
ELT Teachers' Research Engagement: Perspectives from Turkey

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Abstract: This study aims to investigate the perceptions of Turkish EFL and ESL teachers about the concept of research. It attempts to explore the factors affecting how they read and do research. A quantitative study was conducted with 152 English language teachers teaching at various levels in Turkey through an online survey by convenience and snowball sampling methods. The data were collected via Borg's (2009) English Language Teachers' Views of Research survey and analyzed by SPSS. The results indicated that teachers conceptualized research similar to a scientific notion of inquiry. They thought that good research should include teacher objectivity, hypothesis, experiments, variables, statistical analysis, and a large number of participants. Teachers also reported lack of time and considering research not practical in a classroom setting were the most dominant factors that had a negative impact on their research engagement. This study revealed that teachers do research for their professional development and to enhance their teaching techniques but lack of time and lack of interest in research emerged as the most significant obstacles for doing research.

Keywords: Teacher research, educational research, research engagement, English language teaching (ELT), teacher cognition

İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Araştırma Bilinci: Türkiye'den Perspektifler

Özet: Bu çalışma, İngilizcenin Türkiye'de yabancı dil ve ikinci dil olarak öğretiminde görev yapan İngilizce öğretmenlerinin araştırma kavramına ilişkin görüşlerini araştırmayı hedefler. Bu çalışma, katılımcıların araştırma okuma ve araştırma yapma düzeyleri ile bu konulara dair tutumlarını etkileyen faktörleri ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlayan nicel bir araştırmadır. Türkiye'de çeşitli düzeylerde eğitim veren 152 İngilizce öğretmeninden kolay örneklem ve kartopu örneklem yöntemleri kullanılarak çevrimiçi anket yoluyla veri toplanmıştır. Katılımcılardan elde edilen veriler, Borg'un (2009) İngilizce Öğretmenlerinin Araştırmaya İlişkin Görüşleri anketi kullanılarak toplanmış ve SPSS program ile istatistiksel olarak analiz edilmiştir. Elde edilen sonuçlara göre, öğretmenlerin araştırmayı bilimsel bir sorgulama anlayışına benzer şekilde kavramsallaştırdıkları tespit edilmiştir. Çalışmaya katılan öğretmenler, iyi bir araştırmanın en önemli özelliği olarak sırasıyla araştırmanın nesnellik, hipotezler, deneyler, değişkenler, istatistiksel analizler, çok sayıda katılımcıyı içermesi unsurlarını barındırması gerektiğini düşünmüşlerdir. Buna ek olarak öğretmenler, yeterli zamanın olmamasının ve sınıf ortamında araştırma yapmanın pratik olmayışının, araştırmaya katılımlarını ve araştırma yapmalarını olumsuz yönde etkileyen en belirgin faktörler olduğunu bildirmişlerdir. Mevcut çalışmada, öğretmenlerin mesleki gelişimleri ve öğretim tekniklerini geliştirmek için araştırma yapıyor olmalarına rağmen, kısıtlı zaman ve araştırmaya ilgi duymamalarının araştırma yapmalarının önündeki en önemli engeller olduğunu ortaya koymuştur.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Öğretmen araştırması, eğitim araştırması, araştırma katılımı, İngiliz dili eğitimi, öğretmenlerin araştırma bilinci

1. Introduction

In today's modern world, how to teach and how to teach better have become some of the most frequently questioned fields for teachers (Shind and Karekatti, 2012). Especially, in ELT, teachers need to adapt themselves to variations of teaching reforms and innovations to improve themselves in their own field and in terms of their pedagogical practices. As teaching is an ongoing process, lifelong learning is a crucial term for all teachers around the world. One of the most essential underpinnings of the professional development of teachers is research (Kowalchuk, 1999; Lind, 2003). Day by day, there has been a momentous increase in expectations for English teachers since English has become an indispensable point in education. Therefore, research engagement through conducting research and/or reading other studies has had an important role for teachers in the field of English language teaching for a long time. Nevertheless, the fact that there is still a gap between practice and theory constitutes a problem needed to be figured out (Beycioğlu et al., 2010; Hammersley, 2000; McIntyre, 2005; Oancea, 2005; Kutlay 2013). Because of this significant problem, it is claimed that "teachers should be critical consumers of educational research, using it to inform their instructional decisions" (Borg, 2010, p. 410).

As stated above, due to the fact that teachers of English play an essential role as practitioners in class in the process of educational development, they are expected not only to be aware of their way of teaching but also to find a solution to the problems that they have confronted and expand their awareness about their own teaching practice. In this case, teacher research can be considered as a beneficial way of lifelong learning. Teacher research is defined as "systematic, rigorous inquiry by teachers into their own professional contexts, and which is made public" (Borg, 2009, p.377). Moreover, Borg (2010) states that teacher research should be intentional, methodologically appropriate, ethical, and coherent. Along with teacher research, professional development takes place on the foundation of reflective teaching. Reflection can be defined as a metacognitive strategy that helps teachers think critically based on their experiences, actions, and teaching practices. According to Goodley (2018), reflective teaching awakens both teachers and students to build up skills such as metacognition and logical thinking. Altınsoy and Birgün (2016) highlighted the importance of teaching process as "...in which teachers inquire about what impedes student learning, and how their instruction can increase the students' learning along with how they perceive this inquiry in this process are matters of questions that should be given answers. (p.3)"

Overall, because of the limited empirical studies within the context of Turkey that can be seen in the studies of Kutlay (2013) and Bulut (2011) are mostly limited to tertiary level English teachers only. However, in this study, we aim at specifying the degree of research engagement of 152 ELT teachers around Turkey. It is hoped that this study would contribute to the literature significantly by providing wider-ranging data from English teachers engaging in various types of schools from kindergarten to university practitioners teaching at any level unlike the other studies focusing on only some specified levels and school types as mentioned above. Thereby, this study will provide a better representation of the community of ELT teachers in Turkey by examining more diversified participants.

1.1. Literature Review

There has been an ongoing debate about the nature and the standards of research (Kutlay, 2013). Basically, research can be considered as the systematic process of gathering and analyzing information to increase understanding of the world in general and of the phenomenon under study in particular. Stenhouse (1981:103) defines research as systematic self-critical inquiry. Nunan (1992) defines "systematic process of inquiry consisting of three elements or components: (1) a question, problem or hypothesis, (2) data, and (3) analysis and interpretation" (p.3).

It is strongly believed that teachers should involve themselves in reading, conducting, or engaging research in their life. Because of the essential requirement of the teaching profession itself, educational improvement can only take place when teachers are involved in research and the best curriculum is the result of teacher-researcher collaboration (Stenhouse, 1975, as cited in Nunan, 1997). Additionally, it is also reported by Ulla (2018) that conducting research helps teachers identify what goes right and wrong

in their own classrooms. Therefore, it leads them to take action by deciding what methods and approaches they will employ to generate solutions.

1.1.1. Studies About Teachers' Perceptions of Research

Even though perceptions of teachers towards research have become more of an issue around the world and research engagement of teachers is also often discussed in the literature of ELT all throughout the world, there are only a limited number of empirical studies available in the literature. Among one of the first studies in recent literature, McDonough and McDonough (1990) conducted a research of 34 teachers of English about their view of research. Similarly, the study conducted by Mcnamara (2002) showed that the most unfavorable perception of teachers in the study emerged as quantitative and statistical aspects of research. Allison and Carey (2007) conducted research with 22 English language teachers' who were teaching at a university language center in Canada. On the other hand, Borg (2009) examined the conceptions of research carried out with 505 teachers of English from 13 countries around the world. Furthermore, Borg and Alshumaimeri (2012) examined 82 university teacher educators' engagement with and in educational research in Saudi Arabia. Another study investigating teachers' views and beliefs about the relationship between second language research and practice was conducted by Tavakoli and Howard (2012). A total of 60 TESOL teachers who are working at a teaching institution in England responded to their questionnaire. Ulla's study (2018) focused on the benefits and challenges of conducting classroom-based research according to the experiences of public high school teachers in the Philippines. Similarly, Arayssi et al. (2019) explored perceptions of language teachers about practitioner research with a qualitative case study design by including 50 teachers in Lebanon. Besides, Hoang (2020) interrogated insights of Vietnamese EFL teachers at universities about self-efficacy through research engagement. Krumsvik (2020) investigated Norwegian EFL teachers' beliefs about in-depth learning by limiting the study sample with the general studies' English teachers only with a qualitative study design. Faribi et al. (2019) examined perceptions of EFL teachers working both in schools and other language institutions towards research in the Iranian context.

As the reason why teachers do not engage in research, Borg (2009) claimed there have been "a number of attitudinal, conceptual, procedural, and institutional barriers (p.1)". Lack of time and knowledge are listed in the research findings by many researchers (Allison and Carey, 2007; Arayssi et al. 2019; Borg, 2009; Ulla 2018) as the major reasons for teachers not to engage in research. In addition to these, Allison and Carey (2007) added that they also lack motivation in the cause of their institutions. Furthermore, Tavakoli and Howard's (2012) study findings promoted Allison and Carey's (2007) by declaring that teachers are inclined not to do research because they are not supported institutionally. Moreover, Arayssi et al. (2019) stated that teachers are unable to conduct research due to "overwhelming working conditions and lack of flexibility in the workplace (p.10)".

Comparably, there still has been a small number of work regarding teachers' practices in their engagement of research in Turkey. Ekiz (2006) examined the attitudes of primary school teachers towards educational research. As one of the most important findings of the study, most of the pre-service teachers stated "negative and undecided" views towards the purpose and type of educational research. Atay (2008) conducted an experimental study to assess the effectiveness of the research-oriented INSET (In-Service Training) program on Turkish EFL teachers. The study showed that even though teachers came across some difficulties while conducting research, it was revealed that the INSET program had positive effects on teachers' professional development process. Beycioğlu et al. (2010) interrogated whether or not high school teachers of English strive for accessing research as practitioners in the field of ELT in Turkey. The researchers also attempted to investigate whether there is a difference between female and male teachers' attitudes towards research. However, no significant difference was found. Kutlay (2013) investigated the

level of Turkish university teachers' research engagement. It was found out that the perceptions of teachers towards research were directed by the scientific concepts like testing and doing statistical analysis whereas they did not believe the importance of research in their classrooms. Those findings led the research to investigate the possible answers of "where do teachers get teaching ideas from?". Altınsoy and Birgün (2016) attempted to explore the viewpoints of ELT teachers in primary, secondary, and high school levels in Turkey. Wyatt and Dikilitaş (2016) attempted to explore the development of three in-service teachers of English on a foundation program at a Turkish university. Findings of the research indicated that engaging in continuing professional development (CPD) which directly benefited their learners helped all three teachers develop effective teachers' self-efficacy beliefs. Moreover, this research set light to show how CPD helps teachers become more productive. Korkut et al. (2018) examined the attitudes and conceptions of pre-service teachers of the English language about their involvement in teacher research in Turkey. This study set light to perceptions and attitudes of pre-service teachers specifically on scientific research. Consequently, it can be stated that although there is some research conducted on teachers' research engagement in some specific departments or specific levels in Turkey, there are very few studies measuring the research engagement of English language teachers in various kinds of institutions in Turkey according to their perspectives. Thus, it is aimed that this research will provide further information on the perceptions of EFL teachers toward research in Turkey and the factors affecting their research engagement.

1.1.2. Teacher Research and Engagement in Research

Although there have been various terms addressing teacher research in different forms such as classroom research, action research, engagement of teachers in research, and practitioner research, it is stated by Altınsoy and Birgün (2016) that they all refer to the same concept of teachers' conducting or taking part in the research.

Borg (2010) describes the teacher research as

“... a systematic inquiry, qualitative and/or quantitative, conducted by teachers in their own professional contexts, individually or collaboratively (with other teachers and/or external collaborators), which aims to enhance teachers' understanding of some aspect of their work.”

Hammersley (2004) puts forward that teacher research; in other words, action research can be conducted depending on three different concerns; to solve practical problems in the classroom, to take any action for social change, or to execute personal professional development.

Stenhouse (1981) claims that teachers should test the theory, which is found in educational research, can be context-bound, and cannot be implemented in every classroom, in their own classrooms. Similarly, Faribi et al. (2019) draw attention to the necessity of doing research for teachers in order to become competent in their field with the purpose of keeping up with innovations in both teaching and learning. Moreover, the significance of teacher research was noted in Ulla's (2018) study by claiming that "identifying what went wrong and what went well in classroom teaching and learning helps teachers to decide on the kinds of teaching styles and methods for their learners." (p.3).

On the basis of other researchers' specifications, Borg (2003; 2010) makes a collective analysis of barriers to conducting teacher research in seven different categories as lack of motivation, limitation of resources, non-cooperative school culture, financial circumstances, lack of teachers' awareness about beliefs, skills and knowledge leadership characteristics of the management and political concerns (like preserving their position).

According to Borg's (2010) study, many language experts accept that engagement in research by teachers can positively affect their work -in both teaching and learning Therefore, it also leads them to make pedagogical decisions and take them into consideration according to the results of their own research.

2.1. Method

2.2. Research Design

The aim of this study was to explore the research engagement of Turkish ELT teachers who are employed at various levels -from kindergarten to university. In the present research, the non-experimental research design was followed because it was not targeted to test any hypothesis or theory. That's why, it was intended to use descriptive research because "the primary purpose of descriptive research is to provide an accurate description or picture of the status or characteristics of a situation or phenomenon" (Johnson & Christensen, 2008, p. 377). Quantitative data collected through an online survey (shown in Appendix A) which was developed by Borg (2009) and it was analyzed by SPSS. According to Monette et al. (2005), surveys are popular non-experimental research methods and they help us for an in-depth explanation of beliefs, characteristics, and experiences of the research population. This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of 'research' according to ELT teachers in Turkey?
2. To what extent do teachers say they read published research?
 - a. Which sources are not preferred by the teacher for reading research, what reasons do they cite?
3. To what extent do teachers say they do research?
 - a. What are their reasons for engaging in research?
 - b. Which sources are not preferred by the teacher for doing research, what reasons do they cite?
4. To what extent are teachers' reported levels of research engagement associated with specific background variables: where they live and their department?

2.3. Participants

The participants of the current study were constituted by 152 ELT teachers working all around Turkey. Participants consisted of 113 female, 38 male teachers, and 1 participant preferred not to report it. The study was conducted based on voluntariness. When the age of respondents was analyzed, it was found that 40.8% (N=62) were ranged between 20-29 years old, 40.8% (N=62) ranged between 30 and 39, 13.8% (N=21) ranged between 40-49, and 4.6% (N=7) ranged between 50 and 59 years old. It can be concluded that the majority of respondents' ages varied from 20 to 39.

2.4. Data Collection

The process of data collection from the participants through an online survey (given in Appendix A), which was developed by Borg (2009), began by utilizing convenience sampling with 30 ELT teachers who were studying as master students in the department of English language teaching at Uludağ University in Bursa at the same time. Afterward, the number of participants was extended by snowball sampling. Thereby, the involvement of wider-ranging participation of ELT teachers including teachers from diversified levels engaging with any age of learners aided to obtain data from a broader perspective.

2.5. The Instrument

There were 6 main categories in the online questionnaire which was utilized as the research instrument including 10 scenarios for obtaining teachers' conceptions about research, six Likert-scale items and one open-ended question concerning characteristics of good quality research, 9 Likert-scale items for research culture, 7 close-ended questions depending on teachers' perspectives for reading and doing research along with the demographic information. The first part included demographic data items by aiming to evaluate if their demographic information affects the findings of this study. In the second part, 10 different

scenarios were provided to teachers and they tried to decide if the scenarios are “definitely not research”, “probably not research”, “probably research” and “definitely research”. In the third part, respondents were asked to define the characteristics of good research by defining their importance. In the fourth part, respondents were asked to answer the questions regarding their institutional research culture. In the fifth part, they were asked to provide information about their institutional research culture. And in the last part, it was aimed to gather information about their engagement in doing research.

Even though an already valid measurement was used, the questions of Borg’s survey (2009) were piloted on 30 teachers outside the actual sample in order to assess both the credibility and trustworthiness of the research instrument in the Turkish context. Then, Cronbach’s alpha was computed on the combination of four constructs of the items (.73, which is accepted as valid) in order to confirm the reliability of the measurement. After finalizing the whole data collection process, it was found that the questionnaire was reliable at a level of .74 according to the calculation of Cronbach’s alpha that is accepted as good and reliable according to studies of Hair et al. (2003) and George and Mallery (2010).

The researchers informed the participants about their rights by receiving their consent (Appendix B) at the beginning of the online survey. In this part of the survey, researchers also informed the participants about the confidentiality of their responses. They were assured that their names would be anonymous and the data collected from them would be used only for the mentioned research. Besides, they were enlightened that their participation would occur voluntarily and they would be able to withdraw whenever they wanted for any reason. Ultimately, participants were also informed that they would have agreed on all of these terms and conditions by clicking on ‘accept’.

2.6. Data Analysis

The statistical analysis of the data collected through the survey was administered by the SPSS program. After the normality test was implemented, it was found that the skewness and kurtosis values of the survey items were between -2 and +2. From this calculation, it was understood that the data were distributed normally based on the principles claimed by George and Mallery (2010). As a result of that, parametric tests which are One-way ANOVA, Independent Samples T-tests, and frequency tests were implemented to analyze our data. In addition to these tests, the qualitative data, which was collected as a response to participant’s views about characteristics of ‘good’ research, was coded by researchers, and content analysis was employed for this section.

3. Findings

The data were collected from teachers with various different levels and different qualifications over Turkey by means of an online questionnaire and analyzed by the researchers. The tables below (Tables 1, 2 and 3) show the background information of the respondents. Also, Table 1 shows the regions of Turkey where participants live.

Table 1.

Respondents by regions

Regions	N	%
Marmara	72	47,4
Central Anatolia	35	23
Black Sea	16	10,5
Mediterranean	8	5,3
Southeastern Anatolia	9	5,9
Aegean	4	2,6
Eastern Anatolia	8	5,3

Table 2 shows the range of ELT experience that teachers have had. The majority of respondents (30,3%) have had teaching experience of less than 15 years. And, Table 3 reflects which department respondents

graduated from. The majority of respondents (74,3%) graduated from the ELT department. On the other hand, the responses in the questionnaire showed that 56.6% (N=86) of respondents work in the public sector and 42.3% (N=64) work in the private sector whereas 1.3% (N=2) defined their workplaces as others. The learner ages of whom respondents teach were mostly between 20-25 years old (N=59), 36.8% (N=56) were between 13-19 years old, 23% (N=35) were 12 and younger whereas just 1.3% (N=2) were over 25 years old.

Table 2.
Respondents by experience

Years of experience	N	%
0-4	46	30,3
5-9	36	23,7
10-14	36	23,7
15-19	17	11,2
20-24	12	7,9
25+	5	3,3

Table 3.
Respondents by graduated departments

Departments	N	%
ELT	113	74,3
ELL	14	9,2
American Culture	11	7,2
Interpreting	7	4,6
Linguistics	3	2
Foreign Language Teaching	4	2,6

Independent Samples T-test was applied to gender variance in different sub-constructs of the item; however, no statistically significant difference was found. Moreover, it was also found that there was no statistically significant difference between six sub-constructs and variables of the workplace, study degree, experience, age, and learner age according to the results of the one-way analysis of variance.

Some of the demographic variables will be referred to in the following sections to analyze whether these variables are linked with the research engagement of teachers or not.

3.1. Respondents' Research Conceptions

In order to evaluate the research conceptions of the participants, items in Section 3 were utilized in the questionnaire.

3.1.1. Evaluation of scenarios

As stated above, the first part of the questionnaire included 10 different scenarios. In this section of the research, teachers, based on their own perceptions, were asked to evaluate each given scenario whether they are research or not. There were no right or wrong answers in this section. The main goal of the item was to obtain perceptions of respondents on which scenarios were mostly evaluated as research and which ones were not.

The definition of research has been made by many researchers in the literature so far. For example, according to Waltz and Bansell (1981), research is described as "...a systematic, formal and rigorous" way which is employed to gain solutions to problems or to discover and interpret new facts and relationships. Furthermore, Stenhouse (1981; 103) states that "research is an inquiry, it is founded in

curiosity and a desire to understand; but it is a stable, not a fleeting, curiosity, systematic in the sense of being sustained by a strategy". Also, Creswell (2008) states that "Research is a process of steps used to collect and analyze information to increase our understanding of a topic or issue". In addition to the definition of research, it has been discussed what counts as research. According to Crookes (1993:137), "research is not research unless communicated". Congruently, Stenhouse (1981) emphasizes that "private research for our purpose does not count as research" (p.111).

Table 4.

Teachers' evaluation of scenarios

Scenario	N	Definitely research (%)	Probably not research (%)	Probably research (%)	Definitely not research (%)
1	152	19,1	25,7	38,2	17,1
2	152	51,3	11,2	30,3	7,2
3	152	48,7	11,2	29,6	10,5
4	152	86,8	1,3	10,5	1,3
5	152	53,9	10,5	30,3	5,3
6	152	64,5	5,9	28,9	0,7
7	152	33,6	21,7	36,2	8,6
8	152	17,1	26,3	38,2	18,4
9	152	44,1	11,8	37,5	6,6
10	152	38,8	19,1	34,2	7,9

Scenarios 4, 5, and 6 were assessed most highly as research by the respondents. Regarding scenarios 4 and 6, the results in our study were similar to Borg (2009), Kutlay (2013) and Banegas (2018). However, in their studies, it has been revealed that scenario 2 was one of the most highly rated whereas in our study scenario 2 was the fourth most highly rated. When scenarios 2 and 5 were compared, it was found that the statistical difference is not significant. Scenario 4 "A university lecturer gave a questionnaire about the use of computers in language teaching to 500 teachers. Statistics were used to analyze the questionnaires. "The lecturer wrote an article about the work in an academic journal." was identified as a systematic and academic practice by the respondents. Conversely, scenarios 1,3, and 8 were the three least rated as research. Scenario 8 was not considered as research the most that are very similar to Borg (2009) and Banegas (2018) though in Kutlay's (2013) study scenario 1 was among the least rated. Also, in contradistinction to these studies where scenario 7 was among the least rated, in the present study, scenario 3 was among the least rated. Scenario 8 "Mid-way through a course, a teacher gave a class of 30 students a feedback form. The next day, five students handed in their completed forms. The teacher read these and used the information to decide what to do in the second part of the course." was not considered as research by the respondents.

3.1.2. Characteristics of good research

Table 5 given below provides information regarding the perceptions of participants about the importance of research characteristics.

Table 5.

Teachers' perspectives about the importance of research characteristics (N=152)

Teachers' perspectives	More Important (%)	Not Sure (%)	Less Important (%)
The researcher is objective	90,6	4,2	5,2
Hypotheses are tested	85,5	6,6	7,9
Variables are controlled	81,5	9,9	8,5

A large volume of information is collected	81,4	13,2	19,1
Experiments are used	77,4	10,5	12,1
Information is analyzed statistically	73,1	9,9	17,1
A large number of people are studied	62,5	9,9	27,6
The results give teachers ideas they can use	61,2	21,7	17,1
The results are made public	60,6	10,6	28,8
Questionnaires are used	56,6	18,4	25,4
The results apply to many ELT context	53,4	10,5	36,1

In the second part of this research, the aim was to have respondents' conceptions on what features are the most important for good quality research. 11 items that represent the characteristics of the research were provided to respondents. Teachers rated them regarding the importance of the item to be good quality research. In table 5, items were grouped summarizing them. "Less important" includes "unimportant" and "moderately important", "More important" includes "important" and "very important". The findings of this section showed that according to the participants being an objective researcher, testing the hypothesis, controlling the variables, and collecting a considerable amount of data were rated as the most important characteristics of good quality research. Also, when "experiments are used" and "questionnaires are used" items were compared, it was clearly seen that participants reflected the scientific aspect of their research conception putting an emphasis on experiments as an instrument type to be used in good research. They also did not emphasize being the results public in good research so the necessity of socializing the results of research which can promote practical ideas for classroom settings is not that important for them. At the end of this section, participants had an optional area to state what qualification good research should include. The most cited characteristic of good research included: "good research should have a clear purpose and nice sampling", "there should be relevancy between hypothesis and questionnaire" (n=5), "filling a gap in the literature and making difference" (n=4), "the use of valid and reliable tools for data collection"(n=4), "interviews, field notes, and observation make the research better" (n=3). All in all, the results showed that good quality research must be supported with a hypothesis, in-depth analysis of a considerable amount of data, and objectivity.

3.1.3. Reading Research

Teachers were asked whether or not they read the research, and what the reasons behind are if they replied 'not' in Section 4 in the questionnaire. Among 152 teachers who participated in the questionnaire, 5,3% of them (n=8) reported that they never read research, 38,2% (n=58) rarely, 30,9% (n=47) sometimes and 25,7% (n=39) often read research. Considering reading research, statistically, significant differences ($p = .027$) were spotted between departments teachers graduated after employing One-Way ANOVA. To see which departments differ from each other, Games Howell's post hoc analysis was applied since the variances were not homogenous ($p = .001$). The results demonstrated that statistically significant differences ($p = .019$) occurred between ELT ($M=2,84$) and ELL ($M=2,14$) departments in the sub-construct of reading research.

After those who said they often or sometimes read research were asked to choose from which sources they prefer reading research. The most cited sources emerged as academic journals, secondly books, thirdly professional journals then web-based sources, and lastly newsletters. The respondents who replied 'never' were asked for reasons behind, and the reasons given by them were illustrated in Table 6 below.

Table 6.

Reasons for not reading research

Reasons	%
I do not have time	58,1
Published research doesn't give me practical advice for the classroom	43,2
Other	18,9
I am not interested in research	17,6

I find published research hard to understand	13,5
I do not have access to books and journals	12,2

The findings in Table 7 indicated that lack of time was the most powerful reason for not reading research which was the same in Borg's study. Also, lacking the practical application of published research in the teaching setting was seen as the second dominant reason.

3.1.4. Doing Research

Teachers were also asked whether or not they do research, and what are the reasons behind if they replied 'not' in Section 4 in the questionnaire. 36,2% (n=55) of the participants reported they sometimes read research and 19,1% (n=29) of them often do research. On the other hand, 11,8% (n=18) reported they never do research and 32,9% (n=50) do rarely. According to the results of one-way ANOVA, statistically, significant differences were found between regions where participants live in doing research ($p = .016$). In order to see which regions differ, Tukey post hoc analysis was applied since the variances were homogenous ($p = .137$). The results indicated that significant differences existed among the regions of Central Anatolia ($M = 2,91$) and Eastern Anatolia ($M = 1,75$) ($p = .019$), and Black Sea ($M = 2,93$) and Eastern Anatolia ($M = 1,75$) ($p = .041$) in the sub-construct of doing research.

The reasons why teachers do research were illustrated in Table 6 below. At this point, it can be stated that teacher development was the most common reason reported by respondents along with personal and professional development.

Table 7.

Reasons for doing research

Reasons	%
Because it is good for my professional development	85,3
To find better ways of teaching	72,6
To solve problems in my teaching	63,2
As part of a course I am studying	49,5
Because I enjoy it	38,9
To contribute to the improvement of the school generally	36,8
Because other teachers can learn from the findings of my work	24,2
Because administration expects me to	8,4
Other	8,4
Because it will help me get promotion	7,4

According to the participants' responses, Table 8 demonstrates the reasons why teachers do not do research. A lack of time was the most dominant factor for not reading research either doing it. Also, it can be said that teachers cannot engage themselves in research because of lacking interest in researching in their fields of profession. Moreover, very surprisingly, it is obvious that one of the main cited reasons for not engaging in research is that teachers did not think that research is a crucial part of their profession. Besides, feeling incompetent and being in need of advice seem like an obstacle for conducting research.

Table 8.

Reasons for not doing research

Reasons	%
I do not have time for research	62,8
I am not interested in doing research	26,9
Other	25,6
My job is to teach not to do research	24,4
I need someone to advise me but no one is available	20,5
I do not know enough about research methods	20,5

Most of my colleagues do not do research	17,9
Administration discourages it	11,5
I do not have access to the books and journals I need	7,7
Other teachers would not co-operate if I asked their help	7,7
The learners would not co-operate if I asked their help	3,8

4. Discussion

The findings of the current study revealed that the results were consistent with the above-mentioned studies in the field regarding what counts as research, the definition of characteristics of good research, reasons for not reading and doing research. (i.e Borg (2009), Kutlay (2013), and Banegas (2018)). In the first section of the survey, although scenario 7 was among the most rated items not to be research in the studies of Kutlay (2013), Altınsoy and Birgün (2016), and Borg (2009), it is not one of the most ranked items not to be research in the current study whereas scenario 3, which implies the importance of research including literature review, was among the top rated item not to be research in the current study. This inconsistency can originate from the participants' qualifications and their different teaching contexts. Also, the participants in Kutlay (2013) and Borg (2009) were instructors from the universities while in the current study participants were all teachers from kindergarten to universities. This may also have an effect on the results. Also, scenario 8 was the most rated item as not to be researched in these three studies, this result can be originated from the limited number of participants and not providing an overall reflection of the students' ideas in the scenario. In conclusion, scenario 1 and 8, which were among top rated scenarios regarding not counted as research, might have been assessed not to be research because they did not include data collection, analysis or statistical explanations in them.

All in all, teachers' perception of research is more liable to include scientific features in it. Their research conception is guided by objectivity, hypothesis, and variables, collecting a large amount of data, using experiments, and statistical analysis of data. They put an emphasis on quantitative methods. Robson (2002; 20) attempted to explain this overall research view with the principles of positivism and defined it as "the standard view of science". Moreover, Shkedi (1988) stated that "the qualitative approach has not yet permeated the realm of legitimate research" (p.575). That is also similar to the conclusion of Borg (2009). It can be also concluded that, as positivism argues that research should act "...as an organized method surrounding precise empirical observations of individual behavior in order to discover and confirm a set of probabilistic causal laws that can be used to predict general patterns of human activity" (Neuman, 1997:63), participants emphasized the ontological, epistemological, methodological and axiological aspects of the positivist paradigm in good quality research.

Even though Borg (2009) emphasizes that making the results of the research public is crucial in research, participants in the current study neglected this item. One of the most noteworthy findings was that whereas "experiments are used" item was rated high, "questionnaires are used" item was not. It can be a clue that participants had a different conception regarding research instruments. This can be interpreted as their understanding of research might be limited to positive sciences only. Though many teachers in the ELT field come across questionnaires while contributing to colleagues' studies, they counted experiments as one of the good research characteristics. On the other hand, no significant difference was found between teachers' views according to their background information such as gender, experience, and where they live. In good quality research characteristics, participants did not think that giving teachers ideas they can use enhances the quality of research although McIntyre (2005; 359) claims that teachers give emphasis on "knowledge how" over "knowledge what". This finding in the present study was not consistent with the finding of Bulut (2011).

In terms of research engagement by reading research, it was found that academic journals were the most used sources rather than web-based sources found as the most used source in Kutlay (2013). Reading research has become more of an issue in the literature day by day when professional development is considered. As a contribution to the literature, Rankin and Becker (2006) carried out a study on whether reading research promoted teachers' classroom practices or not. At the end of the study, they found that reading research helped German teachers to promote their teaching. This study can enlighten teachers to read more research regarding their teaching development.

It was reported by the participants that lack of time (58,1%) and lack of practical applicability (43,2%) were the most prevailing reasons for not reading research. At this point, our results bear a striking similarity to Borg's study (2009). The results of these two studies differ from each other by means of limited access to books and journals. This was reported as the least effective factor to read research in our study although it was found to be the second prevalent factor in Borg's. Therefore, it could be inferred that Turkish EFL teachers have very little difficulty in accessing research sources yet it was surprisingly explored that a significant number (46,1%) of them reported they never or rarely read research. Another interpretation can be made for "the generalizability of research findings to other ELT contexts". When this is taken into consideration, the teachers might have thought that a study in the field could not help find solutions to problems in every context.

The results demonstrated that teachers found doing research beneficial mostly for teacher development in addition to their personal development. At this point, the results of our study were in line with studies of Kutlay (2013), and Altinsoy and Birgun (2016). Equivalently, participants in the study of Beycioglu et al. (2010) also declared that they found educational research qualifying for teachers. Apart from these reasons, academic courses may also be considered as a highly motivating factor for teachers' research engagement as suggested by Borg (2009). In the study of Borg and Alshumaimer (2012) which was conducted with 82 teacher educators at a leading university in Saudi Arabia, the main reason for doing research emerged as working as a faculty member (N=48) which can be interpreted as a requirement of teacher development that is similar to the present study.

The results of the current study revealed that the broadest reason why teachers did not engage in research was lack of time. At this point, the results of our study were convergent with previous studies. The most common reason for not doing research was reported as not having enough time in other studies as well (Allison & Carey, 2007; Altinsoy & Birgün, 2016; Arayssi et al., 2019; Borg, 2009; Borg & Alshumaimeri, 2012; Kutlay, 2013). For example in the study of Allison & Carey (2007), the participants were 22 members of staff teaching at a university language center in Canada. The findings of the study have shown that there were three main reasons for the inability to engage in research for teachers. Those were stated as limited time available after teachers had fulfilled their teaching duties, lack of motivation, and encouragement. Therefore, it can be concluded that teachers deal with the same problem against research engagement throughout the world and it requires some changes to be done by authorities at schools concerning this issue.

Even though the sequence of main causes might show variation depending on the context of the study, in general, it can be claimed that Turkish ELT teachers do not have a considerable level of enthusiasm about doing research as mentioned in Kutlay's study (2013) in parallel with Iranian EFL teachers (Faribi et al. 2019). Similarly, a dramatically low linkage with research engagement was found in Turkish high school teachers according to the study of Beycioglu et al. (2010). Nonetheless, participants of Borg's (2009) study showed a greater level of enthusiasm than our respondents in terms of doing research. Congruently, the study of Borg and Alshumaimeri (2012) revealed that participant teachers' views on research and the

usefulness of the research were positive however they seemed to have doubts on research practicality and implementation in their classroom. At this point, regarding negative concerns about research engagement of teachers, Atay (2008) suggested that INSET programs can be benefitted in order to encourage ELT teachers for conducting research and provide opportunities to update their knowledge about pedagogical issues.

5. Conclusion

There have been plenty of debates about the benefits of teacher research in the field of English language teaching. Therefore, the present study aimed at investigating the English language teachers' perceptions of research, their research engagement, and obstacles of this research engagement (reading and doing research) in Turkey. Even though a large number of studies have been conducted in the same field so far, the present study may be a remarkable example when the different teaching contexts of the participants are taken into consideration.

In brief, the present study revealed that teachers defined research giving weight to quantitative methods and the scientific notion of inquiry. To obtain their ideas on what features should good research include, they were asked to rate the features according to their importance. The teachers rated objectivity as a requirement of good research. Moreover, they stated that testing the hypothesis is the second most dominant requirement for good research. Surprisingly, they stated that using questionnaires were not as important as using experiments in good research. The practicability of research results in their classroom setting was the most rated unsure item. The next section in the research examined teachers' research engagement regarding reading or doing it. It was understood that the most preferred source for reading research was academic journals. Also, teachers were asked to define the reasons that prevented them from reading published research in general. They claimed that they did not have time to read and research did not provide practicality in their teaching. In the investigation of doing and not doing research and the reasons behind it, teachers stated that the motivation that led them for doing research was their professional development and finding better ways for their teaching. Also, other motivators such as "getting a promotion" and "administration expect me to" remained as the most unremarkable factors. Lastly, an in-depth analysis of reasons behind not doing research showed us that not having sufficient time and not being interested in research which can be interpreted as a lack of intrinsic motivation emerged as the most notable factors.

In line with this study, qualitative methods of data collection such as semi-structured interviews can be employed through a sequential explanatory research design to obtain more in-depth data from the participants about their research engagement in the Turkish context. Or, open-ended questions can be added to the questionnaire as well. For future research, an adaptation could be made on the original survey composed by Borg (2009) according to the findings of open-ended questions asking for other reasons for doing, not doing, reading and not reading research. A new section can be added considering various responses obtained from participants to be able to statistically analyze the reasons in the 'other' category.

As the current study was conducted with a limited number of participants within a limited amount of time, the findings should be taken into consideration conservatively. A more comprehensive study can be conducted with a large number of participants to gain more generalizable results in Turkey. Also, while the number of participants in the study was higher in Marmara and Central Anatolia regions, unfortunately, this number was very low in other regions. Due to the use of quantitative data collection through an online survey, it led to some limitations such as generating superficial answers from the

participants and not reaching in-depth explorations of their perspectives about research engagement. Due to the lacking face-to-face interviews, the sequential explanatory mixed-method could not be followed during the research. Since limited qualitative data was analyzed, the research could have been supported with interviews.

Some implications for teachers, teacher education, teaching institutions and policy makers can be inferred from the findings of this study. The results of this study revealed that most of the teachers do not read and do research due to the lack of time. Consequently, it can be implied for the policy makers that the amount of teachers' teaching hours can be reduced by the management of teaching institutions so as to encourage them for both reading and doing research. In addition, a teacher-researcher partnership can be planned by policymakers in the future as suggested by Beycioglu et al. (2010) since most of the teachers find doing research effective to improve their professional development. Similarly, integrating INSET programs into the studies of teachers' professional development by teacher educators can also be considered by school management in parallel with Atay's (2008) recommendation.

Overall, due to the limited number of empirical studies in Turkish EFL and ESL contexts in the literature, the main concern of the present study was to specify the degree of research engagement of 152 ELT teachers around Turkey. Other than previous studies that focused on some specific types of teaching institutions for data collection, this study has made contributions to the literature by investigating teachers' research engagement in Turkish EFL and ESL contexts by providing more in-depth data at varying teaching levels from young learners to tertiary level.

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Appendix A

Section 1. English Language Teachers' Views of Research

What does 'research' mean to you and what role does it play in your life as a professional English language teacher? These are important questions in our field especially at a time when in many countries teachers are being encouraged to do research as a form of professional development. This International Survey of English Language Teachers asks you for your views on these issues and will take 15-20 minutes to complete. Participation in this study is voluntary.

Thank you for your interest in contributing.

1. A teacher noticed that an activity she used in class did not work well. She thought about this after the lesson and made some notes in her diary. She tried something different in her next lesson. This time the activity was more successful.

Definitely not research	Probably not research	Probably research	Definitely research
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2. A teacher read about a new approach to teaching writing and decided to try it out in period of two weeks. He video recorded some of his lessons and collected samples of learners' his class over a written work. He analyzed this information then presented the results to his colleagues at a staff meeting.

Definitely not research	Probably not research	Probably research	Definitely research
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3. A teacher was doing an MA course. She read several books and articles about grammar teaching then wrote an essay of 6000 words in which she discussed the main points in those readings.

Definitely not research	Probably not research	Probably research	Definitely research
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4. A university lecturer gave a questionnaire about the use of computers in language teaching to 500 teachers. Statistics were used to analyze the questionnaires. The lecturer wrote an article about the work in an academic journal.

Definitely not research	Probably not research	Probably research	Definitely research
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5. Two researchers were both interested in discipline. They observed each other's lessons once a week for three months and made notes about how they controlled their classes. They discussed their notes and wrote a short article about what they learned for the association.

Definitely not research	Probably not research	Probably research	Definitely research
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6. To find out which of two methods for teaching vocabulary was more effective, a teacher first tested two classes. Then for four weeks she taught vocabulary to each class using a different method. After that she tested both groups again and compared the results to the first test. She decided to use the method which worked best in her own teaching.

Definitely not research	Probably not research	Probably research	Definitely research
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7. A headmaster met every teacher individually and asked them about their working conditions. The head made notes about the teachers' answers. He used his notes to write a report which he submitted to the Ministry of Education.

Definitely not research	Probably not research	Probably research	Definitely research
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8. Mid-way through a course, a teacher gave a class of 30 students a feedback form. The next day, five students handed in their completed forms. The teacher read these and used the information to decide what to do in the second part of the course.

Definitely not research	Probably not research	Probably research	Definitely research
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9. A teacher trainer asked his trainees to write an essay about ways of motivating teenage learners of English. After reading the assignments the trainer decided to write an article on the trainee's ideas about motivation. He submitted his article to a professional journal.

Definitely not research	Probably not research	Probably research	Definitely research
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10. The Head of the English department wanted to know what teachers thought of the new course book. She gave all teachers a questionnaire to complete, studied their responses, and then presented the results at a staff meeting.

Definitely not research	Probably not research	Probably research	Definitely research
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Section 2. Characteristics of Good Quality Research

1. Here is a list of characteristics that research may have. Tick ONE box for each to give your opinion about how important it is in making a piece of research 'good'.

	Unimportant	Moderately important	Unsure	Important	Very important
a. A large number of people are studied					
b. A large volume of information is collected					
c. Experiments are used					
d. Hypotheses are tested					
e. Information is analyzed statistically					
f. Questionnaires are used					
g. The researcher is objective					
h. The results apply to many ELT contexts					
i. The results are made public					
j. The results give teachers ideas they can use					
k. Variables are controlled					

2. If there are any other characteristics which in your opinion a study must have for it to be called ‘good’ research, please list them here.

Section 3. Research Culture

Tick ONE box for each statement below to give your opinion about the general attitude to research **in your school.**

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Don't know	Agree	Strongly Agree
Teachers do research themselves					
The management encourages teachers to do research					
Teachers feel that doing research is an important part of their job					
Teachers have access to research books and journals					
Teachers have opportunities to learn about current research					
Teachers talk about research					
Teachers are given support to attend ELT conferences					
Time for doing research is built into teachers' workloads					
Teachers read published research					

Section 4. Reading Research

1. How frequently do you read published language teaching research? (Tick ONE)

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
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2. You said that you read published language teaching research often or sometimes. Which of the following do you read? (Tick all that apply)

Books	
Academic Journals (e.g. TESOL Quarterly)	
Professional Journals (e.g. ELT Journal)	
Professional Magazines (e.g. ET Professional)	
Newsletters (e.g. IATEFL SIG Newsletter)	
Web-based sources of research	
Other (please specify)	

3. To what extent does the research you read influence your teaching? Choose ONE.

It has no influence on what I do in the classroom	
It has a slight influence on what I do in the classroom	
It has a moderate influence on what I do in the classroom	
It has a fairly strong influence on what I do in the classroom	
It has a strong influence on what I do in the classroom	

Now go to section 5

4. In Question 1 of this section you said that you read published research rarely or never. Here are some possible reasons for this. Tick those that are true for you.

I am not interested in research.	
I don't have time.	
I do not have access to books and journals.	
I find published research hard to understand.	
It has a strong influence on what I do in the classroom.	
Published research does not give me practical advice for the classroom.	
Other reasons (please specify)	

Section 5. Doing Research

1. How frequently do you do research yourself? (Tick ONE)

Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
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2. You said you do research often or sometimes. Below are a number of possible reasons for doing research. Tick those which are true for you.

'I do research ...

a. As part of a course I am studying	
b. Because I enjoy it	
c. Because it is good for my professional development	
d. Because it will help me get promotion	
e. Because administration expects me to	
f. Because other teachers can learn from the findings of my work	

g. To contribute to the improvement of the school generally	
h. To find better ways of teaching	
i. To solve problems in my teaching	
Others (Please specify)	

Now go to section 6

3. You said that you do research rarely or never. Below are a number of possible reasons for not doing research. Tick those which are true for you.

‘I don’t do research because...

a. I do not know enough about research methods	
b. My job is to teach not to do research	
c. I do not have time for research	
d. Administration discourages it	
e. I am not interested in doing research	
f. I need someone to advise me but no one is available	
g. Most of my colleagues do not do research	
h. I do not have access to the books and journals I need	
i. The learners would not co-operate if I asked their help	
j. Other teachers would not co-operate if I asked their help	
k. Other reasons (Please specify)	

Section 7. About Yourself

1. Years of experience as an English language teacher (Tick ONE)

0-4 years	
5-9 years	
10-14 years	
15-19 years	
20-24 years	
25 plus	

2. If you are an ELT graduate, the highest relevant qualification to ELT (Tick ONE)

Certificate	
Diploma	
Bachelor’s	
Master’s	
Doctorate	
Other	

3. If you are not an ELT graduate, please specify your department and degree.

4. Type of institution you teach English (Tick ONE)

Private	
Public	
Other	

5. The age of the learners you teach most often (Tick ONE)

12 or younger	
13-19	

20-25	
26 and above	

6. The part of Turkey where you live (Tick ONE)*

Aegean Region	
Black Sea Region	
Central Anatolia Region	
Eastern Anatolia Region	
Marmara Region	
Mediterranean Region	
Southeastern Anatolia Region	

7. The department that you graduated (Tick ONE)*

ELT (English Language Teaching)	
ELL (English Language Literature)	
Interpreting and Translation Studies	
American Language Literature	
Linguistics	
Foreign Language Education	
Other	

*These two were added extra to the original survey.