) do use the exams as a common form in using summative assessment in ELC. most teachers (80%) confirmed that they add tests to the exams while one of them (10%) affirm that he uses quizzes while using the summative assessment. On the other hand, one teacher did mention other forms in which they use summative assessment, she said” *presentations or what is known as performance – based assessment*”.

✓ **Formative assessment**

The relevant table shows the analysis of question 04 in section five, which presents to what extent do teachers give importance of formative assessment in their classes.

Option	number	Percentage
High	3	30%
Very high	1	10%
Low	6	60%
Very low	00	00%

Table 3.4: Teachers ‘extents in using the formative assessment

As it is observed, the majority of teachers (60%) use the formative assessment low while the other teachers (30%) use this type high. Hence (10%) one teacher reckon that she used it very high. There is no answer by very low.

The next graph shows the analysis of teachers ‘answer in response to question five (see appendix 01) concerning the shortcomings of the effective of formative assessment on learning and teaching.



Graph 3.6: The effective of formative assessment on learning and teaching

We can observe that the majority of teachers (60%) argue that the formative assessment has an impact on learning and teaching, while only 20 % of them) stated that the formative assessment has effected on learning and teaching and the rest teachers (20%) provided no answer to this question. Teachers who gave me yes answer, they confirmed their answers as follows:

“It helps you track students’ progress and act immediately to support them to learn at their best and mean while it helps students get more involved in their learning and streamline”

“Success of failure depend on the effectiveness of teaching .so formative assessment helps both teacher and learner find satisfaction “

“By choosing the right method of teaching and what suit students’ needs”

“It’s helpful for teachers to check the learning of the students, and students to be aware of their weaknesses”

The last question in last section is an open- ended question gave teachers the freedom to state what they suggest to achieve the effective use of formative assessment in EFL classes appendix01).

The most common answers teachers acknowledge are quoted below:

“I suggest introducing self-assessment tools such students’ portfolio and encouraging students to use it regularly through praising and rewarding their effort”

“Decision makers should give less importance to grades and more space to teachers to properly evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching “

“Appropriate syllabus, smaller classes”

3.1.1.1 Discussion of the results

The obtained results reveal that all of teachers use the summative assessment in ELC more than other types. While the formative assessment is used to some extent by some teachers. The most important, teachers use the traditional assessment every semester through using tests and exams to know what their learners have learned. Many teachers are familiar with the term formative assessment and they have an idea about it. However, most teachers know the effective of formative assessment on learning and teaching, they stated certain hinders they faced during using the formative assessment in EFL classes. So we concluded that those difficulties affected teachers’ exercise to some extent especially limited time for using the formative assessment.

3.1.2 Analysis of the teachers' interview

The analysis of the teachers' interview aims at investigating hinder the use of formative assessment in ELC and the advantages that FA may bring to the classroom. For this reason, it was important to submit a questionnaire and conduct an interview with English teachers at different stages: a questionnaire send to 10 teachers and chose same participants to conduct an interview with them to confirm the findings of the questionnaire. To justify one's choice, teachers' attitudes towards formative assessment confirmed the results of teachers' questionnaire after taking data from them. As mentioned previously, we did the questionnaire with teachers and select them to conduct an interview with them after we get results of questionnaire and prove them. We will focus only on the most relevant questions that may support the results obtained from the questionnaire.

Question 2: what types of assessment that you use in your classes? (See appendix 02)

The majority of teachers reply that both of formative assessment and summative assessment are utilized by them in ELC. Some of the answers they provided was:

“The two types: formative and summative assessment either in oral or written form”

“I use the summative assessment”

“The summative assessment and the formative assessment”

Question 3: Do you know about formative assessment? How can you define it? (See appendix 02)

All of teachers stated that they are familiar with the term formative assessment and they are understanding it and what explains this is their answer, they were able to define it. teachers' responses are cited below:

“yes, it describes learners' feedback in formal situations, as in the classroom; and the teacher builds on it to improve his teaching, and it paves the way or is as a preparation to the summative scores of tests and exams that the learner will take .it is a kind of on-going assessment to evaluate students 'performances and re-adjust the learning and teaching process accordingly “

“Yes, an ongoing process to track students’ progress overtime”

“Yes, it is an evaluation done by the teacher during the teaching process to see whether they are grasping the teaching input or not”

“Yes, it is a technique used to monitor students’ learning to provide continuous feedback over a period of time and adapt the teaching /learning activities, methods and procedures to enhance learning.”

Yes, it is a kind of continual evaluation, in-process evaluations that take place several times during the course”

Question 4: Do you use it with your students? How often? (See appendix02)

The majority of teachers mentioned that they use these types of assessment to some extent because they know its importance in their teaching process. Some teachers replied as follows:

“Yes, more or less regularly, to allow me to adjust my teaching”

“I try to use it so often at least twice each semester because it helps me get feedback about how they are learning”

“In my view, formative assessment deals with evaluation of students work inside the classroom; it is a method to measure homework and to know how much they work: including participation, presentation and this shows in the feedback they reflect in the classroom. I always consider it when calculating their level of understanding”

“Yes, I do, I use it very often when teaching writing, speaking and challenging concepts that need time to be implemented such as intercultural issues involved in learning a foreign language”

Q5: What hinders that you face during using the formative assessment in your classes?

Given the fact that the aim of this question was to investigate the causes which make the use of formative assessment is avoided by teachers in higher education, all teachers stated that they have some difficulties that they face during using the formative assessment with their students. Some of their answers are listed as follows:

“The first factor is time.it should be conducted over a period of time and this appears be difficult when having mixed –ability classes. Besides, it goes through stages to evaluate the improvement of different skills and this requires various techniques”

“Time, we sometimes lack time since we have to finish the syllabus and the time allotted is not enough”

“Time constraint and when there is too much emphasis on grades”

“Time, big classes and the schedule”

“Mainly time consuming and requires a lot energy and know –how (expertism) from the teacher. both students and teachers must be committed to it otherwise neither of them would benefit from it”

“Time and the big number of the students in class, in addition, to the absence of goals and objectives may be some of the causes that hinder formative assessment”

Question8: To what extent should teachers use it with their students?

Most teachers believed that teachers should use the formative assessment with their students because of its importance in teaching and learning English.one teacher stated that teachers use formative assessment depend on some conditions. Some of their answers are quoted as follows:

“Very often”

“As long as it is not taking too much time from the lessons. Summative assessment requires from a teacher to be energetic and dynamic, it is good to the extent to which teachers passes sufficient training to carry it out. on the condition that both teachers and students are committed be managed appropriately so that it could help build effective teaching”

“This depends on time, university, school objectives”

“It is vital for language productivity, hence; it is compulsory for speaking and writing”

Question 9: How can it help your teaching and your students’ learning (the advantages of formative assessment)?

All of teachers acknowledged that the formative assessment is helpful in teaching and learning 'students and it is very beneficial for them because it has many advantages concerning it helps to know their students. Some teachers replied as follows:

“Before you know where your students are in the learning process and also it makes them more involved and aware about what and how they are learning”

“Formative assessment ameliorates classroom learning; it also emphasizes on the learning outcomes of students it helps students achieve better as they come to know their weaknesses and managed to overcome them in addition it enables the teacher to provide a personalized, sometimes, individualized instruction it also increases learners' motivation and engagement towards language learning”

“yes, it has many advantages ;for example ,it provides the teacher with his group real level of background ,learning needs and perspectives it eases depicting learning deficiencies of students it also helps in planning or tailoring revision for learners with their different levels or special needs.it guides the teacher in designing level-appropriate lessons.as it helps to check students' understanding ,hence; the teacher will be able to address some learning problems and issues earlier in the year or teaching stages which he prefers his learner to avoid in summative assessment like exams”

“It is very effective for language productivity and skill building especially for productive skills such as speaking and writing it helps diagnosing learning gaps and fixing language learning dysfunctions”

“Allowing us to have a better understanding of the teaching /learning process and helping us thus to readjust the teaching material or the techniques used”

Q10: what do you suggest to achieve effective use of formative assessment by teachers?

Teachers provided some suggestions to achieve effective use of formative assessment in English language classes. Some suggestions are quotes as follows:

“Encourage students to use it, introduce its tools, show them that they are necessary for their learning, praise and reward their achievement”

“I suggest teachers should use formative assessment as a students’ indicator needs to build lessons and lectures upon what it reveals. (do not teach for the sake of teaching but for the sake of giving interesting knowledge). formative assessment helps teachers to situate the degree of understanding; and thus plan lessons according to certain level of difficulty that is appropriate to their learners.”

“Decide what parts of learning require formative assessment

Make sure to give constructer feedback”

“Good planning”

3.1.2.1 Discussion of the results

Teachers’ answers in the interview confirmed concerning their attitudes towards formative assessment. Most of them maintained that they know about the term formative assessment and they use it to some extent (i.e.: not as it must be done) because of its importance in their teaching and learning. All of them could define it as a kind of assessment which aims to enhance the learning process along the course when giving continuous feedback. Moreover, it is an evaluation done by the teacher during the teaching process to see whether they are grasping the teaching in put or not.

Afterwards, the majority of teachers acknowledged that formative assessment is not used in ELC because of some hinders they faced. For difficulties, most teachers reveal that the main source of those obstacles in avoiding the formative assessment are due to the lack of time and big classes .Also, teachers considered the schedule as a hinder. In addition, there are too much emphasis or grades and having mixed-ability classes. These are challenges which made the use of formative assessment is avoided by teachers.

When it comes to the advantages that formative assessment may bring to the classroom, all teachers confirmed that formative assessment is necessary and it has many advantages including: knowing where students are in learning process. Then, it makes them more involved and it ameliorates classrooms learning. It helps teachers come to know their weaknesses and managed to overcome them. Also, formative assessment eases depicting learning deficiencies of students. In addition, it helps in planning revision for learners with their different levels or special needs.

3.2 General discussion

In the light of the significant results of the study, the results have indicated that teachers in higher education use the summative assessment more than the other types (DA&FA), while the FA is used to some extent. Teachers use the exams and tests when doing the summative assessment to know what their students have learned. Teachers use the formative assessment to some extent because they know that is very important in learning and teaching. They could define it but they avoid its use somehow. Teachers who are not using the formative assessment have some hindrances which make them avoid it in their classes however they know its importance in their teaching English.

Additionally, teachers faced some challenges during using the formative assessment in EFL classes. The majority of teachers maintained that they know about the term formative assessment and it is necessary in enhancing learning and teaching, therefore, they faced some difficulties while exercising it with learners including: time constraint, big numbers of the students in class. In addition, to the absence of goals and objectives may be some of the causes that hinder formative assessment. In essence, formative assessment brings many advantages to the classroom. Throughout the formative assessment, teachers can know where their students are in the learning process, it makes them more involved and aware about what and how they are learning. Also, formative assessment emphasizes on the learning outcomes of students. It helps students achieve better. In addition, it enables the teacher to provide a personalized and individualized instruction. It increases learners' motivation and engagement towards language learning. It guides the teacher in designing level-appropriate lessons. To end, it helps to check students' understanding. We can say that the formative assessment plays a great role in enhancing and succession learning and teaching English in higher education.

3.3 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we have attempted to answer our research questions through the analysis and discussion of the findings. We have discovered that there are many challenges facing teachers when they consider the use of formative assessment to take into account in their practice. The obtained results from the different data collection tools have revealed that the majority of teachers use the summative assessment more than the formative and diagnostic assessment. Moreover, teachers have faced some difficulties which hinder the use of formative assessment in EFL. We have also concluded that formative assessment brings many advantages to the classroom which has a great role in enhancing learning and teaching

English. Finally, we have provided a set of possible suggestions that would achieve effective use of formative assessment in EFL classes.

Limitations of study

Although the hypotheses and the research questions have been answered, that is to say that the main hindrances behind teachers' use of formative assessment in EFL classes are varied, the study has some limitations, which have obstructed the study to fulfill the needs of the research and to involve the dissertation with the necessary information.

The first challenge was time. The researcher could not manage time to finish this research work.

The second challenge which hinders the researcher is the practical phase from this study because the study is stopped because of the corona virus so the researcher did not find teachers to carry out this dissertation.

The researcher did online questionnaire and online interview but they were difficult to get emails of teachers, so the researcher did not find a lot.

The participants were few because of the previous reason so some teachers did not answer them and others did not answer all questions of questionnaire and this may affect the results in way or in another.

General conclusion

In teaching English as a foreign language, active teaching is highly recommended for teachers and learners to achieve higher level in teaching and learning. However, most university teachers are still constraining only on the summative assessment to discover the real level of their students and what they have learned. In contrast, they avoid the formative assessment because of some obstacles. In order to achieve high level of teaching and learning, teachers engage to do through using some effective strategies such as using the formative assessment in ELC.

This research has focused on three main objectives. The study aimed to discover which type of assessment is more used by teachers. Also, the ultimate purpose was to investigate the challenges teachers face during using the formative assessment in higher education. Furthermore, it attempted to investigate the advantages that FA may bring to the classroom.

The first chapter covered the theoretical aspects of the research topic. The first part highlighted the term assessment, its definition and the main types under three types: diagnostic, summative and formative assessment. The second part was devoted to the formative assessment by providing the most important definitions, types, strategies, stages and the role of teachers and students in FA. The last part was concerned with the feedback assessment.

As for the methodology followed in undertaking this research, it was described in the second chapter given the complexity of the topic, it was important to take a multiple approach to undertake this research. A mixed methods approaches were chosen to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from the selected participants who include teachers of master two: didactics and applied languages at Mostaganem University. First, we conducted a questionnaire to teachers to provide answers about their attitudes towards types of assessment and which is more used by teachers. The second step was to conduct an interview with same teachers to obtain further information about hinders the use of formative assessment and its advantages in classroom.

The last chapter was devoted to the analysis and interpretation of results. First, we analyzed and discussed the obtained data from the questionnaire of teachers. Then, the most important responses of teachers through the interview was analyzed and presented in demonstrative figures. Finally, a general discussion of all the results was provided briefly

followed by some proposed recommendations concerning support the effectiveness use of formative assessment.

Through this study, we have discovered that the most assessment which is more used by teachers is the summative assessment. The majority acknowledged that they use the formative assessment to some extent.

Furthermore, the results have revealed that teachers faced many difficulties while using the formative assessment in EFL classes. For instance, time constraint, big number of the students in class and absence of goals and objectives. they add requiring a lot energy. Also, there are too much emphasis on grades and schedule. Moreover, having a mixed –ability classes considered as a problem for teachers to use this assessment.

Through the teachers' responses, we have concluded that the formative assessment brings many advantages to the classroom. Throughout the formative assessment, teachers know where their students are in the learning process, it makes them more involved and aware about what and how they are learning. Then, formative assessment emphasizes on the learning outcomes of students. Hence, it helps students achieve better. In addition, it enables the teacher to provide a personalized & individualized instruction. Therefore, it increases learner's motivation and engagement towards language learning. We can say that the formative assessment has a great role in enhancing learning and teaching English in higher education.

Most importantly, the teachers suggest how they can achieve the effective use of formative assessment in higher education. They suggest deciding what parts of learning require formative assessment. Then; teachers have to make sure to give constructed feedback. They add, teachers have to encourage students to use it; introduce its tools, show them that they are necessary for their learning.

Hence, the previously proposed hypotheses have been proved. we assumed that the summative assessment is more used by teachers. We also estimated that teachers face some obstacles during using the formative assessment with EFL classes. Finally, we expected that formative assessment is very important in developing learning and teaching. We also assumed that it brings many advantages to the classroom.

Eventually, this research was an attempt to answer a limited number of questions. Therefore, a part from formative assessment teachers suggests that they can achieve the effective use of formative assessment in ELC.

This study has limitations. Due to the small number of participants, the sample population is not truly representative. Involving other institutions and universities with similar groups of teachers might have increased the reliability of the study. However, the findings of the present study may prove to be beneficial for English learners, English language teachers and curriculum developers and materials writers in other universities. Finally, the results of the present study are limited to a specific kind of teachers that could not be generalized to other teachers from other department and universities all around Algeria. Thus, other studies and investigations are required to enhance the validity and reliability of the present research.

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Appendices

Appendix01 : Teachers' Questionnaire

Teachers' Questionnaire

I will be a very grateful if you take few minutes to fill this questionnaire which aims to gather information about the types of assessment which are used by teachers in their English language classes. Thank you very much for taking the time to share your ideas and experiences. Your input is very important and greatly appreciated.

Section 01: Personal Information

Please tick(√) the right box (es).

1. Gender:

Male

Female

2. What is the university system that you belong to?

Classical

LMD

3. Level.....

Section 02: Types of Assessment

1. Are you familiar with the term assessment?

Yes

No

2. Do you have an idea about all types of assessment?

Yes

No

If yes, what are they

.....

.....
.....

3. Which type of these assessments is more used than the others in your classes?

Diagnostic Assessment

Summative Assessment

Formative Assessment

Section three: Diagnostic Assessment in ELC

1. Can you define diagnostic assessment?

Yes

Explain

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.....

2. Do you use it with your students?

Yes No To some extent

3. Where and when do you use it?

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4. Is diagnostic assessment important?

Yes No To some extent

Why?

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.....

5. Diagnostic assessment is about?

a- Knowing the student

b- Knowing the students' knowledge

Others

.....
.....

Section four: Summative assessment in ELC

1. Are you familiar with summative assessment?

Yes

No

2. Do you use summative assessment in your English language classes?

Yes

No

3. How often do you use it in your classes?

Every day

every month

every semester

4. In which form do you use summative assessment?

Tests

Exams

Quizzes

Others

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5. Does summative assessment have an impact on learners' level?

Yes

Explain:

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Section five: Formative Assessment in ELC

1. Do you have an idea about the term formative assessment?

Yes

2. Can you define it?

Yes

How

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.....

3. Is formative assessment included in curriculum?

Yes

4. To what extent do you give importance of formative assessment in your classes?

High low

Very high

very low

5. Does formative assessment affect teaching and learning?

Yes

No

How:

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6. What are hinders the use of formative assessment?

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7. What do you suggest to support the use of formative assessment in EFL classes?

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Appendix 02: Teachers' interview

Teachers' Interview

The aim of this interview is to investigate the challenges teachers use during using formative assessment in EFL classes and the advantages that FA may bring to the classroom.

Q01: What does assessment mean for you? In other words, how do you define it?

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Q02: What types of assessment that you use in your classes?

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Q03: Do you know about formative assessment? Yes, or no? How can you define it?

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Q04: Do you use it with your students? How often?

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Q05: What hinders that you face during using the formative assessment in your classes?

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Q06: Do you think that formative assessment is necessary?

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Q07: Does it have disadvantages? If yes, what are they?

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Q08: To what extent should teachers use it with their students?

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Q09: How can it help your teaching and your students 'learning?
(The advantages of formative assessment).

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Q10: What do you suggest to achieve effective use of formative assessment by
teachers?

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