

# Alternative Assessment: Efl Teacher's Perspectives

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Krnčević Purić, Danica

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UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

Danica Krnčević Purić

**Alternative assessment: EFL teachers' perspectives**

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the M.A. in English Language and Literature and German Language and Literature at the University of Rijeka

Supervisor: Dr. Irena Vodopija-Krstanović, Assoc. Prof.

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## **ABSTRACT**

Alternative assessment methods have many benefits for students and teachers, and although it is a growing practice among teachers, it is still far away from being fully implemented within the education system. Therefore, it is of great importance to raise awareness of the benefits of alternative assessment and encourage more frequent use in teaching. This paper explores recent practices in the use of alternative assessment methods, especially teachers' attitudes about the use, effectiveness, and applicability of alternative assessment, focusing on the EFL classroom in Croatia.

The study shows that while teachers are fairly familiar with alternative assessment, these methods are not widely used in the EFL classroom as teachers find them time-consuming, and subjective. The results also indicate that although teachers are mostly aware of the benefits of implementing alternative assessment, there is a need for additional training and education about alternative assessment, as they are uncertain as to how it can be integrated into practice. In contrast to traditional methods, they find alternative assessment methods new and interesting, more personal and motivating, more relaxing and natural, and less stressful. Overall, they reduce test-related anxiety. As the teachers report, alternative assessment is perceived as rewarding by most students because it allows them to be creative. In the context of language assessment, the results suggest that alternative assessment is considered to be particularly relevant in the language classroom, where students are encouraged to use language for communicative purposes.

**Key words:** EFL, communicative competence, alternative assessment, traditional assessment

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Alternative assessment methods are an increasingly common topic of discussion as well as a growing practice among teachers, but are still far away from being fully implemented within the education system. Therefore, it is of great importance to monitor to what extent and how it is actually implemented in the EFL classroom. Even so, a limited number of published articles on alternative assessment leave a gap in the Croatian context. This paper aims to fill the gap by exploring recent practices in the use of alternative assessment methods with a particular eye on teachers' attitudes towards the (frequency of) use, effectiveness, and function of alternative assessment in the EFL classroom.

The study within this paper will therefore address teachers' perception regarding different types of assessment, in particular traditional and alternative assessment, with focus on the strengths and limitations of each method. We assumed teachers hold onto traditional methods, but have positive perception of alternative ones. Given that students seem to enjoy alternative methods, and current 2020 trends in education have highlighted the need to stay flexible, the hope is to raise awareness among teachers and students about different assessment possibilities.

The study was conducted in Croatia, in February 2019 and 68 English teachers participated, all of them from Primorje-Gorski Kotar and Istria. The questionnaire consisted of 42 questions – combination of closed-ended, rating, multiple-choice and open-ended questions. All of them concerned the teachers' evaluation of their own understanding of alternative assessment methods, the use of alternative methods, the comparison of alternative methods and traditional assessment methods, as well as the attitude and opinion of teachers about a particular alternative assessment method.

The theoretical part of the paper consists of five chapters. The Introduction and research questions are presented in the first part. The second chapter describes traditional assessment:

testing as an essential part of assessment in traditional language classrooms and analyses the components assessment and assessment criteria. The third chapter focuses on a shift towards alternative assessment, brought about by theories of Bloom`s Taxonomy and constructivism as well as by communicative language teaching of English, and the changing need of the ESL/EFL student population in a globalized world. The fourth chapter deals with alternative assessment; its definition, comparison of traditional and alternative assessment and its impact and importance in the context of English Language Teaching (ELT). Further on, the fifth chapter investigates recent studies and current practices in use of alternative assessment with respect to traditional methods. The results of the research on teachers` attitude and the use of the alternative assessment in Croatia are presented in chapter 6 and discussed in chapter 7. Concluding remarks are presented in chapter 8.

## 2. TRADITIONAL ASSESSMENT

There are many forms of assessment such as initial assessment, summative assessment, formative assessment, diagnostic assessment, norm-directed assessment, and criterion-directed assessment, all of which appear at different stages of the learning process. While assessments are also used for grading and diagnostic purposes, the fundamental purpose of assessment is to establish to what extent learning outcomes are achieved (Van Wyk and Carl, 2010).

Assessment is defined as “a process of collecting information about a given object of interest according to procedures that are systematic and substantively grounded” (Bachman, 2004: 6). Respectively, language assessment is a process of collecting information about students in order to measure their progress and language development (Cheng, Rogers and Hu, 2004).

In the context of language assessment, the object of interest becomes some aspect of language ability, and information collected could refer to age, background characteristics, native language, and other factors related to language acquisition. The first association of language assessment is in an educational program, but actually language assessment can take place in a real-world setting; for example, during a job interview (Bachman, 2004).

Traditional language assessment tools in education consist of tests which are related to memorization and repetition. Those include multiple-choice tests, C-tests, true-false tests, short-answer tests, and fill-in tests. Among some teachers, such assessment is perceived as “one-shot”, inauthentic, and indirect (Bailey, 1998: 205). The “one shot” nature and other drawbacks of traditional language assessment are described in more details in the next section of this paper.



## **2.1. Testing as an essential part of assessment in traditional language classrooms**

“Testing” and “assessment” are not synonymous; tests are prepared using an administrative procedure that occurs at a predefined date/time and are designed to assess (only) a portion of knowledge at a given time. On the contrary, assessment is an ongoing process that includes a wider domain (Brown, 1994; McAlister, 2000).

In a traditional classroom, assessment occurs mostly through testing, but is also an interactive process between teacher and student which helps monitor the student’s performance (Brooks and Brooks 1993; Hancock, 1994). Tests are one subset of the assessment process which itself comprises more documentation and recordings about the learning process and is eventually evaluated in scores or grades (Brown, 1994).

The key requirements of a good (language) test are practicality, reliability, and validity. In order for a test to be practical, one must consider time constraints, financial limitations, administration, and scoring of the test. Some characteristics of impractical tests include using oral language tests for large group of students, tests that takes several hours to correct, or online tests with a slow internet connection (Brown, 1994).

A reliable test is a consistent and dependable test. A test that yields similar results when given to the same subject on two different occasions is considered reliable (Brown, 1994). A reading test presented on a large computer screen to a room full of test takers would not be reliable. Takers in the first or second row will probably be able to see the text; however, test takers in the back of the room will struggle to read the text correctly. A further example provided by Brown (1994) is a skating test conducted on smooth ice and another on bumpy ice. Clearly, in both of the examples, some subjects will benefit from advantageous conditions, and the examiner has to ensure fair conditions for all test takers even in varying situations.

Additionally, the scorer directions should be clear and detailed in order to ensure objectivity. The benefit of standardized traditional one-answer or multiple-choice tests is that they ensure the scorer reliability since there is only one correct answer.

Validity refers to “the degree to which the test actually measures what it is intended to measure” (Brown, 1994: 254). Brown differentiates between construct and content validity. Content validity is explained as face validity; in other words, by looking at the content of a test, one should conclude if the results of the test really measure what they were intended to measure. Construct validity focuses on the theoretical category of the test. To make accurate and viable judgments about the competence of language learners, tests of language have to rely on practicality, reliability and validity, regardless of how they are used in the classroom (Brown, 1994).

Traditional language types of tasks such as multiple-choice questions, true or false questions, closed tests, or questions with only one-word possible answers contributed to the validity and reliability of the test and are considered to form a good language test. However, some language testers claim that there is a conflict between reliability and validity (Underhill, 1982; Heaton, 1990). They claim that emphasizing one quality over others leads to the loss of the other one, and some propose a balance among test qualities which all together contribute to the usefulness of the test.

The notion of test usefulness include reliability, construct validity, authenticity, interactive nature, impact, and practicality (Bachman and Palmer, 1996). Three principles are related to this model. According to the first principle, it is the overall usefulness of the test that is to be maximized, rather than the individual qualities that affect usefulness.

The second principle states that the individual test qualities cannot be evaluated independently but must be evaluated in terms of their combined effect on the overall usefulness of the test.

As for the third principle, test usefulness and the appropriate balance among different qualities cannot be prescribed in general but must be determined for each specific testing situation.

The last quality discussed in this section is the washback effect of testing. An effective language test should have positive washback, i.e., a positive influence on teaching. For instance, students asked to spell unusual words will most likely result in memorizing/repeating the spelling. However, this task will not promote the communication skills of students, and is an example of negative washback (Bailey, 1998). Overall, a test ought to have “instructional value -- it ought to be possible to use the test to enhance the delivery of instruction in student populations” (Oller, 1979).

## **2.2. Components of Every Assessment and Assessment Criteria**

Essential components of all forms of assessment area set of tasks to which students are to respond, as well as the responses students make, the rules and procedures for scoring (or otherwise evaluating) the responses, and the way in which the scores (or evaluations) are interpreted (Anderson, 1999). In this respect, it is worthwhile to consider how these components are constructed, the focus of each and altogether, and which criteria are to be respected.

When designing assessment tools teachers should take into consideration instructional placement decisions (what do students know and what should be the next teaching lesson?), formative evaluation decisions (monitoring of the students` progress, program effectiveness,

need for making changes etc.), and diagnostic decisions (to detect any difficulties and make instructional program change, if necessary) (Fuchs, 1995).

When creating instructional plans, important criteria for assessment need to be addressed, such as focusing on important learning outcomes, addressing all three purposes of assessment, providing clear descriptions of student performance that can be linked to instructional actions, being compatible with a variety of instructional models, being easily administered, scored and interpreted by teachers, communicating the goals of learning to teachers and students, and generating accurate, meaningful information (be reliable and valid) (Brown 1994; Fuchs 1995; Linn, Baker and Dunbar 1991).

### **3. SHIFT TOWARDS ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT**

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) refers to learning and using English as an additional language in a non-English speaking country. EFL is different from ESL (English as a Second Language) and ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Language), which focus mainly on learning English as a non-native speaker in an English-speaking country (British Council, 2020).

In recent decades, the shift from teacher-centred to communicative student-centred EFL teaching approaches and methods has called for shifting from traditional assessment methods to alternative assessment methods, which are more student-centred (Grabin, 2007). While traditional assessment uses conventional indirect methods of testing, such as multiple choice, true/false, and matching, alternative assessment is in line with communicative language teaching/learning (CLT/CLL) and uses direct real-world tasks. It measures in an authentic manner students' ability to use language in meaningful situations. The positive washback of alternative assessment is that it focuses on the learner's communicative competence and thus fosters CLT in the EFL classroom. (Duff, 2014)

In this section, the philosophical background of alternative assessment is explained with respect to Bloom's taxonomy and constructivism, both of which have had a major impact on the development and rise of alternative assessment.

#### **3.1. Bloom's Taxonomy**

The Taxonomy of Cognitive Objectives was developed by Benjamin Bloom during the 1950s, but is still highly influential in education, and by implication in assessment. Bloom's model comprises six categories in the cognitive domain, or different levels of thinking process,

where each level represents a category. The categories are knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Later on, in the 1990s, the names of the categories were changed by Lorin Anderson et al. (Anderson, Krathwohl et al., 2001) as it is shown in Figure 1.

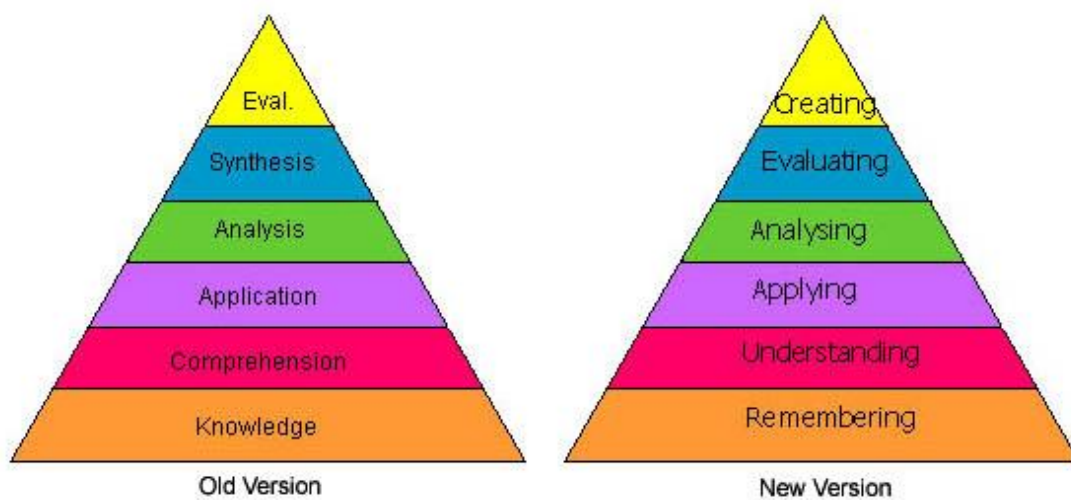


Figure 1. Bloom's Taxonomy

If we relate Bloom`s Taxonomy to assessment, it is evident that traditional assessment generally requires students to recall information or very often simply repeat what they have learned. Typical assessment tasks which include listing, labelling, matching, naming, and recognizing are all part of the first step in learning and involve recalling or remembering of knowledge. The knowledge category is described as the ability to recall “methods, procedures, specifics, patterns, structures and universals” (Bloom et al., 1956: 201). Multiple choice questions are a typical example of traditional assessment, which require students just to recall information. Multiple choice questions are often used in standardized language tests; however, the question is whether traditional assessment represents and satisfies all six cognitive categories of Bloom`s model.

Unlike standard assessment formats, assessment of the learning objectives at the highest levels is recognized as alternative assessment. It captures skills like analysing, creating, creative thinking, which are related to the learning objectives. Bloom's Taxonomy encourages EFL/language teachers to focus on students' critical thinking and develop their skills and performance, not just the content (Anderson 1999, Bloom 1956).

### **3.2. Constructivism**

In a similar vein, constructivism is also aligned with alternative assessment. Constructivist theory claims that learners actively construct their own knowledge and understanding through experiencing things and reflecting on those experiences, rather than just passively take in information (Driscoll, 2000; Kaufman 2004). Learning is seen as an active process as students learn through participation and through discourse, they explore ideas, debate, and inquire (Anderson, 1998).

When comparing assessment in traditional and constructivist classrooms, assessment is seen as an activity disconnected from teaching, whereas in constructivist classroom assessment process is associated part of teaching process (and vice versa) which manifests through teachers observations and students activities, work, presentations and portfolios" (Brooks and Brooks, 1993).

### **3.3. Changing English and ESL/EFL Student Population**

In view of the fact that English is an international language (EIL) taught and used widely in the global context, using traditional tests to assess this surge in English in different cultures remains outdated (McKay and Brown, 2016). Furthermore, since there are more non-native than native speakers of English, and more minority and non-traditional students, changes in teaching and testing methods are needed accordingly (Anderson, 1998; McKay and Brown,

2016). It is doubtful whether traditional assessment is valid, as such practices are often considered to be culturally conditioned and therefore focusing more on white, middle-class and native-English speaking students (cf.; Gomez, Graue, and Block, 1991; Heath and Syrbe, 2018). As presented by critics, among them by McAlister (2020) and Salmani-Nodoushan (2008), tasks found in standardized tests are designed to capture only one specific moment, a small part of the students' knowledge and therefore are not able to take a look at the bigger picture. It is because tests tend to focus on the assessing content and little on the students' skills and knowledge, especially the ones required in the international communication context. On the other side, they claim alternative assessment methods permit students to explain/do something in their own way and therefore emphasize their intellectual strengths, because they leave a variety of options for the language teacher.

In light of the above, it is obvious that changes in teaching and assessment practices are needed as alternative assessment practices could be better related to the changing face of English, varied learner populations, and different learning styles.



## **4. ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT**

### **4.1. Definition of Alternative Assessment**

The attempt to copy real life situations resulted in coining different terms for alternative assessment. In publications and articles, readers may come across different terms, among others: performance assessment, performance-based assessment, authentic assessment, portfolio assessment, direct assessment, holistic assessment. A majority of publications as well as this paper consider and use these terms synonymously.

Alternative assessment developed as a result of the dissatisfaction with current traditional practices, mismatch between instruction, assessment, and curriculum and the search for value in the systematic assessment (Herman, 1992). Although the literature on this subject is growing, there is no single definition of alternative assessment. Some definitions describe alternative assessment as “a procedure gathered over a period of time”, which are “less formal than traditional ones, have formative function, low-stakes consequences and beneficial washback” (Alderson and Banerjee, 2001: 228), or as “procedures and techniques easily incorporated into daily activities of school or classroom, which are used within the context of instruction” (Hamayan, 1995: 213).

Also, a common attribute of alternative assessment is that it is authentic, which has also been hailed as one of the key benefits of this type of assessment. It replicates the use of English (in international contexts) as students are asked to “perform real-world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills” (Mueller 2005: 2). These tasks consider the whole learning process, not only the information student adopted, but also the way students represent their knowledge, the way they organize that knowledge and also the way they are using it, with the aim to understand students’ learning and thinking processes (Seely, 1996).

In terms of the strengths of alternative assessment, according to Herman (1992), some of the key features are that it: (a) asks students to do something: perform, create, produce, (b) taps higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills, (c) uses tasks that represent meaningful instructional activities, (d) invokes real-world applications, (e) respects the fact that people, not machines, do the scoring, using human judgment, (f) requires new instructional and assessment roles for teachers. Drawing on Herman's position, Brown and Hudson (1998) highlighted additional positive characteristics of alternative assessment, which specifically appeal to language testers and teachers. Among others, these include the use of nonintrusive and day-to-day classroom activities, assessment of student everyday activities, focus on both processes and products, feedback on student strengths and weaknesses, sensitivity to multiculturalism, and use of transparent rating criteria.

Given the above, it is evident that the purpose of alternative assessment is to examine students' ability to use their knowledge of English outside the classroom, in real world situations using methods such as demonstrations, portfolios, exhibitions, projects, journals, oral and written responses, rubrics, checklists and self-evaluations. As teaching and assessment need to be aligned to the intended learning outcomes, the idea is to incorporate alternative methods of assessment that are able to effectively assess students' ability to use English in real-life situations.

## **4.2. Traditional vs. Alternative Assessment**

The main theoretical issue behind the traditional assessment indicated by the research is a "test-driven curriculum". Traditionally, assessment follows the curriculum, while in contrast, alternative assessment promotes the idea of curriculum following assessment. In practice, standardized tests become eventually "teaching to the test," resulting in teaching the content

knowledge, and correspondingly disregarding performance as the primary goal of teaching and assessing (Livingston, Castle and Nations, 1989; Spolsky, 1992).

According to Wiggins, the difference between alternative (author uses the term *authentic*) and traditional assessment is the following: authentic assessment examines students' performance on certain intellectual tasks directly and, on the opposite, traditional assessment is based on the indirect (or proxy) item-efficient, "simplistic substitutes from which we think valid inferences can be made about the student's performance at those valued challenges." (1993:1)

However, focusing on alternative assessment does not mean leaving out facts, definitions, names, or concept from education but gives more attention to the four language skills and high-quality performance tasks (Salmani-Nodoushan, 2008). Anderson (1998) proposes a comparison between philosophical beliefs and theoretical assumptions of traditional and alternative assessment. Philosophical beliefs are based on the assumptions that learning is a passive process, that the process is separated from the product, and that the purpose of assessment is to document learning. It also emphasizes the importance of cognitive abilities and assessment is seen as objective, value-free and neutral.

Alternative assessment is built on the contrast philosophical and theoretical assumptions (Anderson, 1998). While in traditional assessment, knowledge is considered to have a universal meaning, alternative assessment knowledge is considered to have multiple meanings; traditional assessment considers learning as a passive process while in alternative assessment, learning is an active process, process is as important as the final product, focus is on inquiry, the purpose of assessment is to facilitate learning, there is a connection between cognitive, and affective abilities. Also, assessment is seen as subjective and value-laden, power and control are shared, and learning is a collaborative process.

The next figure summarizes different assumptions and beliefs between these two opposite assessment practices.

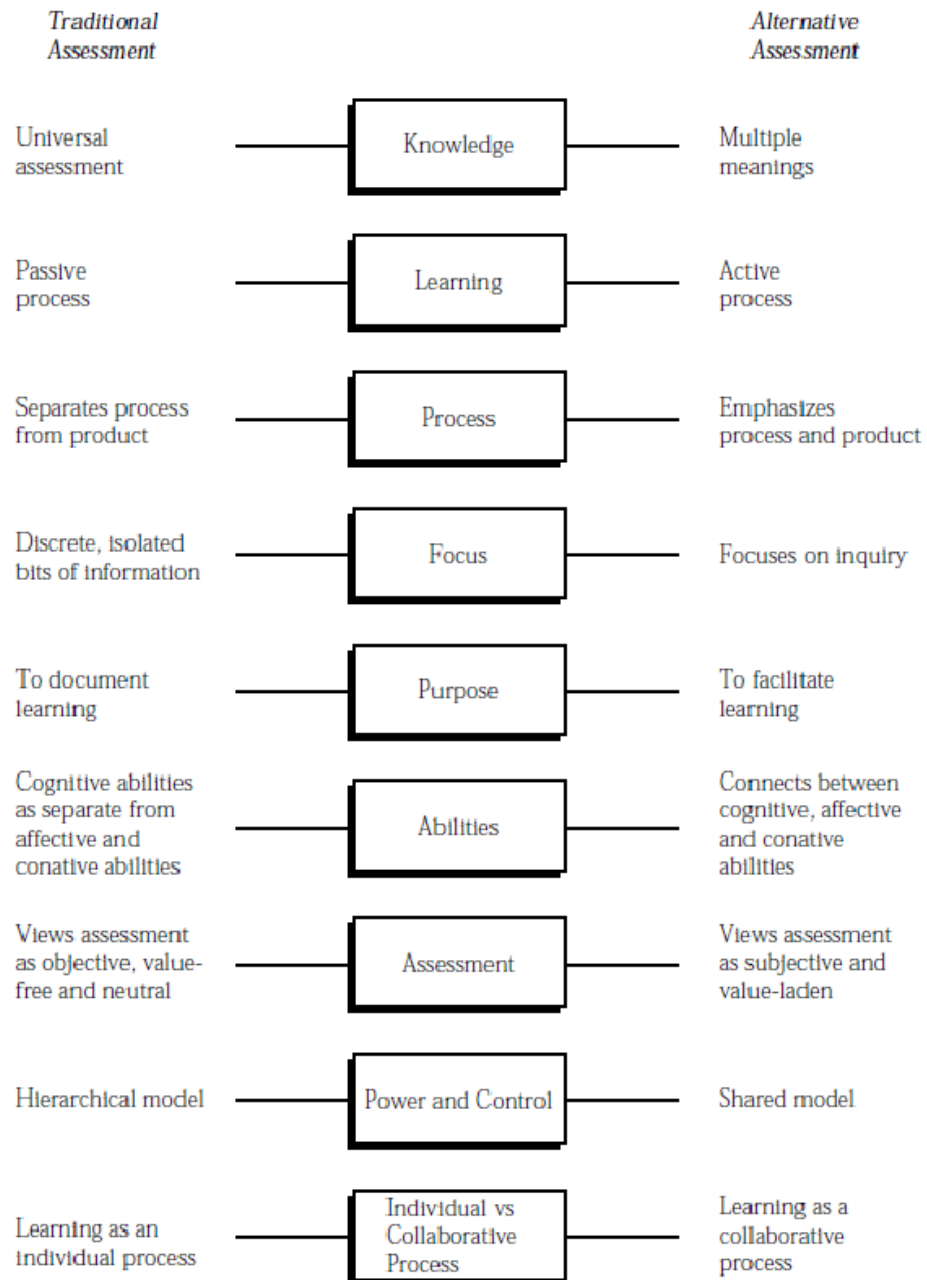


Figure 2. Anderson (1998:9) Comparison of philosophical beliefs and theoretical assumptions of traditional and alternative assessment.

Alternative assessment requires students to engage more, stay active, and perform meaningful and real tasks. Such an approach ignores the traditional hierarchical model of power and control in the classroom. This could be especially challenging in a language classroom as it forces teachers to transform and innovate their teaching and assessment practices.

However, according to study carried out in Croatia in 2008, alternative methods are more satisfying for students. They tend to appreciate them more and are eager to receive adequate feedback information about the results of their work. However, according to data, students are dissatisfied with the fact that examinations are predominantly a teacher's activity. This may result in students' impression that they were incorrectly graded. Therefore, classroom examination and grading should take into consideration the complexity of the student's personality and his/her original contribution to the class. Different models of realization, clear information about the progress and inclusion of students could help them feel more involved in evaluating the learning progress (Vrkic Dimic and Strucic, 2008).

In addition, students mostly perceive traditional assessment as *numbers* that will eventually serve them to achieve certain short- or long-term educational goals (Kavic, 2017), while alternative assessment provides more useful feedback to the students. Alternative assessment gives response to all of these requirements by involving students more meaningfully, not only in the learning process but also in the assessment, which, in fact, with the help of alternative methods, should be part of the ongoing learning process (Kavic, 2017).

### **4.3. Alternative Assessment and English Language Teaching**

Alternative assessment is especially important in language learning because assessment should be diagnostic and help teachers to monitor students' progress and learn to identify the difficulties that their students encounter or have. It should provide the necessary information and feedback so that teachers can adapt and redirect instruction to ensure that students can meet

the language learning outcomes. As it shows students' ability to use the language, it should provide a holistic picture of their ability in the English language, rather than the isolated snapshots provided by traditional assessment and standardized tests (North Carolina State Department, 1999).

Therefore, even though alternative assessment definitions at first glance might seem different, they all come together in one fact: the alternative assessment approach provides new insights into evaluation and teaching activities. Furthermore, it responds to and supports communicative language testing. However, important aspect is the quality of assessment meaning that alternative assessment needs to satisfy the three key criteria of validity, reliability, and practicality (Brown and Hudson, 1998) which were explained in the previous chapters. In this context, a meaningful, yet for Brown and Hudson, too generalized argument, was proposed by Huerta-Macias (1995) who advocates how alternative assessment is valid and reliable by virtue of its close integration with learning and teaching: trustworthiness of a measure consists of its credibility and auditability. Alternative assessments are in and of themselves valid, due to the direct nature of assessment. Consistency is ensured by the auditability of the procedure (leaving evidence of decision-making processes), by using multiple tasks, by training judges to use clear criteria, and by triangulating any decision-making process with varied sources of data (for example, students, families, and teachers). Therefore, alternative assessment consists of valid and reliable procedures that avoid many of the problems inherent in traditional testing including naming, linguistic, and cultural biases (Brown and Hudson 1998, Huerta-Macias 1995).

A key question that arises is how alternative assessment complies with other criteria of English language assessment, for example, documentation collected by using alternative assessment approach is rich in data about student's learning process but is expensive and time-consuming to administer and evaluate. Worthen (1993), argues it is necessary to understand

that complex thinking skills can be only assessed by alternative assessment. It can reach full potential when following criteria are met: conceptual clarity present, mechanism for evaluation and self-criticism for alternative assessment established, users of alternative assessment well versed in issues of assessment and measurement, standardization of assessment judgments introduced. Furthermore, alternative assessment should help students learn better by providing accurate feedback and correct misunderstandings. On the other side, it helps the teacher to tailor their work and allows for additional activities. (Nasri et al., 2010)

Drawing on the qualities of alternative assessment, Wiggins (1993) provided a clarification of authenticity, reliability, and validity of authentic (i.e., alternative) assessment, stating that standardized tests are usually “paper and pencil” tests, with short answers, or one-answer questions, while authentic assessments are more challenging, comprise more activities like research, discussion and similar, which gives students the opportunity to justify their answers or performance (unlike conventional tests where the answer is correct or incorrect, even in the case of open-ended questions). Based on this, the author posits that even though multiple-choice tests are valid to evaluate academic performance, these tests too often give the wrong clue to students and teachers about the amount of work that still should be done, and based on that Wiggins (1993) states that “norms are not standards; items are not real problems; right answers are not rationales”.

A further advantage of alternative assessment is that there is a wide variety of ways in which learning outcomes can be assessed (Inbar-Lourie, 2013). This includes oral examination, analysis of written work (e.g. stories, essays, reports, blogs, diaries) and feedback (direct observations feedback, paired conversations feedback, group interviews feedback, self-evaluation feedback, peer evaluation/feedback, written tasks feedback, student portfolio feedback, including digital portfolios, interviews). All these activities can replicate real-life situations so that students can use the language the way they would in reality.

Another point worth mentioning is that alternative assessment should be implemented daily by both teachers and students (Nasab, 2015). This implies the usage of performance criteria, which means forming students about learning outcomes for teaching units, as well as self-assessment, by which students evaluate their own learning process, and peer-review, targeted examination and offering diagnostic evaluation (keeping track of student progress through portfolios).

Given these points, it is paramount for students to be involved in assessment as it conducive to learning. Self-assessment and peer-assessment help students appreciate their own learning process with teacher guidance. It also enables students to participate in determining success criteria and evaluate the achievement of set criteria. Peer evaluation is a method of evaluating learners' appreciation of other students in order to provide feedback faster, improve learning, and develop critical thinking and communication skills.

Janisch et al. (2007) identify several advantages of self-assessment. First, students become aware of the ways in which they acquire knowledge which helps them to improve their learning. Consequently, they become more efficient, independent, and self-reliant. Next, self-assessment promotes a positive attitude toward learning and develops lifelong learning skills. Third, it helps students to understand the goals of learning by understanding their own progress. Students can identify their mistakes before the teacher evaluates them and they become more self-conscious and self-critical in the learning process, which helps them to improve the quality of learning and the more detailed acquisition of knowledge. Finally, students become accountable for their learning and a large part of the responsibility for the learning process is shifted from teachers to students.

Below, we will examine in greater detail one of the most popular form of alternative assessment – a portfolio. Student portfolio is defined as a collection of student work that gives



insight on student's efforts, progress, or achievement (Arter and Spandel, 1991), “a purposeful, structured collection of the learner’s work that displays learners’ attempts at learning, their progress and their performance in one or more areas” (Paulson et al., cited in Van Wyk and Carl 1991,60). The work inside a portfolio is considered to be a descriptive source of student achievement (Chitpin, 2003). According to recent reports, portfolio assessment is becoming increasingly important, particularly in North America (Chitpin, 2003). Portfolios have various uses, they are used for assessment and evaluation, but also are a subject of discussion between teacher and student, and a tool for communication between parents, learners, and teachers. It is a collection of content learned at school, and a self-reflection tool, too. Language teachers may allow learners to decide what to put in portfolios, discuss their content, and therefore involve learners into decision-making process about their education. Valencia and Calfee (1991) presented three major types of portfolios: the showcase portfolio (includes a collection of the student’s best or favourite work), the documentation portfolio (includes a collection of entries selected by both teacher and student) and the evaluation portfolio (most entries are predetermined for this type of portfolio, as well as the scoring criteria). An ideal portfolio is the one which contains “evidence of learners’ growth and the learning that has occurred” (Van Wyk and Carl, 2010:14) so the process of keeping a portfolio needs to be continuous with the proved evidence of the progress with regards to outcomes. The content of the portfolio may include checklists, written assignments, photographs, drawings, graphs, observation sheets, tests, students’ comments, but also information on practical works and presentations, and it should be presented in logical and systematic manner (Van Wyk and Carl 2010; Du Toit and Vandeyar, 2004).

#### 4.4. Advantages and Disadvantages of Alternative Assessment

Key advantage of alternative assessment is the fact it creates tasks that are clearly aligned to expectations and what was taught, it allows for differentiation to support individual learner, and it shares the scoring criteria before product creation (students know what they are working towards). Advantage is also the fact it usually happens in a longer period of time (allows students to self-assess and peer-assess). Furthermore, alternative assessment allows for a broader, more in-depth look at knowledge acquisition and it easily shows relevance of real-life situations. On the other side, disadvantage of the alternative assessment is taking a lot of time to create differentiated assessment tools and a group work must be created to ensure authenticity. Additionally, there is no “one right answer” so it is difficult to compare results across the class. Further disadvantage is that data does not allow trend prediction and it takes a lot of time to mark and provide on-going feedback (Dikli, 2003).

<b>ADVANTAGES</b>	<b>DISADVANTAGES</b>
It creates tasks that are clearly aligned to expectations and what was taught	Time consuming to create differentiated assessment tools
It allows for differentiation to support individual learners	Group work must be created to ensure authenticity
It shares the scoring criteria before product creation (students usually know what they are working towards)	There is no “one right answer” - difficult to compare results across the class
It usually happens in a longer period of time (allows students to self-assess and peer-assess)	Data does not allow trend prediction.
It allows for a broader, more in-depth look at knowledge acquisition	Time consuming to mark and provide on-going feedback
It is easy to show relevance to real-life situations	

Table 1. Advantages and disadvantages of alternative assessment

Further advantages of alternative assessment include process assessment and product of learning assessment besides other important learning behaviours, as well as evaluating and scrutinizing instruction. Also, alternative assessment allows producing momentous results to

various stakeholders, providing a connection to cognitive psychology and other related fields, adopting a collaborative approach to learning, and providing support for students' psychology and endorsing autonomous learning. (Nasab, 2015)

However, some authors are big opponents of alternative assessment and have identified numerous weaknesses. Perhaps, one of the most serious disadvantages is that it is not clear how to use alternative assessment in order to create instructional placement or formative evaluation decisions (Fuchs, 1995). This may be an indicator, that *performance* assessment (Fuchs uses this term instead of “alternative”) fails to address purposes of assessment. In order to provide clear descriptions of student performance that can be linked to instructional actions, Fuchs (1995) claims teachers can form a picture of a student; however, this is highly dependent on the teacher’s skills in identifying student competencies. Also, performance (alternative) assessments often rely not only on a specific skill of a teacher, but also on a specific skill of the student, so for the students who are not very creative or flexible, this might pose a problem (Forstall, 2019). Another serious obstacle of alternative assessment practice deals with efficiency and practicality. Alternative tasks often take a long time to create and are not easily administered, especially in big classrooms. Furthermore, reliability is a major challenge as scoring criteria and interpretation of results can be highly subjective since students use language creatively and more than one correct solution is possible. This leaves space to subjective techniques when scoring/evaluating. However, careful specifications in scoring criteria could reduce low scorer reliability. Compared to alternative tasks, standardized tasks have a great advantage in this area, because one must concede that reliability and validity are questionable in alternative assessment practice (Fuchs, 1995).

Another significant weakness of alternative assessment methods implementation are environmental difficulties, meaning difficulties regarding teacher, student, and parents, and curricular. For teachers, this mostly refers to insufficient time, the fact that methods were not

found in the curriculum, too high workload, insufficient support and information. For students, problems are lack of information, indifference and parent difficulties included cost, parental pressure on doing test instead of doing alternative assessment, and lack of knowledge, as well as bias about their children's level (Demir, Tananis and Basbogaoglu, 2018).

## **5. STUDIES ON ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT**

### **5.1. Recent studies**

Numerous studies attest to the benefits of alternative assessment. A study conducted by Nasri et. al. (2010) in Malaysia reported positive perceptions among Brunei teachers on alternative assessment. Results revealed that the majority believes that alternative assessment promotes active learning and self-confidence among students. Likewise, it supports both critical and creative thinking. Similar results were obtained by Letina (2014), who found while teachers in theory prefer alternative over traditional assessment; however, in practice, they tend to apply it less than traditional assessment. What Letina (2014) recognized was that a large number of teachers had positive attitudes towards alternative assessment; however, they did not feel qualified to apply it. This suggests that teacher education programs should devote greater attention to alternative assessment. When it comes to students and their experience, a study conducted by Vrkic Dimic and Strucic (2008) revealed students prefer alternative over traditional assessment and appreciate detailed feedback information about the results of their work. Study also showed students would like to be more involved into assessment process, so it is not predominantly a teacher's activity. Next part will focus on the current experiences in alternative assessment practice.

### **5.2. Current practices in the alternative assessment use with reflection on traditional methods**

In a 2018 study, status of various alternative assessment techniques, used in EFL public high school in Morocco, was examined, exposing major problems that inhibit the implementation of alternative assessment. According to the study results, the practice of alternative assessment is slowly evolving, “in the context in spite of the very positive attitudes expressed towards it” (Ghaicha and Omarkaly, 2018). But the same study also revealed that the

practice of traditional assessment seems to be taking the lead in the teachers' current practices up to now.

Therefore, although awareness of the benefits of alternative assessment exists, and not only exists, but is growing; traditional methods are still more prevalent than alternative methods. This is the case even despite the fact that teachers also have a positive opinion of alternative methods. We can assume that one of the reasons for this may be the fact that alternative methods require additional knowledge and resources which may not be available to teachers.

As the results of the Moroccan study also indicate, teachers face different types of challenges including mainly time constraints, class size, and lack of training (Ghaicha and Omarkaly, 2018). In order to enable the introduction and implementation of alternative assessment to teachers, necessary facilities and the required training must be provided; otherwise, the implementation of these methods is not possible, or is significantly more difficult, resulting in not using of alternative assessment methods, but not because they are not adequate or quality (it's exactly the opposite) but because no conditions are created for their application.

When analysing the teachers' perception on alternative assessment, a 2017 study carried out in Slovenia showed that a lack of knowledge is one of the main problems when it comes to the implementation of alternative assessment (Stemberger and Petrusic, 2017). The study included 855 primary school teachers and the results showed that teachers mostly agree with the current (traditional) method of grading, and alternative methods (like descriptive assessment) are less popular. Authors propose the assumption based on the advantages and disadvantages of individual methods of grading and they assume some teachers have insufficient knowledge of the different methods of grading. They conclude by stating that

teachers do not possess accurate information about descriptive grading (Stemberger and Petrusic, 2017).

A study performed in Croatia in 2014 analysed the introduction of descriptive assessment (as an alternative method) in opposition to numerical assessment. Results revealed that longer-term teachers will be predominantly of conventional thinking, less interested and prone to alternative assessment, and more inclined to make a simpler assessment. Long-term teachers experienced a descriptive assessment whose application was halted by their pressures, which can be attributed to their lack of preparation for conducting a descriptive assessment. Assuming that people with less work experience are more likely to be educated and influenced by recent theories (Bežen, 2008; Matijevic, 2005), then they will also be more sensitized by introducing descriptive assessment to assess students' abilities (Margetic, 2014). This study also showed that, although longer-term teachers are less prone to alternative assessment, teachers generally agree with the combination of different assessment methods in language teaching (Margetic, 2014).

A part of the problem with alternative assessment implementation seems to be the fact that, although many of the benefits of alternative assessment have been known for decades, these methods have not been systematized and formalized yet, so that they can be applied regularly and systematically, as is the case with traditional methods. In other words, alternative assessment has rarely been systematically reviewed and addressed in those reformed contexts. It is very rare that alternative assessment is revisited and ideas for its implications in the language curriculum are suggested (Al-Mahrooqi, 2018). Therefore, in order to make these methods more accessible (and also more visible, and therefore more accessible) it is necessary to ensure their *transparency, integrity, validity, and planned improvement* (Quenemoen, 2008).

This is especially important in the context of alternative assessment in language learning, as the assessment is the key to language learning (Bachelor, 2015). Numerous studies have proven this, as well as the positive attitude towards alternative testing methods by the students themselves, which is very important. Bachelor's study from 2015 revealed more about students' perceptions of alternative assessments, in general, and about methods they favour. Only Formative Assessment was a highly favoured assessment choice, while all three types, Dynamic, Task-based, and Formative Assessments, were positively precepted by the students (Bachelor, 2015). Based on these results, Bachelor (2015) states that origin language educators must address the issue of effective assessment types but at the same time creating an atmosphere conducive to learning for the students. Seeking student perceptions while creating quality alternative assessments is a recommendation for language educators.

When it comes to alternative assessment methods, more research is needed to gain insight into the manner and intensity of the use of alternative methods and to detect problems that slow down the implementation of alternative methods. As in general, there is also a lack of research on how to use alternative assessment methods in Croatia as well, so the research conducted as part of this paper will contribute to the effort to improve the current situation in the given area.



## **6. THE STUDY ABOUT EFL TEACHERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT METHODS**

### **6.1. Aims**

The main aim of this research is to analyse teachers' attitudes towards alternative assessment methods. Specifically, the study inquired into EFL teachers' attitude towards and use of alternative assessment in ELT.

The research questions which guided this study are as follows:

- RQ 1. How familiar are EFL teachers with alternative assessment?
- RQ 2. How do EFL teachers feel about alternative assessment as compared to standardized tests?
- RQ 3. What are EFL teachers' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of alternative assessment?
- RQ 4. To what extent are assessment methods used in the EFL classroom?
- RQ 5. What are the strengths and weaknesses of alternative assessment?

### **6.2. Methodology and participants**

The research was conducted in February 2019, the participants were 68 English language teachers working in Primorje-Gorski Kotar and Istria County. The responses were collected by means of an online questionnaire (Google Forms) written in English and sent via email, which yielded a response rate of 34%. The majority of participants are elementary school teachers (62%) with 11 or more years of English teaching experience (57%). As for the class size, most classes consist of 21-25 students (41%), followed by classes with more than 25

students (19%). Only three participants reported to be teaching in a class with less than 11 students.

The questionnaire consisted of 42 questions – a combination of closed-ended, Likert-type, multiple-choice and open-ended questions – in three different parts. The first part investigated background information like age, years of teaching experience, and information regarding their current job position: type of school and average number of students in the class.

The second part examined teachers' understanding of different alternative assessment methods, confidence related to usage of alternative assessment methods and its perceived effectiveness. Participants were asked to rate which assessment practices should be used in a class, difficulties they face when using alternative assessment and frequency and benefits of using different assessment methods. X Questions also examined the need for additional training and support in assessing students. In order to fully understand teachers' attitude on multiple assessment use it was necessary to examine both, the use of traditional and alternative method, which required each question to be asked twice, each time for each method. The idea resulted in total of 27 questions in the second part, comprising a combination of multiple-choice questions and Likert-type questions.

In the third part the participants provided their responses in the set of nine open-ended questions. Participants were asked to explain their answers in as much detail as possible. These questions examined whether they encountered challenges when using alternative and traditional methods, the benefits of using both methods, and their impact on teaching. Finally, participants were asked what type of assessment is preferred among students and to describe their preferred assessment method.

## 6.3. Results and discussion

### 6.3.1. Teachers' understanding of different alternative assessment methods

All participants reported that they use traditional assessment methods, but approximately two thirds of participants (75%) claim to be using both traditional and alternative methods when assessing students. It seems that none of the participants uses alternative method as their only mean for reporting progress.

Most respondents report they have a complete understanding of different alternative assessment methods (41% of them agree and 10% strongly agree) whereas smaller proportion of respondents disagree (1% of respondents strongly disagree and 19% percent disagree). When comparing the share of those who agree and those who disagree with the above statement, we notice there are twice as many respondents (ratio 2,5:1 51% versus 20%) who claim to understand alternative assessment methods than those who do not. However, surprisingly, 28% of respondents opted for neither disagree nor agree *or* do not know. Teachers' understanding of different alternative assessment methods is presented in the next figure.

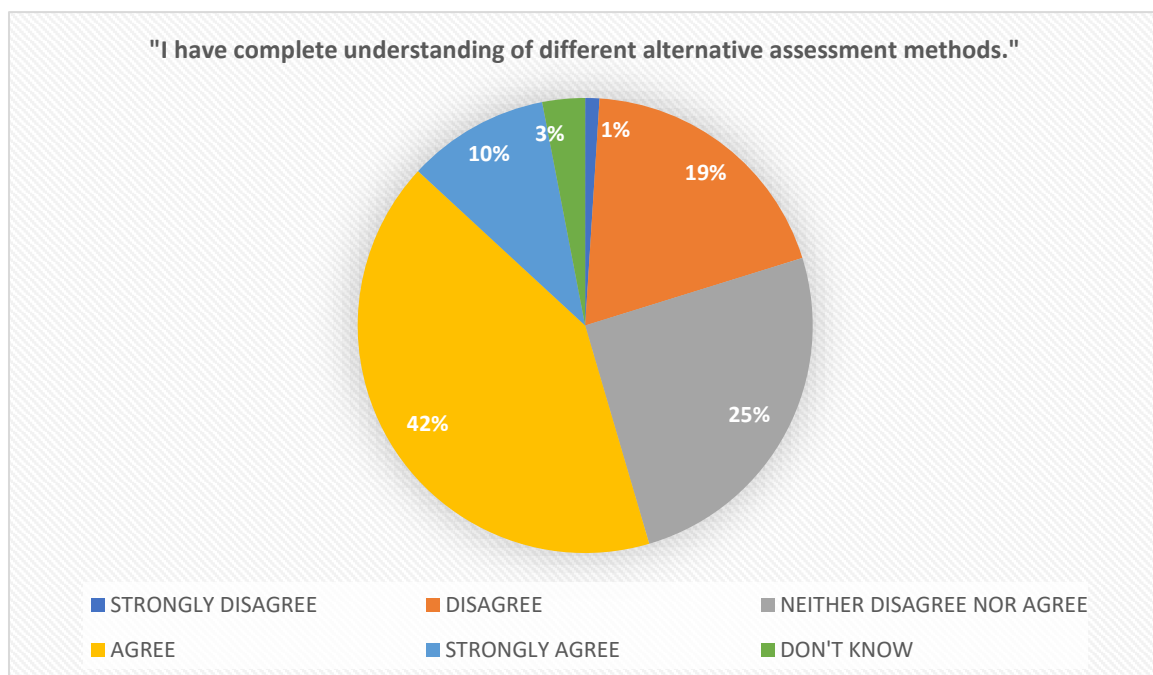


Figure 3. Teachers' understanding of different alternative assessment methods

Contrary to previous question, a large majority of teachers reported to have complete understanding of traditional methods (66%), with 7% of those who disagree. Comparing to alternative method, 19% think their understanding is insufficient.

Most of the respondents would like to attend additional training to expand their knowledge and understanding of alternative assessment (more precisely, 81% of them, which is significantly more compared to the number of respondents - 62% - who would like to attend additional training to expand knowledge and understanding of traditional assessment methods). Teachers' attitude toward attending additional training to expand their knowledge and understanding of alternative assessment methods is presented in the next figure.

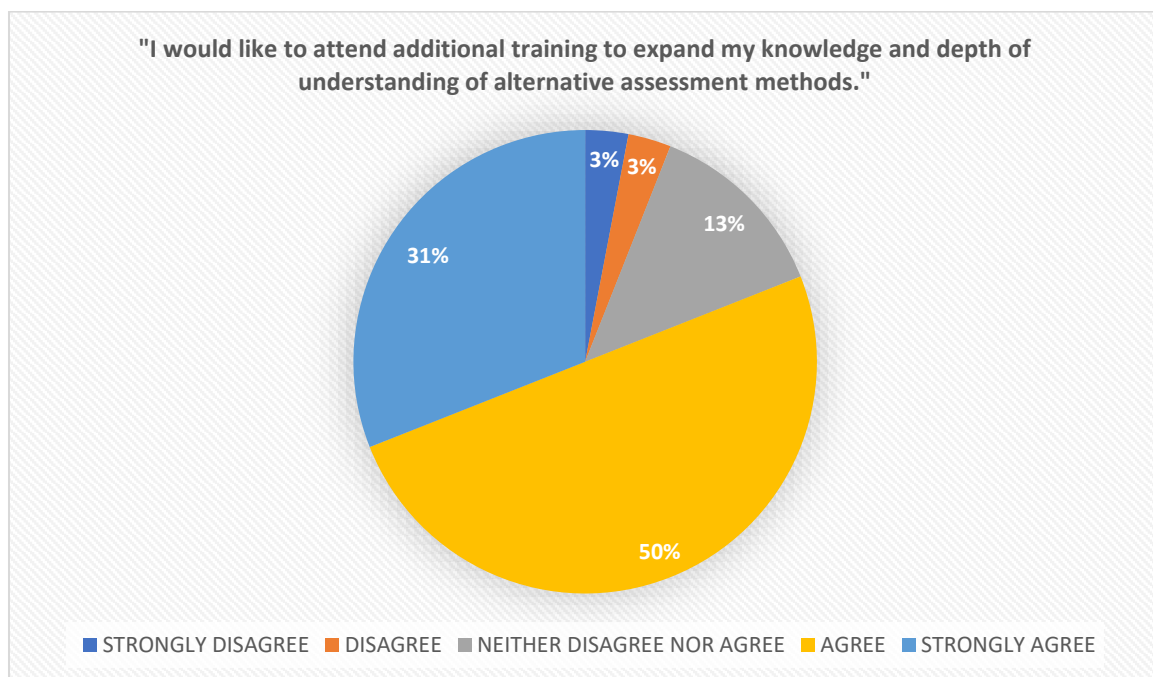


Figure 4. Teachers' attitude about attending additional training to understand alternative methods better

**6.3.2. Teachers’ attitude on differences between alternative and traditional assessment methods and effectiveness of each**

Unexpected, less than half of the respondents understand the difference between alternative and traditional assessment methods (39% agree and 4% strongly agree). As presented in Figure 5, there is a 13% of respondents who stated that the difference between alternative and traditional assessment methods is not clear to them and, also, there is a 35% of respondents who are unsure whether the differences between alternative and traditional methods are clear (additionally, 3% of respondents do not know).

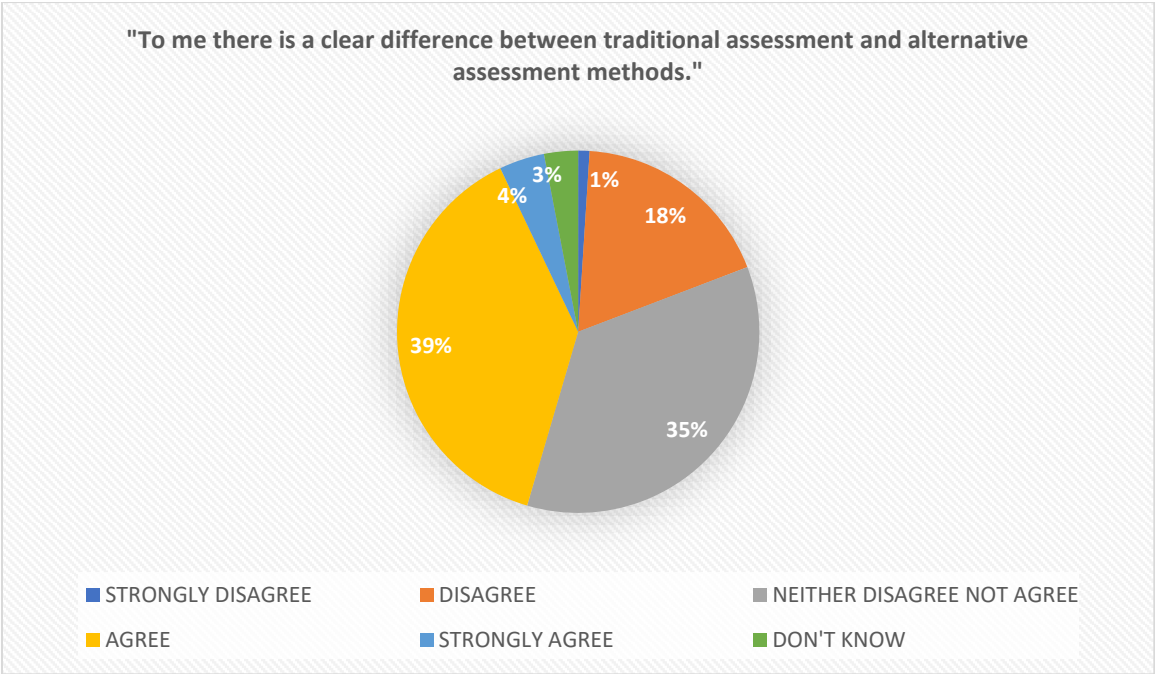


Figure 5. Teachers’ understanding of differences between alternative and traditional methods

When it comes to teachers’ attitude about effectiveness of alternative vs. traditional assessment methods, a minority of respondents (17%) believe that alternative assessment methods are more effective, 10% disagree with his claim, while most participants (50%) neither agree nor disagree. As presented in the figure below half of respondents does not have a clear

opinion on this issue and there is between 7 and 9% of those who stated that they don't know which methods are more effective.

Some teachers claim a balance is needed for the methods to be effective:

*"It's best to combine both traditional and alternative methods of assessment, in my opinion- to have best of both worlds."*

*"You learn reading by reading. You learn writing by writing. And so on. Some things must be done in a 'boring' way to become a habit. And occasionally you can use any method you like to make the lesson more interesting and fun. Not all the time. Make a balance."*

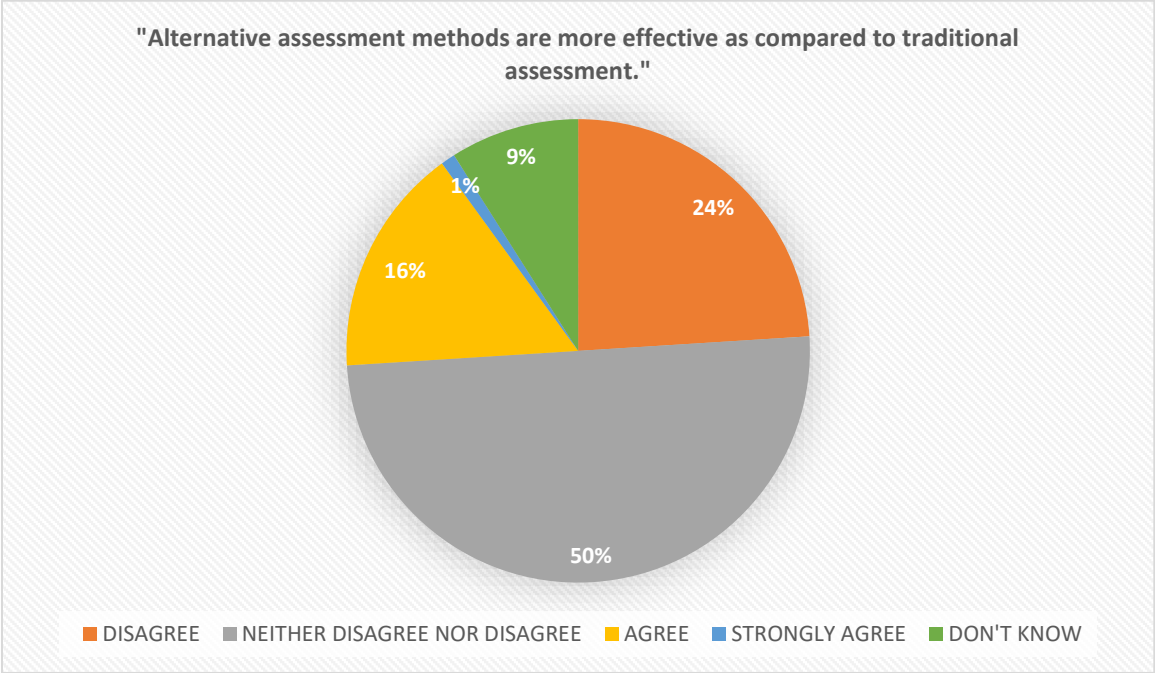


Figure 6. Teachers' attitude about alternative assessment methods effectiveness vs. traditional methods

**6.3.3. Teachers' attitudes on whether alternative assessment methods make teaching easier**

More teachers (41%) think that alternative methods do not make their job easier and about 8% report otherwise. Teachers believe traditional assessment methods make their job

easier (39%), with significant number of those who are not sure (39%). In total, 41% of respondents agree using alternative methods makes their job as a teacher more difficult. As shown in the figure below, in terms of workload, teachers find traditional assessment methods more desirable than alternative ones.

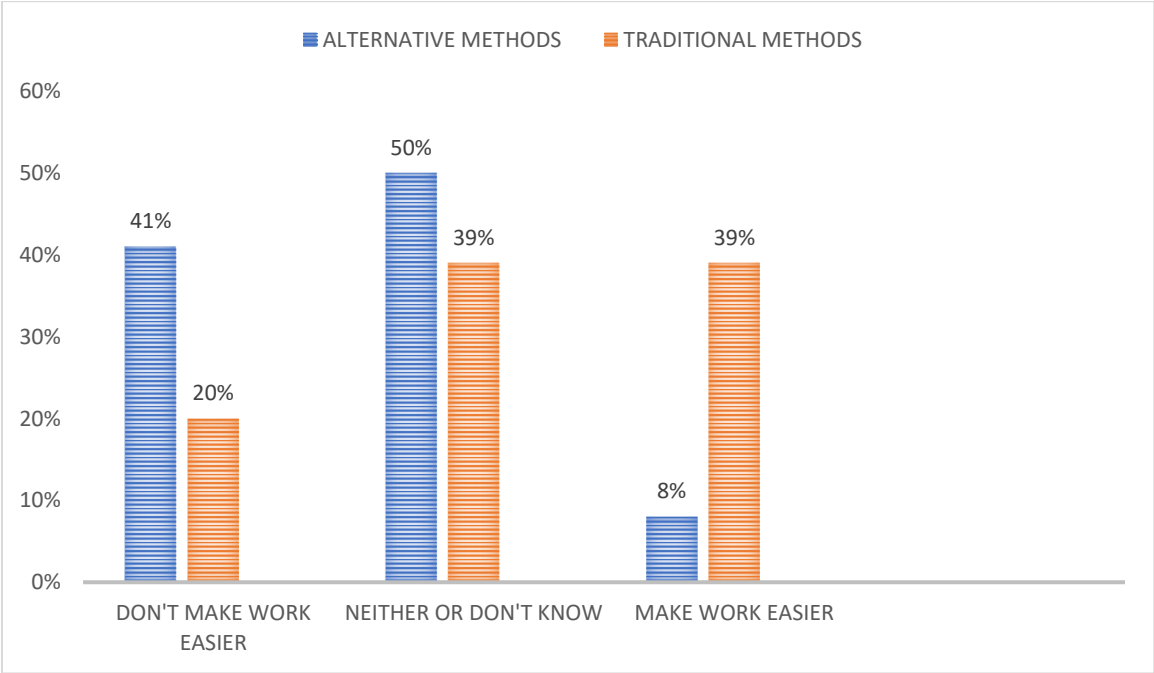


Figure 7. Teachers’ opinion on whether alternative assessment makes their work easier

**6.3.4. Teachers’ attitude on whether alternative methods should be regularly used as assessment methods**

Most of the teachers agree (57%) or strongly agree (12%) that alternative assessment methods should be regularly used in student assessment processes and only a small percentage disagrees (4%). When it comes to traditional assessment methods, large majority of the respondents agree (69%) or strongly agree (10%) that traditional methods should be regularly used in student assessment processes and only a small percentage disagree (4%) or strongly disagree (1%). While the results are similar as one of alternative assessment, there is also a significant number of those who neither disagree nor agree (15%) but less compared to

alternative assessment (25%). Teachers' attitude on whether alternative assessment should be regularly used is shown in the figure below.

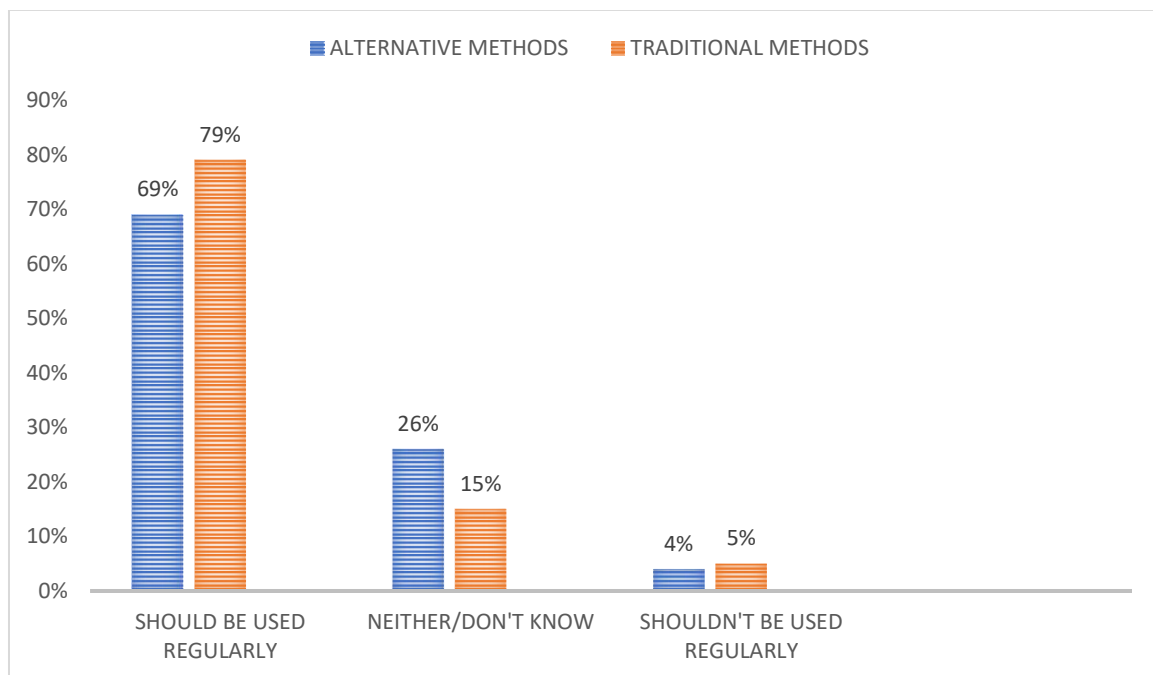


Figure 8. Teachers' attitude on whether alternative assessment should be regularly used

### 6.3.5. Use of alternative assessment methods

Most teachers (57%) use more traditional assessment methods than alternative methods. Less percentage of teachers (13%) use alternative methods more than traditional ones, while 28% cannot make a clear statement on this issue.

According to open-ended responses, teachers have positive opinion of alternative assessment and would choose to use the methods even more along with traditional ones. However, when using alternative methods, they deal with lot of challenges. According to results, using them is time-consuming, not standardized, there is a problem of fairness, class-size, problem with motivation and self-motivation.

*“Too many students in the classroom to be completely effective.”;*



*“Choosing the best possible method out of many, individualizing assessment according to students’ strengths...”;*

*“Lots of preparation and the possibility to fail miserably...”*

*“It could be subjective and might overlook certain linguistic aspect potentially crucial for students' complete linguistic development, e.g. usage of linguistic structures in a holding presentation if the goal is presentation skills.”*

Frequency of use of alternative assessment compared to traditional assessment use is shown in the figure below.

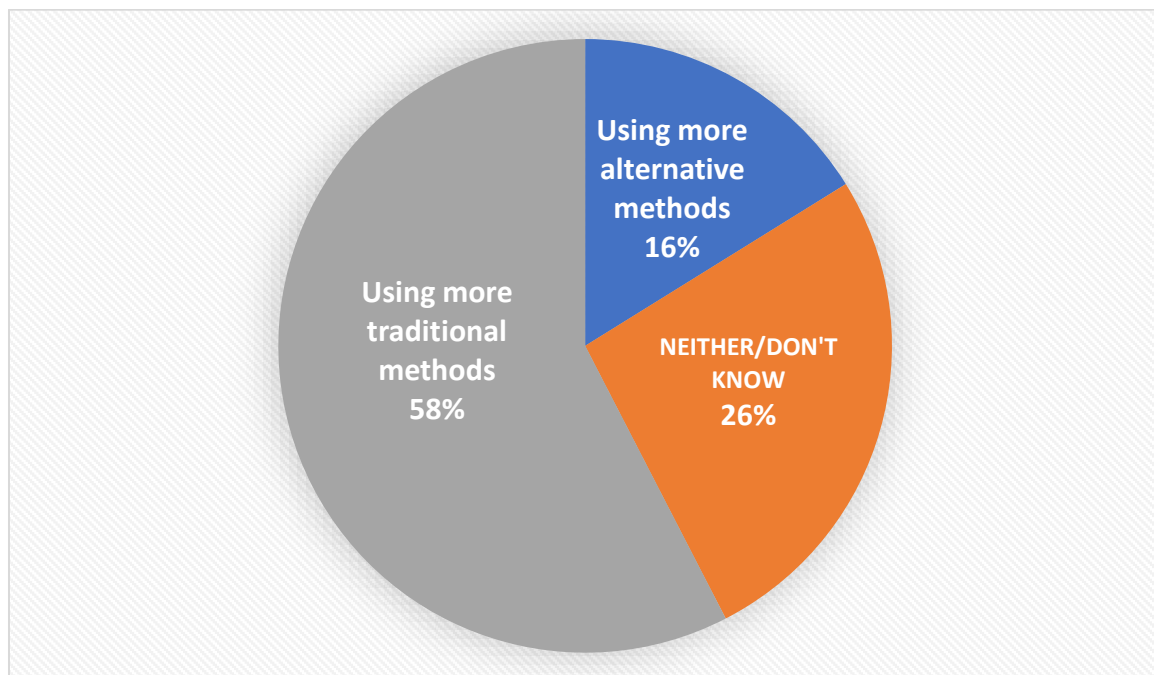


Figure 9. Frequency of alternative vs. traditional assessment use

### **6.3.6. Teachers’ attitude on multiple assessment use, additional assessment use and current alternative assessment practices**

A large majority of teachers agree (62%) or strongly agree (19%) that they need to attend workshops on the use of multiple assessment and only a small percentage of them is not sure

about this (10%). This is linked to the previous question, presented in chapter 6.3.1., which examined how teachers assess their understanding of alternative methods and most of the respondents (81%) stated they would like to attend additional training to expand their understanding of alternative assessment.

This implies that teachers need support, especially in the form of additional education, to be able to use both traditional and alternative assessment methods.

*“How do we do it objectively? Also, students often expect to get an excellent grade just because it's something they put an extra effort in. How do we avoid this practice and make it equally "serious" type of assessment?”*

### **6.3.7. Teachers' attitude on how different assessment methods capture students' skills and knowledge**

When comparing which methods, alternative or traditional, are better in capturing students' skills (like analysing, creating, or creative thinking) the vast majority of teachers (81%) believe that, in this case, alternative methods are much better than traditional assessment practices. Teachers' attitude on alternative assessment methods ability to capture students' analytical and creative skills, compared to traditional methods, is shown in the next figure.

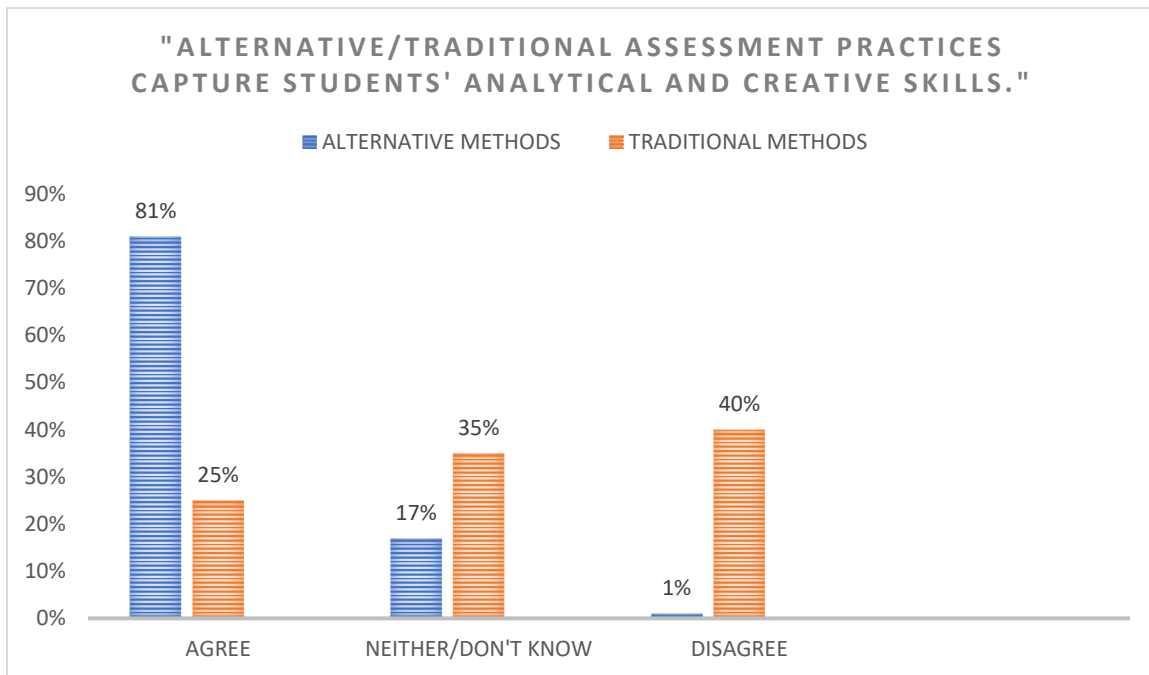


Figure 10. Teachers' attitude on alternative vs. traditional methods ability to capture students' analytical and creative skills

What the respondents claim is that traditional assessment methods, like multiple choice test, C tests and other methods, are able to capture students' knowledge (40% agree, 6% strongly agree) with a significant percentage of teachers who are not sure (35%).

On the other hand, when contrasting with alternative assessment methods, teachers agree that portfolios, presentations and other methods, are able to capture students' knowledge (63% agree, 9% strongly agree). There are seven percent of them who disagree and 21% does not know. The results demonstrated most teachers agree that alternative methods capture students' analytical and creative skills while they disagree that traditional methods are able to provide the same.

*“Results on assessments don't always show true students' knowledge.”*

*“Their writing skills always come in the way, their inability to express themselves the way they want to and the fact that they get completely lost and confused when the question being asked in not 100% same as the one they are used to being asked.”*

*“I think that not every A is the same, just as not every B is the same etc. It's more about how the student has improved in a particular period of time. So sometimes it's a bit more difficult to decide what's objectively fair and what's the right thing to do when grading somebody.”*

Teachers' attitude on alternative assessment methods ability to capture students' knowledge, compared to traditional methods, is shown in the figure below.

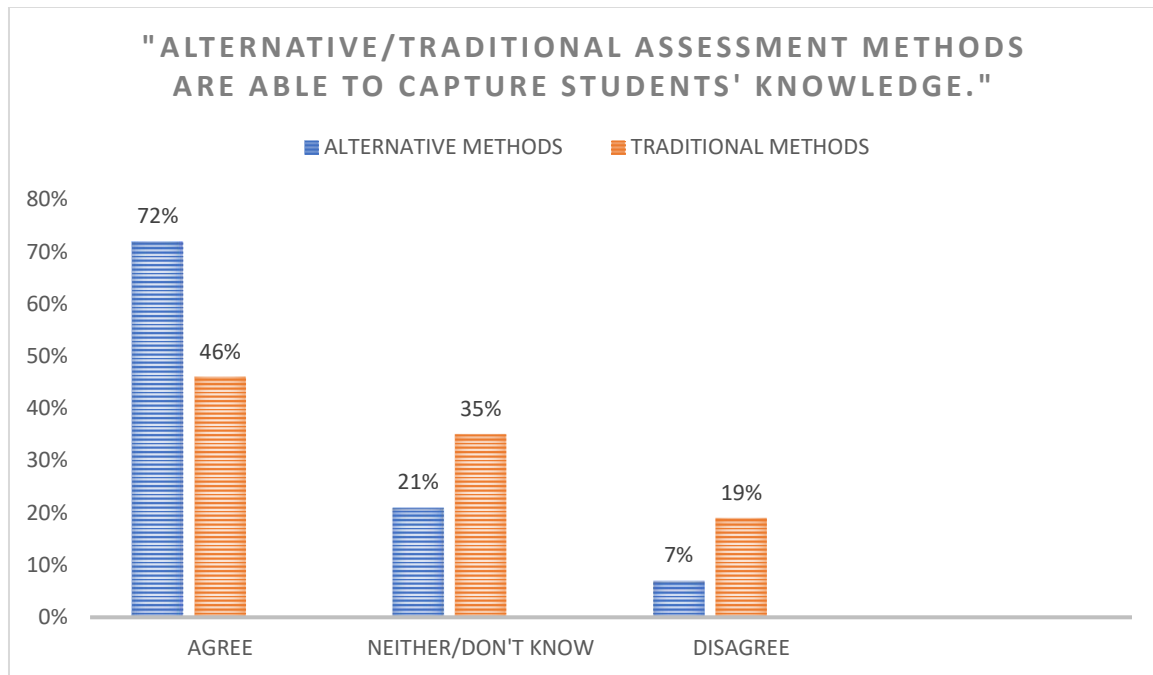


Figure 11. Teachers' attitude on alternative vs. traditional methods ability to capture students' knowledge

In this context, it is necessary to examine students' opinion about effectiveness of each – traditional and alternative – assessment method. A case study at Department of English Language Education UIN Ar-Raniryhe, showed that the two types of assessment applied in their classroom (traditional assessment; multiple choice, essay, fill in the blank, short answer, etc. and alternative assessment; computer based test, portfolio, and group project), cannot be compared in the same time, but both of these two assessment types is needed to apply, even though, according to the results of the study, students prefer alternative than traditional one (Irawan, 2017).

**6.3.8. Difficulties teachers face when using alternative assessment**

When using alternative assessment, teachers experienced all mentioned difficulties, such as increased teacher’s workload, time-consuming activities, subjective grading, higher administrative costs, lack of time, and number of students in the class. The difficulties faced by the most are increased teacher’s workload and lack of time (78% each), but subjective grading and administrations are also an issue (56% and 42%).

As expected, when it comes to the use of traditional assessment methods teachers generally agree that subjective grading, higher administrative costs, lack of time, and number of students in the class do not pose a problem. On the other hand, the most often faced difficulty when using traditional assessment is time-consuming activities (37%), followed by increased teachers’ workload (33%), and lack of time (32%), while subjective grading is the difficulty teachers face the least when using traditional assessment. As shown in the table below, teachers experience less difficulties when using traditional assessment.

	<b>When using alternative assessment</b>	<b>When using traditional assessment</b>
<i>Increased teacher’s workload</i>	78%	33%
<i>Time-consuming activities</i>	72%	37%
<i>Subjective grading</i>	56%	18%
<i>Higher administrative costs</i>	42%	16%
<i>Lack of time</i>	78%	32%
<i>Number of students in the class</i>	76%	27%

Figure 12. Difficulties in using alternative assessment

*“Testing takes time, you can be subjective, you can't get marks ”*

*“Requires teacher's creativity and additional engagement (thoughtful preparation), subjectivity”*

*“Subjective grading... Number of students in class, lack of time”*

### 6.3.9. Frequency and effectiveness of alternative assessment use

This question examines how often teachers use a particular assessment method. The methods listed are: tests, portfolios, presentations, participation, quizzes, peer assessment, teacher assessment, and student self-assessment. Respondents were asked to rate how frequently they use a particular method: very frequently, frequently, occasionally, rarely, very rarely, or never. Most of the methods are used frequently, except peer assessment and student assessment, which are mostly used only occasionally, and portfolios which are never used by most teachers. The most used method is participation in classroom, followed by teachers’ assessment and tests. The least used methods are portfolio and peer assessment. Frequency of use of different assessment method is shown in the figure below.

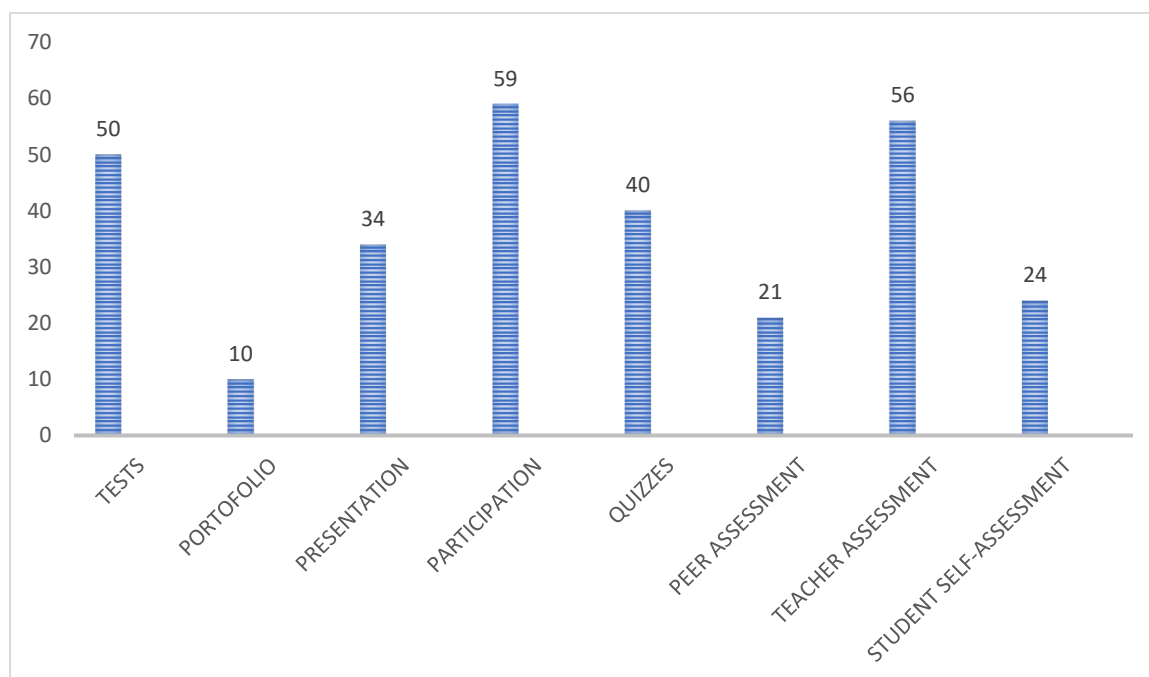


Figure 13. Frequency of use of different assessment method

When it comes to teachers’ opinions about how effectively each method assesses students’ language abilities and performances, most teachers think that the most effective

method to assess students are teachers' assessment, presentation, and participation, whereas the least effective methods include peer assessment and portfolio. Effectiveness of each assessment method in showing students' language abilities and performance is presented in the next figure.

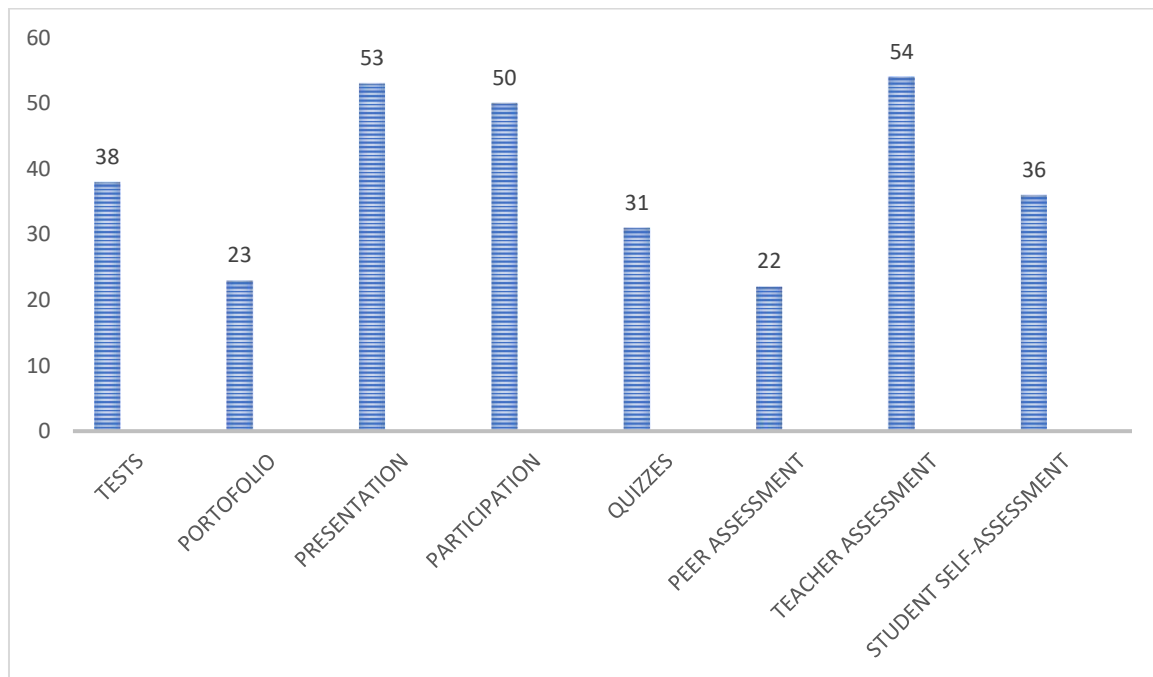


Figure 14. Effectiveness of each assessment method in showing students' language abilities and performance

## 7. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

According to the questionnaire results, slightly more than half of the teachers surveyed believe that they fully understand different alternative assessment methods. Although this is a large percentage, the percentage is less than expected, but, on the other hand, a large part of other respondents think that they partly understand alternative assessment methods, which can be considered a good start in the process of advancing in understanding and applying alternative assessment methods.

As expected, results clearly indicate teachers generally have better understanding of traditional assessment methods. This could be explained by the fact that teachers also use traditional assessment more frequently, which is why they understand them better, using them regularly in the teaching process.

When it comes to alternative assessment methods, there seems to be a dose of uncertainty in teachers' assessing of their own understanding of alternative assessment methods. However, teachers are aware of their shortcomings in understanding alternative assessment methods and would welcome teacher training and development/education on alternative assessment and on how to apply alternative assessment methods. It is clear that teachers need more systematic support in terms of education and teacher training and development, in order to use alternative assessment methods more often and more effectively. Therefore, the system of teacher education and development is of great importance: Croatian Education and Teacher Training Agency (Agencija za odgoj i obrazovanje, AZOO) should organize regular teachers' development programs, and faculties which educate EFL teachers should offer more courses on alternative assessment.

Surprisingly, results revealed significant percentage of teachers who are not fully familiar with the difference between alternative and traditional assessment methods. This is, in



a way, more worrying than the fact that a large percent of teachers do not fully understand how to apply alternative assessment methods. This indicates some teachers are not familiar with alternative methods at all. Therefore, not being able to notice a difference between traditional and alternative assessment methods suggests that teachers do not really know what alternatives methods are all about, let alone will use them.

As for the teachers who clearly understand the differences between traditional and alternative assessment methods, it is noticeable that only a small percentage of them believe that alternative methods are more effective than traditional ones. It is worth pointing out that more than a half of the respondents are not sure which assessment methods are more effective. This clearly shows that alternative assessment methods still have a long way to go before they can be adequately applied and implemented in the assessment system. Because, in order to get a clear insight into the effectiveness of a particular method, it is necessary to use both alternative and traditional methods. While traditional assessment methods have long been in use, and also school systems and universities favour traditional assessment since it makes grading easier and teachers were taught and trained to use traditional methods, alternative methods are still not applied long enough for more teachers to be able to clearly assess the effectiveness of alternative assessment methods compared to traditional methods.

As for alternative assessment methods, there is a higher share of teachers who think that it is more challenging to use alternative methods; that is, most teachers believe that when it comes to choosing which methods make their job easier, they certainly choose traditional methods.

*“Tests - they are the easiest to grade. Presentations and writing are more challenging to assess.”*

*“The traditional one. It helps me and my students have more control over the teaching/learning (expectations, progress... everything is clearer than in the alternative one.”*

However, this does not imply, that the method itself is not valid. In other words, a certain alternative method may be somewhat more difficult to implement but can also be more efficient since it is qualitative feedback, is connected to the real world, it shows how students use the language in everyday life. In comparison to traditional assessment methods, alternative assessment is valid, but often not practical enough, and also highly subjective.

In the open-ended responses, teachers also pointed out numerous benefits of using alternative assessment, such as the fact that these methods can be rewarding for the students, allowing them to be creative, as well as new and interesting, more personal and motivating, more relaxing and natural, reducing stress and anxiety linked to tests, and teachers think that alternative assessment are particularly adequate in language classroom since these methods are “linguistically all-inclusive, for students - they get to use language more completely and more functionally”.

*“The students get better feedback and they get feedback in various forms, which can make them better learners eventually. “*

*“Individualized approach, reduces anxiety in students, students are able to experience practical usage of language”*

*“student friendly”*

*“Students are more involved in different activities, topics, they try more approaches and investigate more, cooperate and exchange information, use critical thinking, connect and correlate different subjects and topics...”*

On the other side, teachers stated that traditional assessment methods are not very accurate feedback in some areas, like creative writing, listening, etc. Also, there is a lack of individuality, and methods poorly display full student's knowledge. Therefore, students can have good results on a test, but still have poor communicative skills. All in all, teachers think that traditional assessment methods are not getting the real picture what students know and can do.

*“Traditional grammar tests are not good because they do not guarantee that students who know all the grammar rules will be successful in communication.”*

As a problem that occurs in traditional assessment, teachers criticized there are too many formalities and criteria to be followed which are given by the Ministry of Education and Educational Agency.

Teachers generally prefer traditional methods, but, in general, agree that alternative methods should be implemented in the regular assessment system.

As expected, teachers generally use traditional assessment methods more than alternative ones and the differences are quite large: more than half of teachers use traditional methods more, while only about 15 percent of teachers use alternative methods more than traditional ones. However, these results should be taken with caution as, again, we encounter a relatively large percentage of those who cannot clearly distinguish between alternative and traditional methods and are therefore probably unable to classify them correctly. It is likely that they are not fully aware as to which methods they actually use. This issue is evident in the inconsistency of results, so it is certainly necessary to point out that a certain percentage of teachers does not have a clear idea of what alternative assessment methods are: 20% of teachers stated they do not have complete understanding of different alternative assessment methods. This percentage is not large in terms of numbers, but it is a grassroots problem considering the

impact of this position on assessment in EFL, and the consequences of not knowing the differences between alternative and traditional, at least in theory on classroom practice and learning.

As shown in results, there is a much smaller number of teachers who use alternative assessment methods than those who use traditional methods, but the results indicate that teachers use alternative methods, although it is very likely that they are not used apart from traditional assessment – it is very likely that alternative methods will be used in addition with traditional methods.

Teachers who use alternative assessment methods, find them better and effective when it comes to perceiving/capturing students' skills, such as analytical or creative ones: the vast majority of teachers, more than 80% of them, believe that alternative methods in this regard are more efficient than traditional ones, and can tap the students' potential.

As mentioned, alternative assessment methods are adequate to use in respect to changes that occur in English language teaching, like varied learner populations, and different learning styles. When it comes to judgment whether alternative or traditional methods are better in assessing students' knowledge, fewer teachers consider alternative methods to be suitable. However, the results showed that although teachers think alternative methods are more effective, a minimal number will use them as their only mean of assessment. However, a positive attitude is certainly a good step towards greater implementation of alternative methods in the regular assessment system. Therefore, particular consideration should be given to teachers' increased awareness of the adequacy of alternative methods when it comes to assessing and capturing students' analytical and creative skills. The fact is, however, that there are certain obstacles (or limitations) to the application of alternative methods, such as lack of teacher education, which may be the reason why they are not used to the extent teachers would

want, or to the extent that these methods should be used, given the benefits they have for students.

When it comes to the difficulties teachers face when using alternative assessment methods, teachers concede that they face various difficulties such as teachers' workload, time-consuming activities, subjective grading, higher administrative costs, lack of time, and number of students in the class. However, the biggest problems are increased workload and lack of time, as already partially confirmed in the previous questions. Subjective grading and higher administrative costs seem to be additional concern. This was also confirmed by research in Morocco, which showed that, when applying alternative methods, teachers mostly face time constraints and lack of training (as well as class size) (Ghaicha and Omarkaly, 2018). It is certainly good to mention that according to open-ended responses, teachers deal with the lack of time, problem present not only when it comes to alternative assessment, but also when using traditional assessment – this makes the problem with time even more significant.

In order to reduce these difficulties, it is necessary to take measures to address the causes. Given that it has already been established that teachers lack systematic, professional education on the types and examples of alternative assessment methods, it can be concluded that this lack is one of the causes of the increased workload of teachers. As for the problem of the lack of time, it is obviously related to the first problem, but it is also necessary to analyse it in more detail to find potential solutions. The fact is that not every alternative assessment method is suitable for every situation, so it is necessary to find the most optimal solution with respect to the language level, aims and learning outcomes, which is why teachers need additional support and training.

As a part of the research, it was examined how often teachers use certain assessment methods. Most used methods include participation in the classroom followed by teachers'

assessment and tests. The least used methods are portfolio and peer assessment. Portfolio, defined as a collection of student work that gives insight on student's efforts, progress and/or achievement, is otherwise considered to be one of the most used alternative assessment methods, as it is stated in chapter 4.3.; for example, it is increasingly used in North America (Chitpin, 2003). Peer assessment is also a particularly useful method, since it saves teachers' time and, even more important, it improves students' understanding, knowledge and skills, but within respondents in this study, is very little used.

The results indicated that participation in class is considered as the best assessment method in language assessment (beside presentation, and the least effective methods are peer assessment and portfolio). As an assessment method, participation is essential in order to enable and provide active learning and enable students to explore their ideas easier, through discourse, debate, and inquiry (Anderson, 1998).

Although this research focused on teachers' attitudes on alternative assessment, we can assume that students would also agree that active learning, as the most effective learning style, is necessary. In this context, it seems that alternative methods are more satisfying for students, possibly because they are dissatisfied with the fact that they are not always given adequate feedback about the results of their work (Vrkic Dimic and Strucic, 2008). Also, it appears that students mostly perceive traditional assessment as *numbers* that will serve them to achieve certain short- or long-term educational goals, while alternative assessment provides much more information to the students, which has a positive washback on teaching and learning (Kavic, 2017). The results in the study confirm the idea that “they like transparency and objectivity”, the former meaning explaining the grade (or whatever was in question) in a gentle, supportive, motivating way.

Also, *“they are usually very good and accurate in self-assessment, which surprises me every time”*.

*“Oral exams - then they feel more relaxed. Project work-motivating, engaging. Sketches/monologues-they can express their creative side”*.

However, it is necessary to conduct further research of the students' attitudes to draw further conclusions.

In view of the fact that, as Bachelor (2015) stated, “assessment is the key to language learning”, it is paramount to improve assessment methods and incorporate alternative assessment into the EFL classroom.

In the context of the application of alternative methods, and the implications of this research, the connection between the implementation of alternative assessment methods and the *state graduation exam (državna matura)*, conducted in the Republic of Croatia, should be mentioned. The state graduation is a set of exams in general education subjects that are taken at the end of a four-year high school education. State graduation exams are conducted in a standardized manner throughout the country at the same time and under the same conditions and criteria for all students and applicants (Pravilnik o polaganju državne mature, 2012). Namely, it turned out that traditional assessment methods are not fully adequate for conducting the state graduation and there is a clear need to include other - alternative - assessment methods, in order to conduct the state graduation more efficient and with higher quality, to meet the objectives for which it is conducted, primarily for welfare of the graduates.

## 8. CONCLUSION

English language teachers are mostly familiar with alternative assessment; however, they do not implement these methods in the EFL classroom. Among the reasons for this are that the teachers find them time-consuming, subjective, and expensive. The results indicate a lack of education about alternative assessment, but also suggest that the teachers would be willing to undergo specific alternative assessment training. On the other side, teachers are mostly aware of the benefits alternative assessment have, and they consider these methods as new and interesting, more personal and motivating, more relaxing and natural. Furthermore, teachers report that students find alternative methods rewarding as they allow them to be creative, particularly in the language classroom where students are allowed and expected to use language more completely and more functionally in communicative situations.

Every year nearly 30,000 students take the foreign language exam. Because of the large number of students, it is important that the exam can be graded objectively and therefore relies on traditional assessment. Still, it seems that state graduation exam remains one of the main reasons teachers in Croatia will continue to rely mainly on traditional methods. However, this may have a negative washback on teaching EFL, and it would be useful if alternative assessment were also used in the state graduation exam.

Apart from the language classroom, alternative assessment methods are also useful in situations when students and/or teachers are not able to be physically present in the classroom, and it is necessary to conduct distance learning and assessment. An example of such a situation took place during the COVID-19 pandemic when classes were held online. Language teachers had to use alternative teaching methods as well as alternative assessment methods, in order to keep up with school curricula and tasks in the new conditions. This is one of the most recent



examples of successful implementation of alternative assessment methods in line with alternative teaching methods.

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## **10. APPENDIX**

### **Questionnaire**

## Alternative assessment-Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to gather information on teachers' attitudes towards alternative assessment methods in the EFL classroom as part of research for my Master's Thesis at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Rijeka. The questionnaire will take about 15 minutes to complete, it is voluntary and completely anonymous. The results will be reported for the group of respondents. When sharing the results, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify individual participants. If you have any questions, please contact me: Danica Krncevic ([danica.krncevic@gmail.com](mailto:danica.krncevic@gmail.com)). Thank you!

\*Required

### Part I. Background Information (Please mark your answer in the appropriate box.)

---

1. Age \*

Mark only one oval.

- 24-32
- 33-40
- 41-50
- 51 and above

2. English teaching experience \*

Mark only one oval.

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- 7-10 years
- More than 11 years

3. The average number of students in each class which you have been teaching this or last year \*

Mark only one oval.

- less than 11
- 12 to 15
- 16 to 20
- 21 to 25
- more than 25



**4. Where do you teach? \***

Mark only one oval.

- Public elementary school
- Private elementary school
- Secondary vocational school
- Public secondary school (language school)
- Private secondary school (language school)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**5. When assessing students, I usually use \***

Mark only one oval.

- Traditional assessment methods
- Alternative assessment methods
- Traditional and alternative assessment methods
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Part II. Assessment methods - Perception, beliefs and practice**

For the next questions, please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement

**6. I have complete understanding of different alternative assessment methods. \***

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**7. I have complete understanding of different traditional assessment methods. \***

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**8. I feel that the understanding I have is enough to use alternative assessment methods. \***

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**9. I feel that the understanding I have is enough to use traditional assessment methods. \***

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. I would like to attend additional training to expand my knowledge and depth of understanding of alternative assessment methods \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. I would like to attend additional training to expand my knowledge and depth of understanding of traditional assessment methods \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. To me there is a clear difference between traditional assessment and alternative assessment methods. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. Alternative assessment methods are more effective as compared to traditional assessment. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Traditional assessment methods are more effective as compared to alternative assessment. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

15. In my opinion, alternative assessment techniques make teachers' work easier. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. In my opinion, traditional assessment techniques make teachers' work easier. \*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**17. Alternative assessment techniques should be regularly used in student assessment processes. \***

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**18. Traditional assessment techniques should be regularly used in student assessment processes. \***

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**19. In my practice, I use more alternative assessments than traditional tests. \***

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**20. In my practice, I use more traditional tests than alternative assessments. \***

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**21. I need to attend workshops on the use of multiple assessments. \***

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**22. I apply my teaching and assessment practices to real life situations. \***

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**23. My current assessment practices occur almost entirely through testing. \***

*Mark only one oval per row.*

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**24. Alternative assessment practices capture skills like analyzing, creating, creative thinking. \***

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**25. Traditional assessment practices capture skills like analyzing, creating, creative thinking. \***

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**26. Multiple choice test, C tests and other traditional methods are able to capture students knowledge. \***

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**27. Portfolios, presentations and other alternative methods are able to capture students knowledge. \***

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Answer	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**28. Difficulties (I have encountered) I expect to encounter when using alternative assessment? \***

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Increased teacher's workload.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time-consuming activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Subjective grading.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Higher administrative costs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Number of students in the class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**29. Difficulties (I have encountered) I expect to encounter when using traditional assessment?**

\*

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
Increased teacher's workload.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Time-consuming activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Subjective grading.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Higher administrative costs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Number of students in the class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**30. Please rate how frequently you use the following techniques in the EFL classroom \***

Mark only one oval per row.

	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Very Rarely	Never
Tests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Portfolios	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Presentations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quizzes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Peer assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teacher assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student self-assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**31. Students getting marked on \_\_\_\_\_ is the most effective to show their English language abilities and performance. \***

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
Tests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Portfolios	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Presentations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Quizzes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Peer assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teacher assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student self-assessment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**32. In my opinion, when alternative assessments are used (check all that apply) \***

*Tick all that apply.*

- Teachers will focus more on students' performance capabilities.
- Teachers will understand the effect of his/her teaching more easily.
- It will be easier for teachers to assess students' learning achievements in listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- Teachers can easily figure out students' difficulties in learning.
- Teachers will design more situations to make students active learners.
- The assessment style can lower students' anxiety for assessments.
- Students can understand more about their own learning problems.
- Students can easily find out suitable approaches to their language learning.
- Students will develop more practical skills to use English.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**33. In my opinion, when traditional assessments are used (check all that apply) \***

*Tick all that apply.*

- Teachers will focus more on students' performance capabilities.
- Teachers will understand the effect of his/her teaching more easily.
- It will be easier for teachers to assess students' learning achievements in listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- Teachers can easily figure out students' difficulties in learning.
- Teachers will design more situations to make students active learners.
- The assessment style can lower students' anxiety for assessments.
- Students can understand more about their own learning problems.
- Students can easily find out suitable approaches to their language learning.
- Students will develop more practical skills to use English.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Open-ended questions

For the next set of questions, please explain your answers in as most detail as possible.

**34. What are the challenges you encounter when assessing students knowledge of English?**

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**35. What are the challenges of using traditional assessment?**

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**36. What are the benefits of using traditional assessment?**

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**37. What are the challenges of using alternative assessment?**

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**38. What are the benefits of using alternative assessment?**

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**39. What is the impact of assessment on your teaching?**

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**40. What type of assesement do your students like? Please explain why.**

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**41. Which assessment methods do you prefer? Please explain why.**

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**42. Please provide additional comments on assessment in the EFL classroom or on any of the above questions?**

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