

**REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
ÇUKUROVA UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO TEACHER RESEARCH: TURKISH PRIMARY
EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND ENGAGEMENT**

Gül Sema KILINÇ

MASTER OF ARTS

ADANA / 2022

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Çukurova Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Müdürlüğüne;

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Gül Sema KILINÇ

ÖZET

ÖĞRETMEN ARAŞTIRMALARININ İNCELENMESİ: YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETMEN İLKOKUL ÖĞRETMENLERİNİN ARAŞTIRMA ALGISI VE ARAŞTIRMAYA KATILIMLARI

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Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Ana Bilim Dalı

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Mayıs, 2022, 102 sayfa

Öğretmenleri eğitim araştırma sürecine dâhil etme fikri, psikolojik alandaki gelişmelerin kapsamını daha çok öğrenme sürecine yöneltmesiyle ortaya çıkmıştır. Eğitim araştırmaları, psikolojik araştırmaların dallarından biri iken, davranışçılık ve sınıf odaklı yaklaşımı ile popülerlik kazandıkça ayrı bir alan olarak değerlendirilmeye başlamıştır (Landsheere, 1993). Dil öğrenmeye yönelik artan ilgi, öğretmenlerin araştırmacı olarak rolünü tanımlama ve öğretmen araştırmasının özelliklerine karar verme girişimleri, bu alanların detaylı olarak araştırılmasına neden olmuştur (Borg, 2010; Santa ve Santa, 1995).

Bu çalışmanın amacı, ilkokul düzeyinde yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğreten öğretmenlerin araştırma algılarını ortaya çıkarmak, bilimsel araştırmaları okuma ve araştırma yapma sıklıklarını araştırarak bilimsel araştırmadaki faaliyet düzeylerini ortaya çıkarmaktır. Araştırmanın deseni sıralı açıklayıcı karma yöntem deseni olarak planlanmıştır (Creswell, 2012). Borg'un (2009) altı bölümden oluşan anketi nicel verileri elde etmek için uyarlanmış, nitel veriler için yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler yapılmıştır. Bu araştırmanın örneklemini 2020 - 2021 yılları arasında Hatay ili İskenderun, Payas ve Dört Yol ilçelerinde görev yapan 75 İngilizce öğretmeni oluşturmaktadır. Çalışmanın bulguları öğretmenlerin sınıf içinde yapılan gözlem, farklı eğitsel aktivitelerin nasıl uygulandığı ve öğrencilerin dönütleri, öğrencilerin derse karşı olan tutumlarının ve katılım düzeylerinin gözlemlenmesi gibi aktiviteleri araştırma olarak kabul ettiğini ortaya çıkarmıştır. Ancak araştırmanın, hipotezlerin test edilmesi, veri toplama araçlarının kullanımı, verilerin istatistiksel analizi, çalışmanın yayınlanması gibi bilimsel özellikleri öğretmenler tarafından vurgulansa da sınıf içi aktiviteler kadar önemli oldukları

belirtilmemiştir. Bulgulara göre, öğretmenlerin araştırma yapma düzeylerini belirlemelerinde görev yaptıkları kurumun bilimsel araştırmaya bakışı ve tutumu önemli rol oynamaktadır. Bulgular ayrıca öğretmenlerin araştırma yapma motivasyonu, bilimsel araştırma bilgisi ve araştırmaya rehberlik edecek bir danışman ihtiyacı katılımcı öğretmenlerin araştırma yapmalarını belirleyen önemli etkenler olduğunu ortaya çıkarmıştır. Aynı etkenlerin katılımcı öğretmenlerin araştırma yapma ve okuma düzeylerini de belirleyen unsurlar olduğu ortaya konmuştur. Bulgular ışığında çalışma, öğretmen yetiştirme programlarının “araştırmacı öğretmen” rolünün öğrencilere kazandırılması konusunda düzenlemeler yapmasının, kurumsal araştırma kültürünü teşvik etmek için okulların bilimsel araştırma üzerine hizmet içi eğitimler düzenlemesinin ve öğretmenlerin bilimsel araştırmaya katılım düzeyinin artması için kendilerine gereken zamanın tanınmasının yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğreten öğretmenlerin bilimsel araştırma algılarını ve araştırmaya katılım düzeylerini artırabileceğini önermektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğretimi, ilkökul İngilizce öğretmenleri, dil öğretmeni araştırmaları, öğretmenlerin bilimsel araştırmaya katılım düzeyi, öğretmenlerin bilimsel araştırma algısı



ABSTRACT**AN INVESTIGATION INTO TEACHER RESEARCH: TURKISH PRIMARY
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The idea of including teachers in the educational research process emerged as the developments in psychology gradually directed its scope to the learning process. While educational research was one of the branches of psychological research, it started to be considered a separate field. It gained popularity with behaviourism and its class-oriented approach (Landsheere, 1993). Increasing interest in language learning, which attempts to define the role of teachers as researchers and to decide on the characteristics of teacher research, has led to these areas being explored in detail (Borg, 2010; Santa & Santa, 1995).

Drawing on this, the aim of this study is to explore the research perceptions of primary school English teachers and their level of engagement in scientific research by investigating the frequency of their reading published research and conducting scientific research. The research design was planned as a sequential explanatory mixed-method design (Creswell, 2012). Borg's (2009) six-part questionnaire was adapted to obtain quantitative data, and semi-structured interviews were conducted to acquire qualitative data. The research participants consisted of 75 English teachers working in primary schools in Iskenderun, Payas and Dörtyol in Hatay province. The findings showed that although teachers are aware of the characteristics of scientific research, they have a misconception between conducting educational research and searching for the materials and lesson plans or doing observations in the classroom. The attitude of the institution they work in was evidenced to play an essential role in the participant teachers' level of engagement. In addition, teacher-related factors such as motivation, scientific research knowledge, and the need for a consultant are striking factors that determine the extent of teacher participation in research. Research findings implicated that the adjustments in teacher training programs to qualify the students with the *teacher-researcher* role,

providing teachers in- service training on research, and allocating time for research in teachers' schedules are the factors that can increase teachers' level of research awareness and engagement.

Keywords: EFL teacher research, primary school EFL teachers, language teacher research, teachers' research engagement, teachers' research perception



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Most of all, I would like to present my gratitude to my supervisor, Prof. Dr. Rana YILDIRIM, whose support, instructive feedback, and guidance were invaluable to me while conducting this study. I am indebted to her for every piece of the contribution she made in terms of theoretical and practical aspects of this study, her constructive advice and her patience.

I would like to express my most profound appreciation to my committee members: Dr. Ebru ŞİRE KAYA and Dr. Duygu İŞPINAR AKÇAYOĞLU, for their time and valuable feedback. My special thanks also go to all the instructors in the M.A. program for their contributions and support to me in my academic path.

My gratitude is also extended to the researchers who have contributed to the literature to convert the world into a better place. Additionally, I owe my thanks to the primary school EFL teachers who volunteered for the study and shared their views.

My acknowledgements would not be completed without expressing my sincere thanks and my love to my dearest parents and my siblings for their support in every step I have taken in my life. It would be difficult and meaningless to come so far without them. My special thanks also go to my uncle Yusuf and his lovely wife, Şengül, due to their moral and material support.

Gül Sema KILINÇ

Adana/ 2022

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ABBREVIATIONS

LT: Language Teaching

EBP: Evidence-based Practice

ER: Educational Research

TR: Teacher Research

TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language

IAELT: International Alliance of English Language Teachers

ELT: English Language Teaching

EFL: English as a Foreign Language



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Teaching English as a foreign language is an engaging and daunting process for both teachers and learners. It involves a lot of research into the backgrounds of individual groups of students and the reasons for which they are acquiring a foreign language. Whereas this seems too much on the teachers, many scholars (e.g. Borg, 2010; Carter & Halsall, 1998; Elliot & Sarland, 1995; Hargreaves, 1996; Kincheloe, 2003;) have argued that good teachers are those who continuously do research on their area of interest and base their actions and quality of teaching on the results of their findings. This study analyses the extent to which teachers of English as a foreign language in primary schools in Turkey are actively engaged in research and the extent to which the outcomes benefit their classroom experience.

1.2. Background to the Study

The rising interest and development in natural sciences in the 19th century witnessed a spike in education-centred research (Landsheere, 1993). The pioneering developmental and experimental psychology studies directed research to education and the educational process (Landsheere, 1993). Varying educational experiences and challenges have been the basis for improved educational research. It became a systematic process of discovering how and why people in the education system behave the way they do (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998). On the other hand, modern classroom-centred research arose in the second part of the 19th century. The question of what makes teaching ‘good’ led teacher trainers to focus on the classrooms more (Allwright, 1983). As Borg (2010) stated, this research also had an essential role in shaping educational policies in some countries like Australia, Singapore, and Scotland. Borg also explained that these countries gave researchers a place in the government to initiate policy-making and regulate classroom practice to create uniformity in instruction. As the education process is influenced by the trends and needs of each era, educational research has also become more dynamic and diversified and perhaps more problem-specific.

Early research into education was more scientific in the literal sense in that it mainly centred on scientific observation. That is why research on language classrooms was out of sight at the beginning of classroom-centred research compared with other disciplines. Early studies conducted in the sixties about language classrooms aimed to investigate which methods should be used in language teaching (Allwright, 1983). The new perspectives on language and language learning approaches have driven researchers to do detailed and small-scale investigations over time. Language classroom research has formed its research framework over time, although the research culture of other disciplines influences this process (Allwright & Bailey, 1991).

Teachers' approaches to research are crucial and should be given attention since teachers are considered practitioners, consumers, and sources of data for research. Teachers, teacher trainers, educational policy-makers, and the authors of instructional materials are considered as the primary audience that benefits from the results of these educational and language classroom researches (Carroll, 1965). Teachers have a catalyst role in this audience group since their practice and feedback directly permeate research development. While some teachers expect research results to impact and relate to their professional experience directly, others believe that these results indirectly expand their understanding of teaching (Hemsley-Brown & Sharp, 2004). The link between teachers and research is worth shedding light on from this perspective.

Besides the traditional roles of the teacher such as being an information provider, a facilitator, or a manager (Brown, 2001; Harrison & Killion, 2007; Leaman, 2008), teachers are considered as leading agents for change in practical teaching, course design, and problem-solving (Fareh & Saeed, 2011). These different roles direct researchers to investigate the level of teachers' engagement in reading, conducting research, and putting to test the research results. Teachers' engagement in research plays an essential role in the quality of teaching, institutional development, and improvements in educational policy (Borg, 2010). This practical and physical engagement in research is believed to improve their competencies and enhance their professional development (Borg, 2010; Burns, 2010; Fareh & Saeed, 2011). Thus, bridging the gap between teaching and research must be achieved by creating transparent communication networks that link researchers and practitioners, which facilitates improved classroom experiences and makes an impact on current and future research (Hemsley – Brown & Sharp, 2004).

1.3. Statement of the Problem

How and what practitioners learn from research or researchers learn from practitioners has been a question for debate about the interrelation between practice and research (Nassaji, 2012). It is crucial for researchers and teachers to understand one another's perspectives on research because their interaction improves educational studies and practice. Having access to related educational research and adjusting ways of teaching according to the evidence of these studies helps teachers in their professional development, especially in addressing the students' different learning needs in a classroom setting. In this regard, teachers' engagement in research proves worthy of discussion. Teacher Researcher (hereafter TR) has been taken into account with the pioneer study of Kurt Lewin (1946) on action research in the 1940s (Borg, 2013). Thus, TR has emerged again in the UK under the curriculum reform movement (Borg, 2010). On the other hand, Schön (1983) defines teachers as practitioners and states that this role explains teachers as autonomous researchers of their practice, bringing into focus the idea of TR. The later studies continued by focusing on TR and teachers' engagement in research (Borg, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2013; Burns, 1999, 2010; Hemsley – Brown & Sharp, 2004; McDonough & McDonough, 1997; Nassaji, 2012). Reliably, Hargreaves (2001) states that teachers who engage with research and make decisions depending on sound research evidence positively affect the teaching-learning process. It also helps teachers to empower their skills via self-examination and continuing change. Although TR is criticized as being poor quality and lacks the typical scientific notions of research (Brown, 2005; Elliot & Sarland, 1995; Ellis, 2010; Liebermann & Miller, 1994), most of the current studies (Allison & Carey, 2007; Anwaruddin & Pervin, 2013; Borg & Sanchez, 2015; Crookes, 1998; Dikilitaş & Wyatt, 2018; Güçlü, 2018; Köksal & Razi, 2011) investigated the extent and the effects of teachers' research engagement.

While some of these studies focus on just ELT practitioners without considering their teaching level, others generally investigate pre-service teachers or the professionals who teach at the university or high school level. To the best of our knowledge, there are no studies investigating the primary school context in language teaching with regard to EFL teachers' research perceptions and engagement. Considering that the English language at the primary school level has been taught by 2nd grade since the 2013 – 2014 academic year (MEB, 2013), investigating EFL teachers' research perspectives in primary school classrooms became essential because teachers' engaging in research contributes to

the teaching quality stated before. Only one study (Şahin & Arcagök, 2013) has been found on teachers' research perspectives in Turkey. However, the participants in this study are the primary school teachers who teach in various subjects, not specifically those teaching EFL. Contemplating the critical nature of language learning at the early ages, the importance of investigating research perspectives of teachers who teach at the primary school level in Turkey has been a spur for this study. The study attempts to probe Turkish primary school EFL teachers' research perception and engagement.

1.4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate primary school EFL teachers' research perceptions and the extent to which they are engaged in research. Based on this purpose, the following research questions guided the investigation in this study:

1. What are the characteristics of research according to primary school EFL teachers?
2. What are the teachers' perceptions of their institutional research culture?
3. What is the frequency of teachers' reading published research?
 - a. If they do not, what are the stated reasons?
4. What is the frequency of teachers doing research?
 - a. What are the stated reasons if they conduct research?
 - b. What are the stated reasons if they do not conduct research?

1.5. Significance of the Study

Stakeholders in education such as policy-makers, researchers, teacher trainers, pre-service teachers, and teachers have conducted and benefitted from educational research. Practitioners are the ones who do research and use the evidence of the existing studies in their classrooms. In this respect, teachers' expectations, perceptions of research, and understanding of research characteristics are valuable since educational conceptions and dynamics. They are in constant transition according to the needs of the societies. Besides, considering teachers as researchers has become another field of educational research, so TR has been the focus of literature for many years. Most of the studies done on TR are generally on the research attitudes and views of teachers (Berliner, 2002; Buschor & Kamm, 2015;

Ekiz, 2006; Linden et al, 2015; Taylor, 2017) as action researchers (Avgitidou, 2020; Christenson et al., 2002; Ponte, 2002) in general. Although understanding these creates a base for TR, a few studies mainly focus on the frequency of reading and doing research and the reasons for reading and conducting research (Borg, 2009; Şahin & Arcagök, 2013). Furthermore, Borg (2007) states that little research has been shown in the field of ELT. Based on these current studies, investigating EFL teachers' research perception and engagement may contribute to the mentioned gap.

The findings of this study are significant in justifying making the teachers more aware of what the concept of research entails and understanding the relationship between teachers and researchers in the field of language teaching. In addition, administrators, teacher training programs, and teachers may understand better research perspectives in the Turkey EFL context using findings from this study.

1.6. Definition of Terms

Educational Research (hereafter ER)

ER is a disciplined attempt to address questions or solve problems by collecting and analyzing primary data for description, explanation, generalization, and prediction (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998).

Teacher Research

It is the systematic, intentional, contextual, public, and self-critical inquiry by teachers about their work (Borg, 2006, 2010, 2013; Cochran – Smith & Lytle, 1999; Freeman, 1998; Mohr et al., 2004). TR is also referred to as practitioner research, action research, collaborative inquiry, critical inquiry, and self-study (Roulston, Legette, Deloach, & Pittman, 2005).

Carter and Halsall (1998) define TR as research grounded in data collected systematically and analysed for a clear purpose, undertaken by teachers, and aims to clarify the aspects of professional activity for a beneficial change.

Education as an Evidence-Based Practice (hereafter EBP)

Davies (1999) clarifies EBP in education as utilizing existing evidence from the worldwide research and literature on education and related subjects. He points out that establishing sound evidence that can fill the gap in existing studies is the basis for meeting the high standards of research such as planning, conducting, and publishing that embrace the social and natural sciences.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical framework of the research. It introduces the concept of teaching as an EBP. Then, what ER and TR entail is discussed. Finally, the chapter reports on the evidence acquired in various global and local research on teachers' research perceptions and levels of engagement.

2.2. Teaching as an Evidence-Based Practice

The developments in research and studies in other fields such as medicine, technology, and agriculture have affected educational policy throughout the 20th century (Slavin, 2002). The concept of "teacher as researcher" was reckoned in the work of Buckingham (1926) in the 20th century, as it is cited in Santa & Santa (1995). According to Davies (1999), the EBP approach to teaching is based on the learning theory of Piaget, Bruner, Vygotsky, and the constructivist school of learning. Learners are expected to build their knowledge by constructively making sense of their experiences. This notion is arrived at using the constructivist theory that posits that learners should learn more actively and constructively than passive (Rollof, 2010). From this perspective, evidence-based education requires teachers to adjust their practices using their experiences in the teaching process. Furthermore, Gagne's (1965) problem-solving model of learning shows that learners produce a new capability by combining principles they acquired before with that which they are acquiring in the present time (Knowles, 1973), which is another perspective that lies under this approach. Even if this model is basically about learning, having teachers rectify their performance with the help of their previous experiences and research findings in evidence-based education bridges it to Gagne's model.

EBP is also conceptualised as outcomes-based education or objectives model (Stenhouse, 1971), research-based education or evidence-informed practice (Hargreaves, 1996, 1999), literature-based education (Hammersley, 1997), and context-sensitive practice by Greenhalgh and Worrall (1997). Davies (1999) explains the function of EBP as;

Evidence-based education operates at two levels. The first is to utilize existing evidence from worldwide research and literature on education and associated subjects. ...

The second level is to establish sound evidence where existing evidence is lacking or of a questionable, uncertain, or weak nature. (p. 109)

On the other hand, Elliot (2001) discusses Stenhouse's objection to the research-based education concept. As Elliot (2001, p.567) states, Stenhouse (1971, 1975, as cited in Elliot, 2001) argues that covering the curriculum may be completed in authoritative teaching in this concept while the teaching is needed to be based on inquiry and discovery. To have such a teaching model, Stenhouse (1975, as cited in Elliot, 2001) argues that the role of teachers as educators should be the focus rather than the concept of teachers as researchers.

These explanations and discussions on the quality and impact of educational research affected the educational policy in the UK, the USA and Australia despite continuous doubts. These countries invested in TR to make teaching an evidence-based profession (Borg, 2010). Other than that, Borg states that the IATEFL organized 'Teachers Develop Teachers Research' conferences, and TESOL published 'Language TR' volumes covering seven continents worldwide. The belief behind these actions was that the use of research by teachers and their involvement in this process positively affected teachers' practices. As a result, the mentioned effects of EBP on educational research and language teaching research constituted one of the theoretical bases for this study.

2.3. Educational Research

The education field is related to all other social sciences such as psychology, anthropology, history, and sociology. ER culture has been evolving and developing. Thus, the studies in these fields have spearheaded new research in education. In the 19th century, 'Die Seele Des Kindes', the Mind of the Child, by Preyer (1882) was accepted as a pioneering study because it was the first book on developmental psychology that led to experimental studies in classrooms. In 1862, George Fisher presented his *Scale-Book* that includes suitable scales to rate students' abilities and knowledge on primary school subjects (Cadenhead & Robinson, 1987). Through the end of the 19th century, Alexander Bain proposed his book *Education as a Science* in 1879 (Nisbet, 2002). He included the scope of the science of education straightforwardly presented in different chapters.

The studies based on these initiator works aimed to solve the educational problems of the era in an experimental and psychological-based manner until the first decade of the 20th century (Nisbet, 2005). The first attempts started in Germany and Switzerland with experimental psychology studies. One of these studies was William Lay's *Experimental didactics: its foundations, with some considerations of muscle sense* that were published in 1903, and he explained and defended by referring to the previous fifteen years that all the school subjects can be considered with an experimental view (Nisbet, 2002). Another one of these studies was *Child psychology and experimental pedagogy* by Claparede in 1905. The study discusses the pedagogy and teachers' and educational authorities' awareness. He changed the title to *Experimental pedagogy and the psychology of the child* in the fourth edition after the revising. He emphasized teaching how to learn before expecting the students to learn, doing factor and correlation analysis during the teaching process, and questioning if the teaching method for each function is transferrable to the others. In this regard, Claparede (1905, as cited in Nisbet, 2005) published *Psychologie de l'enfant et pédagogie expérimentale* which was the only study in France till 1935 (Nisbet, 2005). However, this study was significant since they developed an individual intelligence test applied to mentally disabled children to adjust instruction according to the students' level of intelligence. This test was later revised and utilized in the USA by Terman & Merrill (1916), and it was used for over thirty years. This development transferred the spotlight to the individual differences among students. For the later periods of the 20th century, Thorndike was accepted as a leading figure in research in education (Landsheere, 1993; Nisbet, 2005). His early studies were on animal learning, but then he focused on the laws of learning. On the other hand, the main reason for accepting him as an initiator was the standardized attainment test he developed in 1908 (Landsheere, 1993; Nisbet, 2005). According to an American Yearbook, 109 tests were used in the schools in 1918. Meanwhile, London County Council had its Inspectors of Schools such as Winch, Kimmins, Ballard, Hughes, and Burt, who began to construct tests and had many research studies on learning, memory, attention, fatigue, and transfer of training in England (Landsheere, 1993; Nisbet, 2005). Sharp and Bray (1980) stated that Winch visited countries like Germany and the USA to search for these techniques and developments. He had three books and 29 papers while Ballard developed a standardized one-minute reading test that applied to 22,000 students. Concurrently, the Educational Institute of Scotland founded the Committee of Research directed by Boyd. He had mentioned

school-based research years before the TR began to be discussed and involved the teachers in his research works.

In the second phase of the 20th century, educational research challenged its traditional roots and began to develop its own framework as an independent field. Countries like Britain, the USA, and Scotland raised funds and started foundations on ER even if their aims were different. In Britain, ER increased ten-fold from around 1964 onwards. At the start of that same year, research on the educational field doubled in the USA through 1967. In the 1970s, scholars began to discuss that quantitative studies are more successful in measuring and discovering a wide range of individual differences. However, qualitative research was also defended since it provides the researchers with a view of the complexities in the learning environment and human behavior, as Stenhouse stated (1981). These discussions were followed by the two new concepts, “action research” and TR, which emerged after the Plowden report (1967) that defended positive school discrimination (Nisbet, 2005). In the beginning, these two movements were taken into consideration separately. The Educational Priority Areas (EPA) report of a large-scale program conducted in England and Scotland revealed that TR and action research concepts overlap at some points. Subsequently, Nixon (1981) described action research by combining these two concepts as teachers’ investigation and reflection on their own practice. The related studies and discussions on this description provided the ER a determined and developing framework. At the end of the 20th century, Anderson and Arsenault (1998) defined ER as research that seeks a solution that relies on systematic and objective observation, recording, and analysis for a problem in the educational context. They listed the essential characteristics of ER as follows depending on this definition:

- The new data is gathered from primary sources, or the existing data is used for a new purpose.
- It requires competence in methodology, technical skills in collecting and analyzing the data.
- It demands accurate observation.
- The findings should be recorded and reported to the people interested in the problem.

In the 21st century, ER has enlarged its scope with socio-cultural changes and developments over time. Its focus was on the relationship between education, schooling, and university education. Koichiro (2013) defines ER as a unique and praiseworthy field of scientific research. The reason behind this definition is the importance given to the effectiveness of education (Ponce & Maldonado, 2017). Johanningmeier and Richardson (2008) specify this effectiveness with the effect of teaching in learning, nature of learning, the economic profits of schooling, the schools' role in improving countries' productivity, and the impact of the school in economic developments. Ponce and Maldonado (2017) summarize the necessary features of the mentioned effective ER in the literature as;

- producing the essential knowledge particular to each school or educational system.
- establishing what works and does not work in schools to improve effectiveness.
- explaining the effective critical points for different educational contexts.
- identifying the strategies and testing their validation in various educational settings.
- improving the educational objectives and teaching practices after studying them if necessary.
- assessing the education policies
- helping educators to eliminate the limitations in their methods.

2.4. Teacher Research

Although existing literature concedes the start of the concept of TR to be the 90s, it can be understood that its notions had sprung up in the early 20th century, as documented in the previous section. In the middle of the 20th century, the role of the teacher as a researcher was a term only mentioned in the International Reading Association (IRA) and the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) (Santa & Santa, 1995). However, Buckingham (as cited in Santa & Santa, 1995) mentioned the value of TR in 1926. He supported the idea that teachers' research opportunity provides rapid and robust empowerment to their teaching techniques, and this opportunity also helps them elevate their practice. Following this, Rudduck (1985) argued that teachers' attitudes towards research and the effect of research knowledge are compounded into research-based

teacher education. It was discussed by comparing and contrasting practitioner research and academic research, but only if practitioner research could be considered academic research. Neubert (1989), an associate professor who trained teacher-researchers and kept their research track during their teaching practice, explained the content knowledge and psychological support strategies and made recommendations for teachers to strengthen their research practices. In the content knowledge part of her work, she describes the aspects of the research training program. The psychological support part of the article summarizes the three types of support that these teacher-researchers took: director support, peer support, and external support. Following this, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1990) discussed the issues that help to streamline research on teaching and TR. They compared these two research concepts in terms of institutionalization, standards for methodological conformity, and documentation and analysis. After the comparison, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1990) reached the result that:

There is little disagreement that teachers who engage in self-directed inquiry about their own work in classrooms find the process intellectually satisfying; they testify to the power of their own research to help them understand and transform their teaching practices. (p. 6)

Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1990) listed the value of TR in terms of Teaching Community and Academic Community. They also cited the values Goswami and Stillman (1987) presented. It was argued that teachers' teaching ways, self-perception, and research engagement transformed in a way that brought them closer to university researchers. They concluded their work by stating that necessary training, network, and background research information should be given to the teachers before encouraging them to do research. Another scholar who investigated the division between TR and academic research is Zeichner (1995). He strongly argues for the need to restrict a line between the worlds of TR and academic research. Although Zeichner (1995) defends the collaboration and relation between TR and academic research, he states that these do not reflect the aim of educational research. He concludes the paper thus:

Unless we begin to make the kinds of changes that I have suggested today, to begin to establish dialogues about our research with teachers, to form genuine research collaborations with teachers, and to treat teacher knowledge more seriously and with more

respect, academic educational research will continue to be ignored by teachers and by policy-makers. (p. 169)

At the end of the 90s, Carter and Halsall (1998) explained the crucial features of TR. According to them, teachers should do TR, and their focus should be on professional activity. It should be based on systematically collected and analyzed data for a determined aim which is to clarify aspects of teaching practice in the workplace. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) published another paper summarizing the USA's TR movement in a decade. They provide a detailed review of five US TR trends under the titles of *The Prominence of Teacher Research in Teacher Education, Professional Development, and School Reform; The Development of Conceptual Frameworks for Teacher Research; Theorizing Teacher Research as Social Inquiry; Theorizing Teacher Research as Ways of Knowing in Communities; Theorizing Teacher Research as Practical Inquiry*. The critiques on TR in the literature follow these titles. They cite Fenstermacher (1994) and Richardson (1994), who based 'knowledge critique' of TR on the issue of what kind of knowledge is generated when teachers conduct research about their own schools and classrooms. The second heading is *methods critique* that Huberman (1996), as cited, suggests that the classic criteria of qualitative research apply – that TR is bound by rules for the "provision of evidence, consistency, freedom from obvious bias, and perceptions of the people involved. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) discuss this explanation of Huberman by comparing it to the literature. The last criticism is 'ends critique' which claims TR has more or less instrumental goals and lacks connection to the social and political agendas.

The studies of TR in the 21st century investigate TR in the educational context in school. Henson (2001) starts with the effects of TR on teacher self-efficacy. He examined the self-efficacy, empowerment, collaboration, and perceptions of school climate of teachers who participated in TR. The study conducted at a large school in the US consists of 15 teachers and continues with 12. The results of Henson's work (2001) that utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods present:

Teacher research's impact on teacher empowerment and perceptions of school climate is inconclusive based on the present results. Importantly, teacher research actively engages teachers in instructional improvement concerning issues relevant to the teachers. (Henson, 2001, p. 834)

In 2005, Roulston et al. (2005) focused on TR from the perspective of teacher-researchers. It is demonstrated that practitioners may be neglected in the research definitions regarding producing research-based knowledge and collaboration between university educators and K-12 teachers. Therefore, Roulston et al. (2005) examined all the illustrations that define TR both from the literature and the teachers' perspective and gave the main features of the research as:

- being inclusive of collaborative research partnerships that include practitioners outside the university;
- considering topics and subject areas that may not align with the causal questions promoted of the formulation 'x causes y';
- giving value to teachers' input in the construction of knowledge concerning questions of educational significance. (p. 184)

Burns (1999) also defended that the contribution of other teachers is essential for strengthening the TR. Williams and Coles (2007) studied teachers' approaches to finding and using research evidence from the literacy perspective. The level of teachers reading research data and using it in their practice depends on their time and accessibility to the sources besides their literacy level. On the other hand, Gewirtz, Shapiro, Maguire, Mahony, and Cribb (2009) made a qualitative analysis of TR to understand new roles for academic facilitators, new dimensions of teacher roles, and a viable conception of research authentically TR. Stenhouse (1981, as cited in Gewirtz et al., 2009) believed passionately that 'It is teachers who in the end will change the world of the school by understanding it.'

Besides these views of Stenhouse, relevant literature revealed that TR is commonly conceptualized with action research. Stephen Corey introduced action research to the education field (Karakaya, 2015), and Noffke (1997) emphasized the popularity of action research in teacher professionalism and knowledge building. The comprehensive theory of teacher professional knowledge and teacher professional development through action research that Elliot (2007) developed made him another influential scholar in action research, thus becoming popular in education. Although these two terms were used interchangeably from time to time, Check and Schutt (2012) distinguished the action research and TR by highlighting the features of TR. They explained that the cyclical nature of action research is one element that differentiates it

from TR. In addition, there is no need for a specific action or improvement after the TR but teachers' perception, attitudes, or practice which may take place in time.

TR was discussed and supported in the literature to encourage it, but Hammersley (1997) defended that this admiration should not drive us to accept the results of TR without criticizing. Paralelly, Nunan (1997) also argued that TR and academic research must be assessed by the same criteria. Zeichner (2007) also supported Hammersley by criticizing the lack of information of practitioners on the validity and reliability of the tools, method knowledge on data collection and analysis in their self-studies. However, Allwright's (1997) belief that the aspects of quality academic research shouldn't be the goal in TR but rather to sustain and encourage it, which are also objectives for Zeichner and Nunan. Another part of TR reported as problematic was the unbalanced power between researcher and participant who are teachers and students in the educational context since it may affect the reliability and the validity of the results (Anderson & Herr, 1999). One of these concerns that emphasize TR's problems is the element that prevents teachers from doing research. Allison and Carey (2007) defended that lack of time, energy, and encouragement are the main challenges for teachers in carrying out systematic research. Furthermore, Yayli (2012) pointed out that teachers' lack of expertise in conducting systematic research can further exacerbate this problem. He stated that teachers have difficulty in forming good research questions without the guidance of a supervisor. Gao and Chow (2011) mainly considered the challenges that primary school teachers experience, such as heavy workload, lack of knowledge on conducting research, lack of academic writing training, and therefore the difficulty in publishing their research. They argued that primary school teachers' professional contributions are underestimated comparing their counterparts in other educational settings. The possible solutions of reducing all the mentioned concerns of TR are rearranging the meaning of research without restricting it to scientific research (Allwright, 1997) and finding and suggesting alternative platforms to share TR (Gao & Chow, 2011).

2.4.1. Language Teacher Research

Pioneering works of language teacher research were encountered in the 1980s (Burns & Burton, 2008). Applied linguistics teachers, researchers, and scholars progressively directed their attention and interest to the TR in language teaching and various TR-related issues, including teachers' voices in language classrooms; engaging

teachers in research; teacher-initiated actions for understanding teaching practice; inquiry-based teaching; exploratory teaching; action research; qualitative inquiry; and self-monitoring (Keuk, 2015). This progress was followed by *Teachers Develop Teacher Research* conferences held by IATEFL (Edge & Richards, 1993; Field, Graham, & Head, 1997, as cited in Borg, 2010). Following this, TESOL also published volumes of the ‘ ‘ Language Teacher Research’ ’ series that cover the publications from seven continents (Borg, 2006; Burns & Burton, 2008; Coombe & Barlow, 2007; Makalela, 2009).

Up to date, many papers have been published that reflect the language T benefits which also belong to the TR concept. Beasley and Riordan (1981, as cited in Nunan, 1989) provided a list of the benefits as:

- It sharpens the teachers’ critical awareness through observation.
- It helps to keep track of classroom events and analyze them.
- Teachers feel satisfied with the deep understanding of their practices.
- Teachers can provide more clear instructions through the assessment of their own practice.
- It gives confidence to the teachers that they can overcome the challenges they experienced in their profession. (pp. 3-4)

These studies and concerns also raised the attempts of reconceptualizing language teacher education. As an illustration, knowledge-based teacher education was proposed by Freeman and Johnson (1998) because of the argument that this concept helps teachers learn to teach and improve their teaching. Burns (1999) also supported the use of action research in teacher education in his review. Another scholar who defends language teacher research and highlights its pros and cons in his study is Borg (2010). He considered each detail of TR and language teachers’ research engagement. Fareh and Saeed (2011) stated the significance of TR:

The role of the teacher as researcher transfers teachers from a state of powerlessness to a state of power and from being mere receivers of training and lecturing to initiators of change, thus becoming more efficient and active teachers. (p. 155)

Besides the benefits discussed in the literature, there are also a considerable amount of TR critiques in language teaching. The first discussion is on the validity and reliability of the results in TR. Huberman (1996) questions the reliability of the TR even

if he has also discussed its benefits. Foster (1999) reported that some of the reports included in the *Teacher Research Grant Pilot Scheme* are not proper research papers, so the validity of their results was also problematic. He defined these as a personal description of professional practices, student progress, and staff development involvement. Ellis (2010) considers the TR specific to language teaching as the limited methodological base. Consequently, he defends that the evidence and findings do not have any value in the academic field. Nunan (1997) emphasizes the definition and frame that differentiates TR and academic research. He suggests research should be considered poor or good instead of labelling it as practitioner research or academic research. Like the TR, Crookes (1993) criticized the TR in language teaching for not having a critical perspective and lacking connections to an extensive social or political agenda. Generally, these criticisms towards language TR can be summarized as ‘‘ it is of poor quality, methodologically-speaking, is also often underpinned by conventional scientific notions of research (e.g. large-scale, replicable, quantitative)’’ (Borg, 2010). Another criticised aspect is the amount of research done by the language teachers in school. Kiely (2008) states in his analysis of ELT Journal Articles that ten of the writers in Volume 57 (2003) have a Ph. D., or they are university lecturers with MA or Ph. D. candidates. Borg (2010) attracts attention to this problem:

In LT, my analysis suggests that many teachers who engage in teacher research are university language teachers or are doing teacher research as part of a qualification... This picture presents a contrast to the rhetoric celebrating teacher research’s many goals and potential benefits affecting all levels of the educational system. (p. 407)

2.4.1.1. Language Teachers’ Research Engagement

One of the criticisms directed to language teacher research is about teachers’ research engagement. Block (2000) states that TR seems reasonable in theory, but problems occur in practice sessions. The reason for this is that teachers do not have any reward for the extra work that also involves engaging in research. Besides, the relation between the research results and their impact on the field is another factor that discourages teachers from engaging in research. According to Fareh and Saeed (2011), this lack of research engagement depends on the less emphasis in the literature on teachers’ role as a researcher. They explain the reason for the literature’s attention on TR in language teaching that:

...The absence of this role and the lack of the teachers' awareness of this vital role motivated the researchers to examine this role and see how it can be implemented in teaching English as a foreign language. (Fareh & Saeed, p. 154)

Ball (2012) highlights the accessibility of the sources to the practitioners and missing collaboration among EFL teachers, academic researchers, and policy-makers. Alhassan and Ali (2020) compile the reasons for language teachers' lack of research engagement under three titles; institutional factors, teacher-related factors, and educational policy-related factors. They argue that the institution's lack of resources, support, collaboration, and mentoring challenges teachers' research engagement. According to Alhassan and Ali, teachers' motivation, awareness of the importance of research, research knowledge, critical analysis and synthesis skills also play an essential role in their research engagement level. Lastly, the country's policy in engaging and supporting TR creates a base for the mentioned challenges since each country's policy and approach towards TR in schools is different.

Following these discussions, many studies investigate and discuss how to increase teachers' engagement in research. The benefits and importance of language teachers' research engagement are highlighted in the literature (Borg, 2006, 2007, 2010; Borg & Alshmaimeri, 2012; Dikilitas & Wyatt, 2018; Ellis, 2010). For example, Borg (2007, 2010) defends that research engagement provides teachers with new perspectives of professional sense, practice, instruction giving, research, and critical analysis. Borg (2010) believes that educating teachers on how to consume research evidence is a productive way of enhancing teachers' engagement. It is defended that this engagement helps teachers develop their own pedagogical theories unique to their own classrooms. Their developing new views may contribute to the teaching and learning process, research-informed culture in their institutions, and promote the positive impact of engagement (Borg & Alshmaimeri, 2012). In accordance with this idea, Ellis (2010) suggests that teachers can relate their practices and get inspired by each other thanks to the research done by teachers in the form of detailed case studies which could represent language learning and teaching phenomena. Such an engagement of language teachers leads them to deliver a better teaching quality (Dikilitas & Wyatt, 2018).

Besides the scholars' attempts to increase teachers' research engagement in language teaching, the national and international initiatives of the UK and the USA also have an influential role, especially in the English language teaching research engagement.

The National Teacher Research Panel (NTRP) and The Evidence for Policy and Practice Information Coordinating Centre (EPPI- Centre) are the highlighted foundations of the UK. NTRP aims to supply an accessible resource of education research that can take account of the teachers' perspective in language teaching. Following this, the EPPI-Centre has a literature review-based source available to language teachers. Since this center aims to raise practitioner research and teachers' research engagement, it mainly focuses on what works in the educational context. Like EPPI- Center of the UK, Clearinghouse (<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc>) of the US supplies what works based on the evidence in particular topics, including language learners. In addition, International Research Foundation for English Language Education (TIRF) provides reports on key or unanswered questions on the worldwide policies and practices in English language education. In Turkey, INGED (the English Language Teachers' Association <https://inged.org.tr/>) has a similar goal with the organizations in the UK and US. It aims to help English teachers to develop themselves professionally and the whole process of English language education by using contemporary scientific methods and techniques.

2.4.1.1.1. Research on Language Teacher Research Engagement

The following sections of the study present the research on language teachers' research engagement conducted worldwide.

2.4.1.1.1.1. Global Research

The studies on language teachers' research engagement have distinct differences due to having the same base (Alhassan & Ali, 2020; Anwaruddin & Pervin, 2013; Banegas, 2018; Borg, 2009; Borg & Liu, 2013; Kustati & Al-Azmi, 2018; Mehrani, 2015; Yuan, Sun, & Teng, 2016). To start with, in Borg's study (2009) on teachers' research perception and engagement, he surveyed 505 participants from 13 different countries worldwide. The study investigates language teachers' perception of good research and their level of reading and doing research by exploring the reasons behind it. He used a cross-sectional survey that all participants completed, a written follow-up session that 259 of these teachers volunteered in, and interviews conducted with 12 participants. The survey revealed that statistics, objectivity, testing hypotheses, large samples, and controlling variables are the common characteristics of good research that teachers stated. According to the teachers, publishing the results and generalising the findings is less critical. Another

revealed aspect is teachers' confusion about the research and routine teaching. Regarding research engagement, the stated reasons of those who engaged in and with research are generally personal, pedagogical, or professional rather than the outer sources such as promotion or employer pressure. On the other hand, the reasons for not being engaged in and with research are summarized as lack of time which is a significant reason for lack of knowledge and confidence about research.

Anwaruddin and Pervin (2013) conducted a small-scale study with 40 English language teachers at primary and high schools in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The 20 participants were chosen from the primary school using quota sampling, and the rest were high school teachers. The scope of the survey was teachers' research engagement for professional development. They used a questionnaire developed, and pilot tested as a data collection tool by them. However, just six of the participants volunteered for the interview session of the study. In the results they present, primary school teachers stated reasons were lack of institutional support, lack of encouragement to read and do research, and lack of knowledge (as cited in Borg, 2009). Nevertheless, high school teachers reported difficulty in understanding research reports besides lack of motivational factors such as institutional support or lack of time for reading or doing research. They concluded that the main barrier to being research-engaged is the institutional culture that does not specialize in learning that effectively uses research knowledge.

Moreover, Borg and Liu (2013) published a paper focused on Chinese college English language teachers' engagement in research. The questionnaire respondents are 725 teachers, but only 20 were interviewed. Despite the scholars' expectance of a high level of engagement since they are college teachers, the results revealed a moderate level of engagement. As inferred from the stated reasons of this engagement level, teachers' unproductive conceptions of the relationship between research knowledge and classroom practice caused this level of engagement since more than half of the teachers stated the effect of research on their practice as moderate. They also noted an inconsistency between the institution's expectations and the support given to teachers in terms of research engagement. Another result emerging in Borg and Liu (2013) is that engagement with research is characterized by the search by teachers for immediate and direct positive impacts on their classroom practices. The researchers believe that this result explains why teachers are biased against published research, which the participants labelled as highly theoretical. When participants' stated reasons for doing research are considered, promotion plays a determiner role in teachers' motivation to do research besides

professional or pedagogical concerns, contrary to Borg's (2009) findings. The reasons for not doing research are parallel to the other studies. Lack of time, advisor, or knowledge decreases the level of doing research.

A more recent study by Mehrani (2015) aimed at exploring the extent to which Iranian English teachers engage in doing and reading research and the motivations that can promote teachers' research engagement. The data were collected through interviews with 24 English language teachers who teach at public or private schools. When the level of doing research was questioned, one notable result was that teachers defined doing research as activities such as trying new ways to teach a skill. Another finding displayed that teachers' action of doing research ends when they graduate since they did research as part of their assignments or term projects when they were students. Regarding research reading, most of the participants couldn't name any national or international source of ER or language teaching research. These findings demonstrate that academic research journals which represent the traditional forms of scientific research are not often read by language teachers (Mehrani, 2015). They generally prefer web-based sources because they are usually brief, non-technical, and plain by language. Lastly, the investigated reasons of teachers' motivation for research engagement are stated as either they are encouraged by authorities, expected by colleagues to promote their professional knowledge or their students' expectations.

Another recent study on TR is mainly based on the grounds and justification of teachers in research engagement. Yuan et al. (2016) searched for the motivations of language teachers from China through a university-school collaborative action research that adopted a qualitative case study approach. Fifteen English language teachers from 5 different schools in Beijing volunteered to participate. Two of these teachers were chosen through convenience sampling, and they were trained and supported by research assistants via school visits, phone calls, or emails throughout the whole academic year. Three interviews, which were held at the beginning, middle, and end of the project, were conducted. The findings were considered in terms of teachers' roles and those they gained during the research process. Yuan et al. (2016) found out that teachers' motivation was initially high since they had asked to have the researcher role. However, their motivation went up and down from time to time since they didn't have the necessary background knowledge of conducting action research. The training, collaboration, and having an advisor helped them increase their motivation to be engaged in doing research. At the end

of the study, they gained the teacher-researcher, student-centred teacher, reflective, and strategic teacher roles besides being a facilitator of learning or a curriculum follower.

Additionally, the work of Kustati and Al-Azmi (2018) was on attitude on ELT research. However, unlike other studies, their participants consisted of pre-service teachers. They surveyed 217 pre-service teachers in Indonesia through a mixed-method design. The participants had a positive attitude since they were confident about understanding research and research terminology related to English teacher education. On the other hand, negative views were derived from the thought that ELT research is challenging. The reasons behind this idea that the participants listed in Kustati and Al-Azmi (2018) were;

- lack of knowledge on ELT research methodology,
- lack of training on how to write a good proposal and research report,
- the lack of lecturers' involvement in their research activities,
- the difficulty in having administrative service from the faculty,
- the lack of reading sources in the library,
- the problems in getting internet access on the campus,
- having supervisors who are not from the ELT department.

Banegas (2018) straightforwardly reports EFL teachers' conceptions of research as an extension of Borg's (2009) study. He also aimed to investigate language teachers' research perception and their level of research engagement in Argentina. 622 English teachers completed the questionnaire that conveyed online, and online interviews were held with 40 of those participants. The results displayed that participants conceive research as an academic activity characterized by being systematic and objective, using varied data collection instruments, data analysis, publishing findings, generalizability, and applicability in the classroom. Participants also thought of research as an act carried out by other professionals such as university-based academics rather than teachers. Banegas (2018) demonstrates that teachers believe that they cannot be producers of research but are expected to be the consumers of research products. Regarding reading research, most of the participants who do not read research mentioned three restrictions: lack of time, lack of access to research outputs, and lack of practical advice. However, the primary and secondary EFL teachers' most stated reasons were lack of access and

practical advice in their context. On the other side, 60 per cent of the participants specified their reasons for doing research with personal/intrinsic, extrinsic, practice-oriented/teaching efficacy, identity-driven, and professional-focused reasons. Following the other studies, lack of time and lack of knowledge of research was stated as obstacles for doing research by both teachers in secondary schools and higher education settings.

Further, the work of Alhassan and Ali (2020) is one of the up-to-date examples among other studies mentioned. They studied EFL teachers' research engagement from Continual Professional Development (CPD) perspective in the Oman context. Twenty EFL teachers were interviewed during the academic year. The study adopted a qualitative interpretative method with semi-structured interviews. It has emerged that the participants' concerns about research engagement are mainly pedagogical or professional. Teachers believe that reading and using research findings in their classrooms provide teaching and learning experiences. It was also stated that research engagement could also be a beneficial and refresher tool whereby teachers have the chance to critically challenge their assumptions and revisit and update their traditional approaches to language teaching and learning. According to the participants, benefiting from research does not necessarily entail those teachers conducting research. They can still benefit from reading or using research for their CPD. Regardless, some reported that they were engaged in research by conducting some small-scale action research projects to inform their teaching and resolve some teaching problems they encounter in their classrooms. There were still some challenges that prevented teachers from reading or doing research. These are reported as the difficulty in finding appropriate research findings to their own teaching context, lack of time, heavy teaching loads and schedules, and lack of institutional research culture (Alhassan and Ali, 2020). Besides lack of resources, primarily because of the paid journals and the difficulty accessing these journals, accessing up-to-date books in the library was the main reason for the moderate level of teachers' research engagement.

Summaries of the studies on language teachers' research engagement are presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Summary of the Global Research on Language Teacher Research Engagement

Author(s)	Aim of the Research	Methods	Participants	Major Findings
Borg (2009)	To understand the conceptions of research held by ELT teachers working in a range of countries	Sequential explanatory multi-method strategy	505 EFL teachers in 13 countries covering Europe, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Australia	<p>Statistics, objectivity, testing hypotheses, large samples, and controlling variables are the commonly accepted characteristics of good research.</p> <p>Teachers' research engagement is generally based on personal, pedagogical, or professional reasons rather than external sources such as promotion or employer pressure.</p> <p>Lack of time and lack of knowledge and confidence about research are the common reasons for not being engaged in and with research.</p>

Table 1. (continued)

Author(s)	Aim of the Research	Methods	Participants	Major Findings
Anwaruddin and Pervin (2013)	To explain teachers' engagement with research in Bangladesh	Mixed-method study	40 English-language teachers who are working either at a primary school or at a high school	Lack of institutional support, lack of encouragement to read and do research, and lack of knowledge are stated reasons of primary school teachers for being less engaged in research. The main barrier to being research-engaged is the institutional culture that the learning is not specialized by effective use of research knowledge.
Borg and Liu (2013)	To investigate the notion of teacher as researcher by highlighting many interactive personal, interpersonal, and institutional factors which shape the extent to which teachers can be research-engaged	Mixed-method study	725 college English teachers in China	Teachers' unproductive conceptions of the relationship between research knowledge and classroom practice and the inconsistency between the institution's expectation and the support given to teachers are the main reasons for not being engaged in research. Engagement with research is characterized by the search by teachers for immediate and direct positive impacts on their classroom practices. Promotion plays a determiner role in teachers' motivation to do research besides professional or pedagogical concerns. Lack of time, advisor, or knowledge decreases the level of doing research.

Table 1. (continued)

Author(s)	Aim of the Research	Methods	Participants	Major Findings
Mehrani (2015)	To investigate the extent to which Iranian English teachers engage in doing and reading research and to explore the motivations that can promote teachers' research engagement	Descriptive Study	24 EFL teachers with various teaching backgrounds	Teachers defined doing research as activities such as trying new ways to teach a skill. Language teachers do not often read academic research journals which represent the traditional forms of scientific research. Teachers are encouraged by authorities, expected by colleagues to promote their professional knowledge or their students' expectations
Yuan et al.(2016)	To examine two language teachers' research motivations in their action research in China	Case Study	Two language teachers from Beijing, China	The guidance, support, and research training motivated teachers to engage in research. Teachers gained teacher-researcher, student-centred teacher, reflective, and strategic teacher roles.
Kustati and Al-Azmi (2018)	To investigate the attitudes towards research in the field of language teaching that will be judged based on seven indicators of attitude proposed by	Mixed-method study	217 pre-service undergraduate teachers from the Faculty of Tarbiyah IAIN in Indonesia	Participants have a positive attitude toward research related to English teacher education. ELT research is challenging because of lack of knowledge on ELT research methodology, training on how to write a good proposal and research report, lack of lecturers' involvement in their research activities, the difficulty in having administrative service from the faculty, the problems in getting internet access on the campus, having supervisors who are not from the ELT department.

Table 1. (continued)

Author(s)	Aim of the Research	Methods	Participants	Major Findings
Banegas (2018)	To investigate the conceptions of research held by EFL teachers in Argentina	Mixed-method study	622 EFL teachers in Argentina	<p>Research is an act carried out by other professionals such as university-based academics.</p> <p>Teachers cannot be producers of research but are expected to be the consumers of research products.</p> <p>Lack of time, lack of access to research outputs, lack of practical advice, and lack of access and practical advice in their context are the main reasons preventing the engagement.</p>
Alhassan and Ali (2020)	To investigate Omani teachers' perceptions about the extent to which teachers engage in research, the lack of research engagement among teachers and their suggestions for increasing and sustaining teacher research engagement	Qualitative Case Study	Twenty EFL teachers from different teaching contexts in Oman	<p>Research engagement could be a beneficial and refresher tool whereby teachers have the chance to critically challenge their assumptions and update their traditional approaches to language teaching and learning.</p> <p>Benefiting from research does not mean that teachers must conduct research.</p> <p>The reasons challenging the research engagement are lack of time, heavy teaching loads and schedules, lack of institutional research culture, and lack of available resources.</p>

2.4.1.1.1.2. Local Research

There is an increasing amount of research on teachers' research engagement in the literature in Turkey context (Borg, 2007; Dikilitas & Wyatt, 2018; Köksal & Razi, 2011; Şahin & Arcagök, 2013; Yağız, Aydın, & Akdemir, 2016). Borg (2007) conducted a multi-method study on research engagement in English language teaching. This survey was the first stage of a worldwide investigation (2009) of ELT teachers' research engagements. The participants were 50 teachers on a Freshman English program at a university in Turkey in June 2005. The data collection tool was a questionnaire, which was also mirrored in this study, prepared by Borg for this initial study. The results were discussed under the titles of reading research and doing research. Borg presented that more than half of the participants read research always or sometimes, and a similar number of the participants stated they do research sometimes. The most common reason teachers' reading research is the relation of the evidence to the classroom practice. Teachers generally prefer reading research as long as it provides ideas to them for classroom practice. Participants stated about doing research that their workload doesn't allow them to conduct research. Few of the participants thought that their institution was not encouraging them. However, many of the participants (80%) criticized that the time for reading or doing research, which is essential for their teaching quality, is not allocated in their workload. It has emerged that even if the institution is generally seen to be supportive of teachers' research engagement, time may be a weighing factor, among other reasons, in influencing the extent to which engagement takes place.

Köksal and Razi (2011) aimed at revealing the English language academics' and postgraduate students' ambitions about involving in research studies. Their participants were 159 academicians and postgraduate teachers from 34 different universities in Turkey. In this mixed-method study, after all the participants answered the questionnaire, 12 academicians among them were interviewed. The results of writing a research report experiences of academicians and teachers revealed significant differences between them. Moreover, they stated that the most challenging part of writing an academic article is the discussion part. When the participants were asked if conducting and publishing research is more important than teaching, they underlined the importance and indispensable nature of their teaching and research. When the reasons for conducting research were investigated, providing criteria for the field and being promoted to a higher position were the most stated motives. On the other hand, teaching hours and insufficient sources were blamed for not conducting research as much as they wanted. The suggested solutions to increase the level of doing research were

increasing and enriching the research-related course content at the undergraduate level, providing in-service training on research and professional academic assistance, allowing the academicians to study in a foreign country for a particular time.

One of the example studies on teachers' approaches to ER is the one conducted by Şahin and Arcagök (2013). The participants are 206 primary school teachers who worked at primary schools in Çanakkale in the 2011-2012 academic year. They reported teachers' approach and level of engagement in reading and doing research. The most stated good research characteristics are objectivity, providing new ideas applicable to the classroom contexts, being done by professionals, critical analysis, and being published. The findings showed that the teachers who did postgraduate studies and taught in primary classrooms followed the ER findings. The frequency of doing research also depends on teachers' research training. It was observed that novice teachers are more motivated and willing to be engaged in research and apply theoretical knowledge to their teaching practice as long as the evidence applies to their classrooms. In parallel to the other studies, the commonly stated reason for not reading or doing research is lack of time because of the workload. Besides, not accessing up-to-date sources was also reported as a barrier to research engagement. Teachers explained that the difficulty of reaching published research sources, not knowing where to find related sources, and the payment requirements in some of them decrease their research engagement levels. The participants suggested that

- the institutions should encourage teachers via salary, promotion, permission to attend conferences or seminars,
- the provided sources should be up to date,
- the institution should provide teachers the opportunity of publishing their studies,
- the research training that is given before graduation can be more classroom-centred.

The study of Yağız et al. (2016) differs from the already mentioned studies since their work is a meta-synthesis exploring the ELT research in Turkey in terms of research methods, data collection tools, samples, and data analysis procedures. They focused on the works conducted between 2005- 2015. The study included 274 research articles written by Turkish authors published in 15 journals indexed by ULAKBİM [Turkish Academic Network and

Information Center] (p. 122). According to the results, the most common subjects studied in Turkey are language learning, acquisition and language teaching. While most Turkish researchers prefer quantitative non-experimental methods as research design, they seem reluctant to utilize qualitative methods. Likert-type questionnaires are the most popular when it comes to data collection tools, and then it is followed by documents or alternative observation tools in terms of observation. The participants of a high number of studies analysed in this paper consist of undergraduate students, and the general size of the samples was between 31- 100. The data analysis revealed that frequency- mean and t-test were the most popular analysis methods.

Dikilitas and Wyatt (2018) focused on mentoring teachers to be engaged in research. The study investigated the learning mentoring process of three novice teacher-researchers. They mentored teacher-researchers throughout the 2014–2015 academic year at their Turkish universities before presenting their studies together at the 2015 conference in İzmir. On encouraging TR in the Turkey context, all three mentors were really enthusiastic and motivated for the process. Besides providing academic research guidance, they were conscious that they should also encourage novice teachers psychologically. On the other hand, institutional factors such as the workload of both teacher-researchers and mentors may have made it harder for the three research mentors to take on subject-specialist ‘educator’ mentoring roles. The teachers’ motivation and attitude towards research also affected the mentoring process of these three cases. Although most of the teachers in the institutions that mentors had asked for volunteers had a negative approach towards research, the intrinsic motivation of the volunteered teachers, such as professional development and qualifying teaching practice, made the process easier for the mentors.

The local research on TR engagement summary is presented in Table 2.

Table 2.

Summary of the Local Research on Language Teachers' Research Engagement

Author(s)	Aim of the Research	Methods	Participants	Major Findings
Borg (2007)	To understand the conceptions of research held by ELT teachers working in different contexts, the role which both reading and doing research plays in these teachers' professional lives, and the factors which influence their research engagement.	sequential explanatory multi-method strategy	50 teachers on a Freshman English program at a university in Turkey in June 2005	The most common reason teachers' reading research is the relation of the evidence to the classroom practice. The commonly stated reason is that workload doesn't allow teachers to conduct research. Even if the institution is generally seen to be supportive of teachers' research engagement, time may be a weighing factor, among other reasons, in influencing the extent to which engagement takes place.
Köksal and Razi, (2011)	To find out and analyze the reasons for not being able to research and provide suggestions to encourage professionals to conduct research in the academic field	Mixed-method strategy	159 academicians and postgraduate teachers from 34 different universities in Turkey	Research experiences of academicians and teachers have many different points. The most challenging part of writing an academic article is the discussion part. The relation between teaching and research is essential, and they have an intimate nature. Providing criteria for the field and being promoted to a higher position are the most stated motives for doing research.

Table 2. (continued)

Author(s)	Aim of the Research	Methods	Participants	Major Findings
Şahin and Arcagök (2013)	To investigate the primary school teachers' approaches towards educational research practice	Descriptive study	206 primary school teachers who worked at primary schools in Çanakkale in the 2011-2012 academic year	<p>Novice teachers are more motivated and willing to be engaged in research and apply theoretical knowledge to their teaching practice as long as the evidence applies to their classrooms.</p> <p>Commonly stated reason for not reading or doing research is lack of time because of the workload.</p> <p>The difficulty of reaching published research sources, not knowing where to find related sources, and the payment requirements in some of those sources decrease teachers' research engagement levels.</p>
Yağız et al., (2016)	To prompt similar and comparative studies with the published studies in different indexes and to summarize the research context, sampling and parameters to reflect scientific research tendencies at Turkish context, to assist further studies and to enhance the strength and quality of the research field and to better understand research gaps through the highlighted findings.	Content analysis under the heading of historical research	274 research articles written by Turkish authors published in 15 journals indexed by ULAKBİM	<p>Common subjects studied in Turkey are language learning and acquisition and language teaching.</p> <p>Likert-type questionnaires are the most popular data collection tools.</p> <p>Most of the studies analysed in this paper focused on undergraduate participants most.</p> <p>Frequency- mean and t-test were the most popular analysis method.</p>

Table 2. (continued)

Author(s)	Aim of the Research	Methods	Participants	Major Findings
Dikilitas and Wyatt (2018)	To gain insights into developmental learning teacher-research-mentoring processes and how they can be impacted by contextual issues and mentor-mentoring	Case study	Three teacher-research mentors	The workload of both teacher-researchers and mentors made the process harder for the three research mentors to take on subject-specialist 'educator' mentoring roles. The intrinsic motivation of the volunteered teachers made the process easier for the mentors.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the methodological considerations, namely the research design, participants, data collection tools utilised, the procedure for data collection and analysis.

3.2. Research Design

Creswell (2012) stated that mixed-method strategies are beneficial in engaging with both quantitative and qualitative data. The sequential explanatory mixed-method strategy is proposed for the studies in which collection and analysis of the quantitative data are followed by the collection and analysis of the qualitative data (Borg, 2007). The advantage of this method is that the quantitative data and the subsequent analysis provide a general understanding of the research problem followed by a detailed exploration of participants' views which are obtained through qualitative data analysis (Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006). Following these, the study employed the sequential explanatory mixed-method study to investigate primary school EFL teachers' perceptions of research and their research engagement. As a quantitative data collection tool, a questionnaire adapted from Borg (2009) was used to understand primary school EFL teachers' perceptions of research and their level of research engagement.—This method was appropriate because, as Dörnyei (2002) recommends, large amounts of data can be collected efficiently, economically, and standardized in a cross-sectional survey through a questionnaire. After collecting the quantitative data, the qualitative data was collected by a semi-structured interview to obtain more details for each section of the questionnaire (Adams, 2015). The interview process takes much longer than the questionnaire administration; however, it is one of the most common tools which enables the researcher to reveal and understand the respondents' views, especially on particular items in the questionnaire (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012).

3.3. The Participants

The sampling method of the study was determined by utilizing different non-random sampling strategies. Convenience and purposive sampling techniques were employed together. The convenience sampling technique has several criteria, such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Considering accessibility and geographical proximity, İskenderun, Payas, and Dörtyol districts of Hatay were selected to carry out the study. Besides, Hatay is one of the cities with the closest primary schooling rate at 90.98% to Turkey's primary schooling general rate, which is 91.16% according to DOĞAKA reports (Kafalı & Güngör, 2018). Through purposive sampling which allows for concentrating on participants with special characteristics (Fraenkel et al., 2012), the research focused on primary school EFL teachers as its participants. Etikan et al. (2016) recommend total population sampling, which is one of the purposive sampling techniques, if the number of the participants being investigated is small related to the population. Concerning these, the sample of this study consisted of 78 primary schools EFL teachers in the İskenderun, Payas, and Dörtyol districts of Hatay.

The quantitative data were obtained from 75 primary school EFL teachers teaching students aged 6 to 11. Table 3 displays the participating teachers' years of teaching experience.

Table 3.

Range of Teachers' Years of Experience

Years	N	%
0-4	7	9.3
5-9	25	33.3
10-14	25	33.3
15-19	10	13.3
20-24	7	9.3
25+	1	1.3
Total	75	100.0

According to Table 3, only one participant had teaching experience above 25 years. More than half of the participating teachers claimed to have 5-9 (%33.3) or 10 – 14

(%33.3) years experience. 13.3 % stated to have 15-19 years' experience. While 9.3% of all participating teachers stated to have 20-24 years of teaching experience, another 9.3 % claimed to have 0-4 years' experience.

Table 4 shows the highest ELT qualification of the participants.

Table 4.

Participants' highest ELT qualifications

Qualification	N	%
Certificate	8	10.7
Bachelor's	57	76.0
Master's	5	6.7
Other	5	6.7
Total	75	100.0

According to Table 4, 76% of the participants have a Bachelor's degree. 10.7% of them stated they have the certificate, which stands for the pedagogical formation certificate. The ones who have their Master's degree are 6.7% of the participants, and the other 6.7% stated that they have other degrees, but they did not mention the details about these degrees.

The qualitative data was collected through the semi-structured interviews, which were held with 10 out of 75 participants who volunteered to be interviewed.

3.4. Data Collection Tools

The study employed both quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, namely a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire (see Appendix A) used in the study was adapted from the one designed by Borg (2009). It had six sections consisting of the participants' background information, their conceptions of what counts as research, their views of characteristics of good research, their perceptions of their institutional research culture, their engagement in reading research, and their engagement in doing research. As Borg (2007) emphasised, the questionnaire sections were based on the literature on TR in education and ELT.

Section I firstly asked the school where the participant teachers work as EFL teachers and their e-mail addresses to contact them easily if they volunteered for the

interview session of the study. Following this, participants' years of experience, their highest relevant qualification to ELT and whether they were working part-time or full time were asked for the interpretation of the data obtained from the other sections in the questionnaire. The items in Sections II and III were used to reveal the research perceptions of the participants. In Section II, ten research scenarios which are created and integrated in the questionnaire by Borg (2009) were presented to the participants. Participants were asked to rate these scenarios as *definitely not research*, *probably not research*, *probably research*, or *definitely research*. There are no right or wrong answers because the section aims to understand participants' views of good research. Participants decided to what extent each research scenario is research according to them. Section III included 11 items that reflect the characteristics of good quality research. Participants rated these items as *unimportant*, *moderately important*, *unsure*, *important*, or *very important*. Section IV had nine items that investigated the research culture in the participants' institutions. Participants were asked to rate these items as *disagree strongly*, *disagree*, *don't know*, *agree*, or *agree strongly*. Section V asked the frequency of participants' reading research. It had two different follow-up items. The teachers were directed to one of those two items on the basis of their response regarding the frequency of their reading published research. If they read published research *rarely* or *never*, the participants were asked to choose the items that are true for them among the six possible reasons for not reading or rarely reading published research. If the participants *sometimes* or *often* read published research, they were asked to choose the sources through which they read published research, and they were asked to state the extent to which the published research they read affects their teaching. Section VI, the last section of the questionnaire, investigated the frequency of the participants' doing research. If they stated that they do research *rarely* or *never*, the possible reasons for not doing research or rarely doing research were given with 11 items. The participants were asked to choose the ones that were appropriate for them. If the participants do research *sometimes* or *often*, possible reasons for *sometimes* or *often* doing research were listed with nine items, and they chose the ones related to their reasons.

The qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews, including six pre-determined questions (see Appendix B). The first question "*What are your criteria for the scenarios to be definitely research?*" and the second question "*What are the characteristics of good research according to you?*" were asked to explore the research understandings of the participants in more detail. In question 3,

participants were asked to explain the perspectives of the management and their colleagues towards research. Question 4 was asked by considering the frequency of teachers' reading published research to understand their reasons for reading or not reading research. If they *often* or *sometimes* read published research, the question was "*What kind of sources do you usually use and on which subjects do you read?*". If they *rarely* or *never* read published research, they were asked "*What are the reasons for not reading / rarely reading published research?*". Question 5 was a follow-up question for the participants who *sometimes* or *often* read published research, and participants were asked *how these readings affect their teaching*. Question 6 was asked the participants in two different forms according to the frequency of their doing research to understand the research they do and their reasons for doing or not doing research. The teachers who *often* or *sometimes* do research were asked to "*tell the nature of research they do and the reasons for doing research*" and the teachers who *never* or *rarely* do research were asked "*What are the reasons for not doing research?*"

3.5. Data Collection Procedure

Before undertaking the investigation, a permission letter was sent to Borg via email to adapt the questionnaire he developed (see Appendix C). When his consent was taken, the questionnaire was adjusted through Google Forms (available on <https://forms.gle/76xv1sVK2rcq5DF5A>). The consent form for the participants was provided in the introduction part of the questionnaire. The list of the primary schools in İskenderun, Payas, and Dörtüol and the number of teachers in each school were obtained from the Hatay provincial directorate of national education after the permission of Ministry of Education was taken (see Appendix D). Each school in the districts was contacted via phone, and the questionnaire link was sent to the participants thanks to the school principals. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and the participation was voluntary. 75 participants out of 78 completed the questionnaire in English.

Following the completion of the questionnaire, 19 EFL teachers approved their consent to participate in the interviews. Each participant was sent an email to schedule the interviews according to their available times. However, nine of these participants did not respond to this e-mail, and they stated that they did not want to be interviewed when they were contacted via phone. Consequently, the interviews were scheduled with 10

participants out of 19. Before starting the interviews, the participants' consent was asked to audio-recording the interviews for data analysis purposes. Then semi-structured interviews were held with 10 EFL teachers in Turkish via Skype, and each of them lasted around 20 minutes.

3.6. Data Analysis Procedure

The quantitative data analysis was performed using SPSS software (version 21). Section I, the demographic section of the questionnaire, was interpreted separately to display a profile of the participants. The data of the other sections in the questionnaire were presented and interpreted through the frequency tables.

The qualitative data were processed according to the five steps indicated in Figure 1 presented by Creswell and Poth (2018).

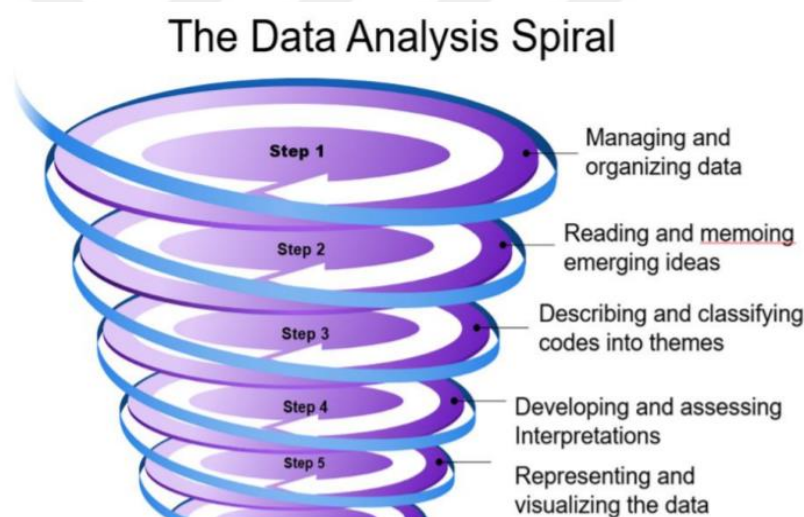


Figure 1. The data analysis spiral

Source: Creswell & Poth, 2018, p.186

In step 1, managing and organizing the data, the audio recordings of the interviews were named according to the order that they were held as *Teacher 1, Teacher 2, Teacher 3, Teacher 4, Teacher 5, Teacher 6, Teacher 7, Teacher 8, Teacher 9, and Teacher 10*. After that, the semi-structured interviews were transcribed verbatim via Microsoft Word 2016, thanks to the audio recordings. Each teacher was represented with the numbers given according to the order they were interviewed. Then these interviews were translated into English for content analysis purposes by the researcher. The translated interviews were checked by an ELL instructor who had her PhD. to prevent loss of meaning. In step

2, reading and memoing emerging ideas, the transcripts were subjected to content analysis by the researcher. Each interview was read separately, and any codes or interpretations were noted down for each of them. In step 3, the interviews were read according to the order of interview questions and emerging codes for each question were noted down on a table. After that, these codes were reviewed and classified into themes on this table. Before steps 4 and 5, the transcripts and coding method were also shared with two other independent researchers for the content analysis with the aim of inter-coder reliability. After two weeks, the researchers shared their notes and the table of codes and themes. After this process, each coder's codes and themes were compared with those of the researcher. In step 4, the researcher compared and contrasted the coding frames of others and adjusted the data set accordingly. The themes and the frequency of the codes were converted into a table for each interview question to develop interpretations. Then the data were visualised and represented in the findings chapter as the last step of the analysis process.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings acquired from the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, namely, the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The research questions that guided the presentation of the findings are as in the following:

1. What are the characteristics of research according to primary school EFL teachers?
2. What are the teachers' perceptions of their institutional research culture?
3. What is the frequency of teachers' reading published research?
 - a. If they do not, what are the stated reasons?
4. What is the frequency of teachers' doing research?
 - a. What are the stated reasons if they conduct research?
 - b. What are the stated reasons if they do not conduct research?

4.2. What are the characteristics of research according to primary school EFL teachers?

Data pertaining to primary school EFL teachers' perceptions of research were obtained through the questions in sections II and III in the questionnaire. In section II, the participants were given ten scenarios that describe different research settings and asked the extent to which they feel the activity described is an example of research. The scenarios are presented below.

Scenario 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.

Scenario 2

A teacher read about a new approach to teaching writing and decided to try it out in his class over a period of two weeks. He video recorded some of his lessons and collected samples of learners' written work. He analysed this information then presented the results to his colleagues at a staff meeting.

Scenario 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.

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.

Scenario 5

Two teachers were both interested in the 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 newsletter of the national language teachers' association.

Scenario 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.

Scenario 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.

Scenario 8

Mid-way through a course, a teacher gave a class of 30 students a feed-back 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.

Scenario 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 trainees' ideas about motivation. He submitted his article to a professional journal.

Scenario 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, then presented the results at a staff meeting.

Table 5 presents the participants' assessments of the research scenarios given above. Four possible ratings were given to the participants (1= *Definitely not research*, 4= *Definitely research*).

Table 5.

Assessment of the Research Scenarios

	1		2		3		4		Mean	SD
	Definitely not research		Probably not research		Probably research		Definitely research			
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Scenario 1	6	8.0	5	6.7	39	52.0	25	33.3	3.11	.847
Scenario 2	-	-	6	8.0	29	38.7	40	53.3	3.45	.643
Scenario 3	2	2.7	10	13.3	37	49.3	26	34.7	3.16	.754
Scenario 4	1	1.3	8	10.7	27	36.0	39	52.0	3.39	.733
Scenario 5	2	2.7	9	12.0	31	41.3	33	44.0	3.27	.777
Scenario 6	3	4.0	4	5.3	20	26.7	48	64.0	3.51	.778
Scenario 7	7	9.3	11	14.7	27	36.0	30	40.0	3.07	.963
Scenario 8	12	16.0	13	17.3	30	40.0	20	26.7	2.77	1.021
Scenario 9	5	6.7	11	14.7	34	45.3	25	33.3	3.05	.868
Scenario 10	2	2.7	8	10.7	33	44.0	32	42.7	3.27	.759

What stands out in Table 5 is that scenario 6 was rated as *definitely research* by most of the participants (M= 3.54, 4= *Definitely research*). Following scenario 6, 53.3% of the participants indicated that scenario 2 is also *definitely research*. However, none of the participants indicated this scenario as *definitely not research*, contrary to the other scenarios. As seen in Table 5, similar to scenario 2, another scenario rated as *definitely research* is scenario 4 (M= 3.39). Moreover, the mean scores of scenario 5 and scenario 10 are the same (M= 3.27). Nevertheless, while 44% of the participants stated scenario 5 as *definitely research*, the same percentage rated scenario 10 as *probably research*. Besides, Table 5 shows that more than half of the participants (52%) stated that scenario 1 is *probably research* (M= 3.11, 3= *Probably research*). Another scenario that was highly rated as *probably research* is scenario 3 (M= 3,16). It is clearly seen in Table 5 that 45.3 % of the participants indicated that scenario 9 is *probably research* (M= 3.05). Likewise, the mean score of scenario 7 displays that the number of teachers who indicated this scenario as *probably research* was higher than the number of the participants who rated it differently. Even though 36% of the participants thought it was *probably research*, 40% of the participants stated that it was *definitely research*. On the other hand, it is understood from the table that 14.7% of the participants believed that this scenario is *probably not research*. This scenario's standard deviation is considerably higher than the others (SD= 0.963). Nevertheless, the mean score of scenario 8 shows that participants thought that it was *probably not research* (M= 2.77, 2 = *Probably not research*). Besides, the number of people who stated that scenario 8 is *definitely not research* or *probably not research* is higher than the other scenarios. 17.3% of the participants thought that this is *probably not research*, and 16 % indicated that it is *definitely not research*.

Table 6 shows the themes and codes that emerged from the analysis of the interviews. Participants were asked to explain their criteria to rate a scenario as *definitely research*.

Table 6.

Teachers' Criteria for the Research Scenarios to Be Definitely Research

Question	Themes	Codes	f	
1. What are your criteria for the scenarios to be definitely research?	Classroom-related criteria	1. Problem-solving	3	
		2. Applicability	3	
		3. Students' feedback	1	
		4. Motivating students	1	
		5. Classroom practice	1	
	Scientific criteria	1. Being published	4	
		2. Synthesized with literature	2	
		3. Reliability and Validity	2	
		4. Scientific	2	
		5. Divergent variables	1	
		6. Favorable results	1	
	Teacher-related criteria	1. Teacher's effort	2	
		2. Professional development	2	
	Total			25

According to Table 6, three themes emerged from the analysis of the research scenarios. The most frequently mentioned criteria were about research being *classroom-related* and being *scientific*. Among the *classroom-related criteria*, participants mainly stated that the research done in the classroom should be *problem-solving* and *applicable*.

Regarding the code *problem-solving*, one of the participants expressed that it is required research to search for a problem or something missing:

...a research must seek an answer to a problem or something that is missing. In other words, that person must have a problem related to that subject, a roughness that needs to be eliminated. In some scenarios, I couldn't feel a research situation like this. Writing a report and presenting it may not always be a research concern. But the fact that the teacher tried to solve a problem in the classroom, did research

on it, did experiments on the students, analysed the questions that came up later, and then wrote and published this shows that this is a research concern.

Another participant also referred to the code *problem-solving* that: *“According to my research point of view, it is important to find solutions to the problems in the classroom...”*

Regarding the code *applicability*, three of the participants indicated that the research done in the classroom should be *applicable* to the learning environment. One of them expressed that: *“For me, good educational research must have an in-class application.”* Also, the other participant said that: *“I think all the scenarios are research because it is important that they can be applied at school...”* Another one also expressed that: *“I decide it by looking if it could be done in the conditions of my school.”*

Another code that emerged under the theme of *classroom-related criteria* was *student’s feedback*. Referring to this code, one of the participants expressed that:

...We can say that the feedback in the classroom determines the quality of the research. In other words, the reaction of students and their level of participation in the lesson can be effective for us to see the value of the research.

The other codes mentioned under the title of *classroom-related criteria* theme were *motivating students* and *classroom practice*.

In reference to the code *motivating students*, one of the participants stated that: *“In all scenarios, I think that every step in each scenario is important to make students love the lesson and improve their language.”*

Referring to the code *classroom practice*, another participant expressed that she finds everything done in the classroom valuable.

Another heavily mentioned theme was the *scientific criteria*. A variety of features were stated, but being *published*, *being synthesized with the literature*, *reliability and validity* and being *scientific* were the criteria stated the most for the scenarios to be considered good research. The other stated criteria were having *divergent variables* and *favorable results*.

Referring to the code *being published*, it was stated by one of the participants that: *“If I do research, I would like to have it published. If it is published in the journal, that*

means the journal sees this work as research and has valued it, so I think it has been published.”

Regarding the code being *synthesized with the literature*, another participant stated that:

If I talk about my point of view, I think it is necessary to do research and analyze it and synthesize it with the literature. According to my research point of view, it is important to focus on finding solutions to the problems in the classroom and to try to interpret the obtained data well and compile the results with the literature when necessary.

About the code *reliability and validity*, it was also indicated that research should be done by paying attention to the reliability and validity conditions. On the other hand, regarding the code *scientific*, a participant said that: *“For me, the third scenario, the research for the MA course, would be the kind of research I can do. The research should have a scientific base.”*

Related to the code *divergent variables*, another participant indicated that she rated the scenarios if they contained the features that are important for her. She said that: *“I did it by looking at whether the research published or not, or the diversity of the variables.”*

Regarding the code of *favorable results*, it was also stated that: *“I think they are research because it is important that they can be applied at school, they produce favorable results...”*

Lastly, *teacher-related criteria* were another theme that emerged. *Teacher’s effort* and *professional development* were the stated codes under this theme. For example, in relation to these two codes, it was reported by a participant that: *“I have taken into consideration the efforts of the teacher here...Considering that s/he is constantly trying to improve herself/himself, and how much effort s/he puts into it, I thought all the scenarios were definitely research.”*

Also, one of the participants said regarding the code of *professional development* that: *“I believe that people develop themselves more and they can express themselves when they do research. Therefore, everything done in the classroom is research for me.”*

Overall, what emerges from the findings reported here is that the research done for enhancing the classroom practice, in terms of *solving the problems, having applicable results* or *helping to motivate the students*, was accepted as *definitely research*. The

participants reported that the scientific aspects such as *being published, being synthesized with the literature, and reliability and validity* also affect the quality of research. *Teacher's efforts* and contribution of research to the *professional development of the teachers* were also the factors that play a role in deciding if a particular research scenario (see Table 5) is *definitely research*.

Table 7 illustrates the rate of importance attached to the characteristics of good research listed in section III in the survey. The findings were explained in descending order by considering the mean scores of each characteristic.



Table 7.

The Importance of Good Research Characteristics for Teachers

Characteristics	1		2		3		4		5		Mean	SD
	Unimportant		Moderately important		Unsure		Important		Very important			
	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%		
A large number of people are studied	1	1.3	27	36.0	2	2.7	20	26.7	25	33.3	3.55	1.318
A large volume of information is collected	4	5.3	22	29.3	2	2.7	22	29.3	25	33.3	3.56	1.358
Experiments are used	5	6.7	22	29.3	2	2.7	20	26.7	26	34.7	3.58	1.398
Hypotheses are tested	2	2.7	21	28.0	4	5.3	24	32.0	24	32.0	3.63	1.271
Information is analyzed statistically	3	4.0	24	32.0	-	-	19	25.3	29	38.7	3.63	1.383
Questionnaires are used	4	5.3	24	32.0	2	2.7	24	32.0	21	28.0	3.45	1.339
The researcher is objective	2	2.7	22	29.3	-	-	15	20.0	36	48.0	3.81	1.372
The results apply to many ELT contexts	4	5.3	19	25.3	5	6.7	28	38.7	18	24.0	3.52	1.256
The results made public	11	14.7	12	16.0	10	13.3	23	30.7	19	25.3	3.36	1.401
The results give teachers ideas they can use	1	1.3	23	30.7	6	8.0	23	30.7	22	29.3	3.56	1.244
Variables are controlled	4	5.3	21	28.0	8	10.7	23	30.7	19	25.3	3.43	1.286

Table 7 illustrates that the characteristic that has a high level of importance is the researcher's objectivity (M= 3.81, 4= important). 48% of the participants thought it was very important, but % 29.3 % rated this as *moderately important*. Statistical analysis of information and testing hypotheses were also *important* characteristics of good research for the participants when their mean scores are considered (M= 3.63). On the other hand, 32.0 % of the participants indicated that statistical analysis of the information is *moderately important*, while more than half of the participants rated testing hypotheses as *important* (32.0 %) or *very important* (32.0 %). The other characteristic, which the participants gave importance to, is the applicability of the results to many ELT contexts. 38.7 % of the participants thought that it was *important*, and 24.0 % also rated this feature as *very important*. Using experiments was also ranked as *very important* by 34.7 % of the participants and *important* by 26.7% (M= 3.58). According to the mean score (M= 3.56), collecting a large volume of information and giving teachers useful ideas were also considered as *important* characteristics. The participants who rated 'collecting a large volume of information' as *important* or *very important* consisted 62.6% of the total number of respondents. Similarly, giving teachers useful ideas was also rated as *important* or *very important* by more than half of the participants (30.7% = *important*, 29.3% = *very important*). Table 7 also indicates that studying with a large number of people also has high importance in the view of the participants considering its mean score (M= 3.55). What stands out in the table is that 33.3 % of the participants rated this item as *very important*, while 36 % of the participants also rated the same item as *moderately important*. This feature also has the highest rate among others that were placed as *moderately important*. Similar to this characteristic, using questionnaires is another feature on the list that was rated as *important* by 32% of the participants. At the same time, the same per cent of the participants also rated it as *moderately important* (M= 3.45). 56 % of the participants thought that controlling variables (M= 3.43) was also *important* (30.7%) or *very important* (25.3%). Lastly, making the results public has the lowest mean score (M= 3.36). While it was highly rated as *unimportant* among other characteristics (14.7%), the participants rated it as either *important* (30.7%) or *unimportant* (29.3%).

In Table 8, the themes and codes that emerged from the analysis of the interviews. Participants were asked to elaborate on their responses regarding the characteristics of good research.

Table 8.

Teachers' Views about Characteristics of Good Research

Question	Themes	Codes	f
2. What are the characteristics of good research?	Scientific Characteristics	1. Applicability	3
		2. Having all scientific aspects	1
		3. Having heterogeneous sample	1
		4. Testing a hypothesis	1
		5. Synthesis with literature	1
		6. Data collection	1
		7. Data analysis	1
	Classroom-related Characteristics	1. Improving the learning environment	3
		2. Addressing students' needs	1
		3. Sharing findings and experience	1
Total			14

According to Table 8, the highly mentioned theme was the *scientific characteristics* of research, and the other theme was the *classroom related characteristics*. Under the theme of *scientific characteristics*, the participants mostly stated that *applicability* is one of the characteristics that good research should have. The other codes that emerged were *having heterogeneous sample*, *testing a hypothesis*, *synthesis with the literature*, *data collection*, *data analysis*, and *having all the scientific aspects* that form research.

Related to the code of *applicability*, one of the participants stated that: “*Applying a survey on a paper is not for me, I think it is necessary to make an application and look at the results.*” Another participant also indicated that: “*The important thing is how important and applicable research has emerged in its field.*”

Regarding the code of *having all scientific aspects* is another criterion for one of the participants. She stated that: “*In my opinion, each feature of research are important in their own ways. For this reason, I can say that all the elements of research are very important.*”

In reference to the code of *having heterogeneous sample*, a participant stated that: “*The research I was going to do would consist of a sample that would cover all segments, especially in the schools which located in places with low socio-economic conditions.*”

Related to the code of *testing a hypothesis*, one of the participants indicated that: “*It is needed to test a hypothesis to know what to read and compile for conducting a proper research.*”

Another participant referred to the code *synthesis with literature* by saying that: “*I should be able to synthesize the result of my research with the literature to interpret these results rather than just researching.*”

The codes *data collection* and *data analysis* were referred by a participant that: “*For me, the data collection process is important for a research, and then comes the processing and interpretation of these collected data.*”

The other theme was *classroom-related characteristics*. Participants stated that they consider if the research *improves the learning environment*. Besides, under the theme of *classroom-related characteristics*, participants also indicated that *addressing students’ needs* and *sharing findings and experience* were also their criteria for a good research.

In reference to the code *improving the learning environment*, one of the participants said that: “*Everything that is done for students’ success and the quality of education is research.*” Another participant also explained that: “*The work of the teacher in the classroom or on behalf of the school, the effort s/he puts into, and the feedback he receives from students are more important than the scientific features.*” In addition, another participant also explained that: “*Increasing the English class hours that children will be exposed to or improving physical conditions could be the aim.*”

Regarding the code of *addressing students’ needs*, it was stated by a participant that: “*I can say that the most important thing for a research is being conducted by considering the needs of the students.*”

One of the participants expressed in reference to the code *sharing findings and experience* that: “*I believe the research I do is beneficial for my colleagues, for this reason, I give importance to share the results of the research I do and the experience I have gained with them.*”

In conclusion, these findings indicate that the primary school EFL teachers give importance to scientific characteristics (see Table 7). On the other hand, in parallel to the findings of the research scenarios (see Table 5 and Table 6), the characteristics related to

its application and its positive effects on the teaching environment (see Table 8) are also the requirements for qualifications of good research.

4.3. What are the teachers' perceptions of their institutional research culture?

Section IV of the questionnaire elicited the teachers' perceptions of the research culture in their institutions. Participants were asked to rate the items according to the extent to which they agree with these considering their institutions. With a view to supporting findings acquired from the questionnaire, the teachers were asked, in the semi-structured interviews, to explain in more detail what they think about the general attitude to research in their schools.

In Table 9, participants' ratings of the level of agreement to items about the research culture in their institutions were displayed. The findings were explained in descending order by considering the mean scores of the items.

Table 9.

Teachers' Perceptions of Institutional Research Culture

	1		2		3		4		5		Mean	SD
	Disagree strongly		Disagree		Don't know		Agree		Agree strongly			
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Teachers do research themselves	2	2.7	12	16.0	13	17.3	38	50.7	9	12.0	3.54	.996
The management encourages teachers to do research	1	1.3	10	13.3	11	14.7	39	52.0	13	17.3	3.72	.958
The teachers feel that doing research is an important part of their job	2	2.7	12	16.0	13	17.3	33	44.0	14	18.7	3.61	1.057
Teachers have access to the books and journals	3	4.0	8	10.7	16	21.3	29	38.7	18	24.0	3.69	1.084
Teachers have opportunities to learn about current research	4	5.3	6	8.0	12	16.0	37	49.3	15	20.0	3.72	1.054
Teachers talk about research	3	4.0	6	8.0	18	24.0	35	46.7	12	16.0	3.64	.987
Teachers are given support to attend ELT conferences	8	10.7	9	12.0	16	21.3	28	37.3	13	17.3	3.39	1.036
Time for doing research is built into teachers' workloads	6	8.0	5	6.7	19	25.3	37	49.3	7	9.3	3.46	1.039
Teachers read published research	3	4.0	10	13.3	18	24.0	33	44.0	10	13.3	3.5	1.024

According to Table 9, the items that the participants mostly agreed to were management's encouraging teachers to do research and teachers' having the opportunity to learn about current research (M= 3.72, 1= *disagree strongly*, 5= *agree strongly*). A large number of the participants thinks that the management encourages teachers to do research (52% = *Agree*, 17,3= *Agree strongly*), and teachers' having opportunity to learn about current research were rated as *agree* (49.3%) and *strongly agree* (20%) by the same percentage of the participants. Another item that was mostly agreed upon by the participants was having access to books and journals (M= 3.69). While 62.7% of the participants *agreed* or *strongly agreed* with this item, 21.3% stated that they do not know, and 10.7% *disagreed*. Moreover, 46.7 % *agreed*, and 16% *agreed strongly* that the teachers in their institutions talk about research (M= 3.64). One of the most approved items was that teachers consider research an important part of their job (M= 3.61). 44% of the participants *agreed*, and 18.7% *agreed strongly* with this statement. More than half of the teachers *agreed* (50.7%) or *strongly agreed* (12%) that they do the research themselves. It was also stated that teachers read published research (M= 3.5). Nearly half of the participants (49.3%) *agreed* on the fact that their institutions allocate the time that is needed to do research (M= 3.46). However, 25.3% of the participants stated that they were *unsure*. Compared to the others, more participants rated this item as *unsure*. Finally, the item with the lowest mean score is institutions' giving support to attend the ELT conferences (M= 3.39). Less than half of the teachers claimed to *strongly agree* (17.3%) or *agree* (37.3%) with this item. While there are some teachers who either *disagree* (12%) or *strongly disagree* (10.7%) with this statement, interestingly enough, some others (21.3%) claimed not to know if they receive such support from their schools.

Table 10 illustrates the themes and codes that emerged from the interviews regarding the teachers' views of institutional research culture.

Table 10.

Teachers' Views of Institutional Research Culture

Question	Themes	Codes	f
3. How would you evaluate the attitudes of the school management and your colleagues towards research?	Positive attitudes	1. Supporting research engagement	4
		2. Providing access to the sources	3
		3. Opportunity to follow the projects	1
		4. Colleagues doing research	1
		5. Collaborative colleagues	1
	Negative attitudes	1. Management's lack of encouragement	4
		2. Colleagues' lack of research engagement	2
		3. Being indifferent	1
		4. Colleagues' lack of motivation	1
	Neutral	1. No idea	2
	Total		21

According to Table 10, the findings from the interviews showed that the participants' views are either *positive*, *negative* or *neutral* about the general attitude towards the research culture in their institutions. The most frequently cited *positive* opinion is that the school management *supports teachers' research engagement*, and it was also highly mentioned that the management *provides access to the sources*. The other codes that emerged are the managements' providing *opportunity to follow the projects*, *colleagues doing research*, and *collaborative colleagues*.

Regarding the codes of *supporting research engagement* and *providing opportunity to follow the projects*, one of the participants said that: "*The school provides us every opportunity, and teachers can usually follow TÜBİTAK, Erasmus, or Commenus projects. I can say that the management provides us every support in this regard.*"

It was also stated by another participant that: "*When we request for a conference to be organized, or to participate in any existing conferences, the administration tries to arrange or give permission to attend the conferences.*"

In addition, regarding the codes of *supporting research engagement* and *providing access to the sources*, a participant said that: “*Management also gives us information and support guidance especially when there is a new method or resource. They also provide the necessary support as well as resource sharing.*”

The code of *providing access to the sources* was also indicated by two participants. One of them explained that they have a corner in the teachers’ room where they can access magazines, books, articles, and periodicals. And the other one said by also referring the code *management’s supporting research engagement* that: “*They give us information about seminars and conferences, there are usually magazines and educational publications in teachers’ room.*”

The code of *colleagues doing research* was stated by one of the participants that: “*For example, we have teachers who do their master’s and they conduct research in their fields.*”

The code of *collaborative colleagues* was indicated by a participant that: “*Although I am the only English teacher in my school, we share the methods and techniques that we use in the classroom with other teachers. When we read research or learn something new, we share it.*”

Under the theme of *negative attitudes*, the most frequently cited opinion was *management’s lack of research encouragement*. The second code that was cited more than others is *colleagues’ lack of engagement*. The other emerged codes were *being indifferent* and *colleagues lack of motivation*.

Referring the codes of *management’s lack of research encouragement* and *colleagues’ lack of research engagement*, a participant explained that she was disappointed because of the attitude towards research in her institution by stating that:

I can honestly say that I was a little disappointed. Maybe other schools encourage and support their teachers, but unfortunately, our school does not. I want to apply to TÜBİTAK projects and do something for the school. We are three English teachers at the school, but I did not have the chance to observe other teachers on this subject. As far as I can see, we do not have much encouragement or motivation at our school in this regard. Everyone monotonously gives their classes and goes.

Another participant referred to the code of *management’s lack of research encouragement* by stating that: “*The support of the administration is more of a support*

for the exams, as primary school and secondary school are together in the institution. The management made it easy for me to attend the seminars in my field that I wanted to attend when I asked. However, I do not remember that the administration made any announcements about the seminars or training.”

Referring to the code *management’s lack of research encouragement and lack of motivation*, it was also indicated by a participant that: *“When I do something extra for students, I get feedback like ‘why are you bothering’ or ‘there is no need’. That is a little demotivating, too. I am trying to do something on my own.”*

About the codes of *colleagues’ lack of research engagement and being indifferent*, one of the participants expressed that: *“According to what I have observed, we, teachers in national education, do not focus if there is no such thing as a master’s degree and so on. ... As I said, teachers in our school do not have research anxiety because they generally have concerns about curriculum training and exam preparation....”*

Another participant also referred to the code of *colleagues’ lack of research engagement* by saying that:

Attitudes of my colleagues are obligatory in general. Those who want a doctorate or master’s degree do it because it is a necessity, but for example, I don’t think they could or would do it for similar reasons if it wasn’t necessary.

Under the theme of *neutral*, regarding the code of having *no idea*, one of the participants indicated that: *“I have just started working at this institution, the first year is already spent with distance education, so frankly, I don’t have the chance to observe my colleagues or my institution in this regard.”* Another participant also stated that: *“Due to the pandemic, I couldn’t evaluate the attitudes of other teachers at the school, though.”*

In conclusion, the findings acquired from the analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data suggest that while some of the participants stated that their managements have an encouraging attitude by providing sources and opportunities for research (see Table 9 and Table 10), some others expressed that they find their management less encouraging in terms of research engagement. On the other hand, some

of the participants also stated that they have colleagues who do research or collaborate. However, some of them explained that their colleagues do not have research engagement and do not have motivation for research engagement (see Table 10).

4.4. What is the frequency of teachers' reading published research?

The participants were asked to indicate how frequently they read research in Section V. This section consists of two follow-up parts. If the participants stated that they *never* or *rarely* read published research, they were asked to state the reasons. If they *sometimes* or *often* read the research, they were asked to state which sources they read from and to what extent the research they read affects their teaching. In the interview, the participants were asked to elaborate on the reasons for the frequency of their reading research.

Table 11 displays how frequently the participants read published research.

Table 11.

The Frequency of Reading Published Research

	1		2		3		4		Mean	SD
	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often			
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
How frequently do you read published research?	1	1.3	30	40.0	42	56.0	2	2.7	2.60	.569

According to Table 11, 56% of the participants stated that they *sometimes* read published research, and the participants who *rarely* read research consisted the 40% of the participants. In addition, 2.7% of them indicated that they *often* read research, and 1.3% of the participants stated that they *never* read research.

Table 12 presents the sources from which the participants stated they read published research, and they could state more than one source.

Table 12.

Sources of the Published Research

Sources	Responses	
	f	%
Web-based sources of research	32	39.0
Books	26	31.7
Academic journals	10	12.2
Professional magazines	5	6.1
Newsletters	5	6.1
Professional journals	4	4.9
Total	82	100.0

Table 12 shows that the most highly-rated sources are *web-based sources of research* (39%). Following this, another frequently rated sources are *books* (31.7%). *Academic journals* (12.2%) are also among the sources that were rated more frequently than the others. The less frequently cited sources are *professional magazines* (6.1%) and *newsletters* (6.1%). Lastly, the least cited sources are *professional journals* (4.9%).

Table 13 shows the themes and codes that emerged from the analysis of interview data concerning which sources and which subjects the participants read.

Table 13.

The research reading sources and subjects

Question	Themes	Codes	f
4a. You stated in the questionnaire that you <i>often</i> / <i>sometimes</i> do research reading.	Sources	1. Online sources	8
		2. Social media	3
		3. Articles	2
		4. Journals	2
		5. Interviews	1
What kind of sources do you usually use and on what subjects do you read?	Subjects	1. Lesson preparation	3
		2. Classroom management	3
		3. Teaching methods and techniques	3
Total			25

The findings were presented under two themes, *sources* and *subjects* in Table 13. Under the theme of *sources*, parallel to the findings obtained from the analysis of the quantitative data (see Table 12), the most frequently cited source is *online sources*. This is followed by *social media*, *articles*, *journals*, and *interviews* as the other sources that the participants stated to read from.

The *online sources* were referred by one of the participants by stating that: “*I usually follow the World Health Organization because of the pandemic. However, I follow the TEFL magazine and its online platform from my field.*”

Another participant also referred the codes *online sources*, *journals* and *social media groups* by saying that: “*The sources I use are generally web-based. If I were to say the most frequent ones, I can say that the British Council, ELTJ, Cambridge, and a few ELT communities on Instagram are the ones I follow.*”

Also, regarding the codes *online sources*, *interviews*, and *social media*, another participant indicated that: “*I try to follow the professors who are mostly on web-based sources and social media... I prefer to read or listen to the interviews rather than sources written in academic language.*”

In reference to the codes of *online sources, journals, and articles*, a participant also said that: *“I used to read a lot when I was an undergraduate, although I haven’t been paying much attention lately. I am still trying to follow the ELT Journal... I usually go online for these readings, but I sometimes look at academic articles about the subjects I need.”*

Regarding the code of *articles*, another participant also expressed that: *“Since language is a dynamic field, I am reading articles to follow up on any new topics that have been studied.”*

Online sources were also stated by another participant by saying that: *“I cannot name a particular journal or publication that I follow constantly or regularly. In general, I scan the subject I need to improve on Google, and read the sources I come across.”*

The second theme is *subjects* on which the participants read. The subjects cited by the participants are *lesson preparation, classroom management, and teaching methods and techniques*.

Referring to the code *lesson preparation*, a participant said that she read about how to prepare a speaking activity or how to give her students daily use patterns. In addition, another one stated that: *“I review all kinds of educational content such as activities or lesson plans. I use the resources to search for the activities that can make students like the lesson and facilitate students’ learning.”* One of them also expressed that:

I mostly research teaching methods and materials. Since I want to make students love the lesson, I especially search for materials such as songs, and speaking activities that will make them love the lesson.

Regarding the codes *classroom management and teaching methods and techniques*, one of the participants stated that: *“In general, my research is internet-based resources related to teaching and classroom management.”* Also, another participant expressed that she is currently trying to follow *classroom management and language teaching methods and techniques* subjects.

In reference to the code *classroom management*, a participant said that: *“I try to read articles and magazines on classroom management to improve myself in this regard because I think this is more important for young learners.”*

Table 14 presents the extent to which reading research affects participant teachers' teaching.

Table 14.

The Effect of Reading Research on Teaching

	f	%
It has no influence on what I do in the classroom	1	1.3
It has a slight influence on what I do in the classroom	3	4.0
It has a moderate influence on what I do in the classroom	18	24.0
It has a fairly strong influence on what I do in the classroom	10	13.3
It has a strong influence on what I do in the classroom	10	13.3
Total	42	56.0

In Table 14, 24% of the participants who read research reported that the research they read has a *moderate* influence on their teaching. In addition, 26.6% of these participants indicated that the research they read has a *fairly strong influence* (13.3%) or it has a *strong influence* on what they do in the classroom (13.3%). On the other hand, 4% of these participants stated that the research they read has a *slight influence* and 1.3% of them reported that reading research has *no* influence on what they do in the classroom.

Table 15 presents the themes and codes that emerged from the interview analysis of how the research that the teachers read affects their teaching.

Table 15.

Teachers' Views of the Effect of Reading Research on Teaching

Question	Themes	Codes	f
5. How do these readings affect your teaching?	Positive effects	1. Contribution to professional development	6
		2. Enhancing teacher motivation	3
		3. Enhancing learner motivation	3
		4. Enhancing teacher professional confidence	2
Total			14

The findings from the interview displayed that the participants stated the *positive effects* of reading research on their teaching. The highly expressed positive effects were *contribution to professional development*, *enhancing teacher motivation* and *enhancing learner motivation*. The less mentioned effect was *enhancing teacher professional confidence*.

Regarding the codes of *contribution to professional development*, *enhancing teacher motivation* and *enhancing learner motivation*, one of the participants said that:

Students generally like the activities they do during the lesson and improve themselves, which motivates me in reading research and self-development. I pay attention to develop myself professionally anyway, but as I said, seeing that the students love the lesson, and I can break their prejudices motivates me more.

In addition, by referring to the codes of *contribution to professional development* and *enhancing teacher professional confidence*, another participant explained that:

I can say that it increases my professional self-confidence. It greatly increases my course adaptation and motivation because I feel equipped. I think my approach to students or towards unexpected situations in the classroom is more appropriate and correct. It makes me happy to have done something about my professional competence."

Referring to the codes of *enhancing teacher professional confidence*, and *enhancing teacher motivation*, another participant also explained that:

I can even say that its effect is huge. First, as a teacher, I feel more confident in the classroom professionally. Other than that, I observed the results of the activities. I have had the chance to compare myself and my students as I read both in terms of learning and teaching. I can understand the profile of my students in a shorter time, based on the research I have read. Most importantly, I have the feeling that I am not alone. Our motivation is to know that you have colleagues with similar concerns or problems.

About the codes *contribution to professional development* and *enhancing learner motivation*, a participant stated that: *“I feel that I am improving myself not using the same method every year. According to what I have observed, the motivation of students’ and the speed of their learning are changing positively.”*

Another participant also indicated *enhancing teacher motivation* that: *“Seeing what I read is working makes me more motivated to improve myself in teaching and researching.”*

In reference to the *contribution to professional development*, a participant also indicated that: *“I can say that it affects my teaching a lot, in a positive way. My state in the first years and my performance in the following years made a huge difference. If I had the opportunity, I would like to continue reading more and regularly.*

Regarding the code of *enhancing learner motivation*, another participant said that: *“I can’t say that I apply everything I read, but I could observe that the techniques I tried motivated the students to participate in the lesson, and they were more willing.”*

In conclusion, the highly stated sources from which the teachers read research are *online sources* such as the *articles* on the academic journals' websites or the published materials and tips for teaching on *social media groups*. In addition, *books and educational magazines* or *journals* are also used to follow the published articles. These sources are used for searching materials and activities for the *lesson preparation*, *learning about teaching methods and techniques*, and *classroom management*. Besides, the participants stated that the research they read has *a positive effect* on their teaching in terms of

contributing to their *professional development* and *enhancing their professional confidence, enhancing teacher and learner motivation*.

The findings which refer to the question as to the reasons that the participant teachers stated for not reading research are presented in Table 16 (the findings obtained from the questionnaire) and Table 17 (the findings acquired from the interviews).

Table 16 displays participants' reasons for not doing research, and the participants can state more than one reason.

Table 16.

The Reasons for not Reading Research

	Responses	
	f	%
I do not have time	20	46.5
Published research does not give me practical advice for the classroom	9	20.9
I am not interested in research	8	18.6
I do not have access to books and journals	5	11.6
I find published research hard to understand	1	2.3
Total	43	100.0

According to Table 16, the highly-rated reason is *not having time* (46.5%). Following this, the reason that *published research doesn't give practical advice for the classroom* (20.9%) is another reason that was most frequently cited. While *not being interested in research* was cited for eight times (18.6), *not having access to books and journals* is another reason that was cited less (11.6). The reason that was rated least frequently (2.3%) is *finding published research hard to understand*.

In Table 17, the interview analysis of why teachers do not read research is presented.

Table 17.

Teachers' Views as to the Reasons for not Reading Research

Question	Themes	Codes	f
4b. You stated in the questionnaire that you <i>rarely/ never</i> do research reading. What are your reasons for <i>not reading/ rarely</i> reading research?	Institutional factors	1. Lack of time	5
		2. Having an administrative duty	1
	Personal factors	1. Lack of motivation	1
Total			7

Table 17 illustrates that the most frequently cited theme for not reading research is related to the *institutional factors, lack of time and having an administrative duty*. The other theme is related to the *personal factors, namely lack of motivation*.

Regarding the code *lack of time and having an administrative duty*, one of the participants stated that: *“Since I am also an administrator at my school, even though I have access, I do not have the opportunity to read or research in detail due to lack of time.”*

Referring to the code *lack of time*, another participant also said that: *“I do not have time to sit down and read the research done in my field in a detailed way.”*

In reference to the codes of *lack of time and lack of motivation*, a participant explained that:

If the family is disinterested or, worse, has a negative attitude, it becomes difficult to motivate the students or make these students love the lesson. This also affects the motivation of the teacher. As I mentioned, the conditions at the school where I work, the attitudes of my students and their parents make me lose myself in researching activities and preparing materials instead of reading research, and I don't have much time to deal with reading research.

In summary, the most frequently stated reason for not reading research or rarely reading research is *lack of time*. Another highly stated reason was that *research does not give any practical advice for the classroom*. At the same time, some of the participants also stated that *they were not interested in research*. *Not having access to the sources* is another factor that reduces the frequency of the participants' reading research. Besides, *being an administrator* at school where they work and *lack of motivation* also play a role on the frequency of the teachers' reading research.

4.5. What is the frequency of teachers doing research?

In section VI of the questionnaire, participants were asked to state how frequently they do research. The participants who claimed to *sometimes* or *often* do research were asked to state their reasons for doing research in the follow-up part of this section, and those who stated that they *never* or *rarely* do research were asked to state their reasons for not doing research. In the interview session, the participants who do research were asked to explain their reasons and the research they do, while those who do not do research elaborated on their reasons.

In Table 18, the frequency of the participants' doing research is presented.

Table 18.

The Frequency of Doing Research

	1		2		3		4		Mean	SD
	Never		Rarely		Sometimes		Often			
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%		
How frequently do you do research?	11	14.7	12	16	37	49.3	13	17.3	2.71	0.935

According to Table 18, 49.3% of the participants claimed that they *sometimes* do research, and 17.3% stated that they *often* do research. The participants who said they *never* do research consisted of 14.7% of the participants, and 16% stated that they *rarely* do research.

4.5.1. What are the stated reasons if they conduct research?

Table 19 presents the findings as to why the participants do research. The participants could state more than one reason.

Table 19.

The Reasons for Doing Research

	Responses	
	f	%
To solve problems in my teaching	33	24.3
Because it is good for my professional development	32	23.5
To find better ways of teaching	26	19.1
Because it will help me get a promotion	21	15.4
Because my employer expects me to	10	7.4
Because I enjoy it	6	4.4
Because other teachers can learn from the findings of my work	4	2.9
To contribute to the improvement of the school generally	4	2.9
Total	136	100

According to Table 19, the most frequently cited reason for doing research is *solving the problems in teaching* (24.3%), and *professional development* (23.5%) is another reason that was frequently cited. Additionally, *finding better ways of teaching* (19.1%) is also among the reasons that was frequently cited. Following these, another reason that was cited more frequently is that *the research helps to get promotion* (15.4%). Similarly, *employer's expectation* also has a high rate of citation (7.4%). On the other hand, *enjoying doing research* was also rated less frequently than the other reasons while the least rated reasons are that *other teachers can learn from the findings* (2.9%) and *the research contribute to the improvement of the school* (2.9%).

In Table 20, the interview findings of the participants' reasons for doing research and the type of research they do are illustrated.

Table 20.

Teachers' Views About the Nature of Research They Do and Reasons for Doing Research

Question	Themes	Codes	f
6a. Please tell me the nature of research you do and the reasons for doing research	Reasons	1. Professional development	4
		2. Improving student learning	3
		3. Improving the institution	1
		4. Sharing experience	1
		5. Receiving appreciation from school management	1
	Nature of research	1. Observation	5
		2. Taking field notes	2
		3. Following articles	1
		4. Reflection in action	1
Total			17

In Table 20, the findings of the interviews are presented under the themes of *reasons* and *nature of research*. Under the theme of *reasons*, in parallel to the findings summarized in Table 19, the most frequently stated reasons are *professional development*, and *improving student learning*. The other stated reasons for doing research are *improving the institution*, *sharing experience*, and *receiving appreciation from school management*.

In reference to the codes of *professional development*, *improving student learning* and *receiving appreciation from management*, one of the participants said that:

...my biggest motivation source is my professional development and the students' attitudes towards the course and me, and students' success. Apart from that, I already said that the management supports it. When we apply to projects such as Erasmus and TÜBİTAK, these are also appreciated by the administration. I can say that this is another indirect source of motivation for me.

Regarding the codes of *professional development, improving student learning, and improving the institution*, another participant explained that:

I usually do it to improve the quality of education...I mean, I think it is beneficial for me in every aspect of my profession, it also indirectly contributes to my student's development and the school I work.

The codes of *improving student learning and sharing experience* were referred by a participant by expressing that:

I'm doing it because not all students are at the same level, you know. To involve these students in the lesson, I make use of the readings I have done and try new methods in the classroom. Then I share the feedback especially with the classroom teachers, so that we can exchange ideas with each other about the development of the students.

Under the theme of *nature of research*, the highly mentioned code was *observation*. The participants also frequently stated that they were *taking field notes* during their lessons. The other codes that were displayed as doing research were *following articles* and *doing reflection in action*.

In terms of the codes of *observation* and *taking field notes*, one of the participants elaborated on the research she does by saying that:

I have a notebook where I take notes about them when I try the activities I found or the tips I read in the classroom. I note down the subject, what did I do and what did I change, what was the response of the students and in which class. I evaluate and observe the students' reactions and the pace of the lesson. I use these notes for the next year or semester while planning my lessons. There are similar profiles in terms of class and students anyway. For example, I check the exam results of the students if I tried a new technique. If it counts as research, these are the things I do. But I've never done anything like writing an article or doing a survey and analyzing it.

Referring to the code of *observation*, a participant said that: “*The research I do is mostly on classroom observation and education quality.*” Another participant also stated that: “*...what I mean by doing research is researching activities as I mentioned, trying*

what I learned in the classroom, and observing how they affect the students. Frankly, I haven't done anything scientifically.”

In relation to the code of *observation*, another participant also indicated that: *“In fact, it was not very possible due to the pandemic process, but I searched the visuals and digital education materials more, and I had the opportunity to observe the reactions of my students in this regard.”*

Regarding the codes of *observation*, *taking field notes*, and *reflection in action*, one of the participants expressed that:

Actually, I do research on practice rather than theory. For example, in my 2nd-grade classes, I try how I can embody abstract subjects and how I can turn them into games. I always search this since teaching is mostly done through games in primary school. I attend seminars and teacher meetings, take notes, and organize them, but unfortunately, it doesn't work in every class. I have a notebook that I give feedback to myself in these cases.

Referring to the code of *following articles*, another participant said that: *“Well, I do, but I don't know if we can put it in the scientific research category. I still try to follow the articles of my university professors.”*

In conclusion, the most frequently mentioned reasons for doing research were related to *professional development* and *solving problems in teaching*, such as *improving student learning or reflecting in teaching*. Most of the participants also expressed that *getting promoted*, *the management's expectation* or *receiving appreciation from school management* are the other reasons besides *enjoying doing research*. In addition to this, the participants also stated that they do research to *improve the institution they work at*. Another reason for doing research was *sharing experience* with the aim of *other teachers can learn from the work*. On the other hand, the nature of research that the participants explained were mostly related to the *observation* of their teaching practice and *taking field notes* for the process of student learning; however, some of the participants also mentioned the lack of scientific aspects of research in nature of research they do.

4.5.2. What are the stated reasons if they do not conduct research?

Table 21 illustrates the reasons for the participants who do not do research, and the participants could state more than one reason.

Table 21.

The Reasons for not Doing Research

Reasons	Responses	
	f	%
I do not have time to do research	10	26.3
I am not interested in doing research	10	26.3
My job is to teach not to do research	5	13.1
I do not know about research methods	4	10.5
Most of my colleagues do not do research	4	10.5
The learners would not cooperate if I did research in class	3	7.8
I need someone to advise me, but no one is available	2	5.2
My employer discourages it	-	-
I do not have access to the book and journals I need	-	-
Total	38	100

According to Table 21, the most frequently cited reasons for not doing research are *not having time* (26.3%) and *not being interested in doing research* (26.3%). It was also frequently reported that they do not do research because *their job is to teach, not to do research* (13.1%). Moreover, *not knowing about research methods* and *not doing research because most of their colleagues do not do research* are the reasons that have the same frequency (10.5%). Another reason which was stated less frequently than the others is that *learners would not cooperate if the teachers did research in class* (7.8%). Also, the least frequently rated reason is to *need someone to advise, but no one is available* (5.2%). However, *not doing research because of discouraging employers or not*

having access to the books and journals they need were not cited as a reason for not doing research by any of the participants.

Table 22 displays the themes and codes that emerged from the interview analysis of the responses given to the interview question regarding why participants do not conduct research.

Table 22.

Teachers' Views as to the Reasons for not Doing Research

Question	Themes	Codes	f
6b. What are the reasons for not doing research?	Personal reasons	1. Lack of time	2
		2. Lack of background knowledge	1
		3. Lack of interest	1
	Institutional reasons	1. Heavy workload	1
		2. Having an administrative duty	1
Total			6

The participants' reasons for not doing research were classified under the themes of *personal reasons* and *institutional reasons*. Under the theme of *personal reasons*, similar to the findings of the quantitative data (see Table 21), the reasons for not doing research were stated as *lack of time*, *lack of background knowledge* or *lack of interest*. The stated *institutional reasons* were *heavy workload* and *having an administrative duty*.

In reference to the codes *lack of time*, *heavy workload* and *having an administrative duty*, one of the participants stated that: “As I said, being the assistant principal takes a lot of time, I have time problem, and I do not have the opportunity to do research because I attend classes less than usual. But of course, I miss doing something about it in class.”

Regarding the codes *lack of time* and *lack of background knowledge*, another participant said that:

I think that I can research after reviewing the literature and doing some studies for practice. Being able to manage my class according to my observation and reading research does not seem acceptable as research, in my opinion, when I think of research, I think of the kind of articles we read at the undergraduate level. Even if I do research, I can say that we don't have time to sit down and write during the semester.”

Referring to the code of *lack of interest*, one of the participants explained that: “...*I can say that I don't think my field is very interesting anymore. I don't think there are always new things to discover.*”

In summary, the questionnaire and the findings of the interviews showed that the highlighted reason for not doing research is *lack of time*. Another reason that was frequently indicated is *not being interested in doing research*. On the other hand, they stated that *a teacher's job is to teach, not to do research*, this is also a factor that affects the participants' not doing research. In addition to these, the participants frequently mentioned *the lack of research knowledge* to do research. Relatively, *the need for someone who could advise about research* also reduces the frequency of doing research. In addition, *having colleagues who do not conduct research* is another factor that plays a role in participants' not doing research.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1. Introduction

This chapter interprets the findings of this study under the titles of the four research questions that were set out at the beginning.

1. What are the characteristics of research according to primary school EFL teachers?
2. What are the teachers' perceptions of their institutional research culture?
3. What is the frequency of teachers' reading published research?
 - a. If they do not, what are the stated reasons?
4. What is the frequency of teachers' doing research?
 - a. What are the stated reasons if they conduct research?
 - b. What are the stated reasons if they do not conduct research?

The conclusion, implications and limitations of the study are also presented in this chapter.

5.2. The Discussion of the Findings Regarding Research Questions

The study aimed to explore the primary school EFL teachers' research perceptions and level of engagement in the existing research resources and their level of engagement in conducting research. The core of this aim was that classrooms are considered the first place to focus on improving language teaching and the learning process (Allwright, 1983). Further, even if the theory of TR seems straightforward, its practice needs to be observed in an actual field of work study (Block, 2000).

5.2.1. What are the characteristics of research according to primary school EFL teachers?

The first question of this study sought to understand the primary school EFL teachers' research perception. Teachers' understanding of research was examined in detail through the research scenarios and the questions related to the characteristics of

good research. However, the findings of all sections of the questionnaire and the interview were considered while interpreting the teachers' perceptions of the research.

The findings showed that classroom-related aspects that improve teaching practice, like solving problems or applying to the classroom environment, are the main characteristics that the participant EFL teachers expect good research to have, even though the scientific features of research are also given importance. For instance, the observations done by the teacher, trying new activities in the classroom while noting down the students' reactions, and taking notes about the teaching process or their self-performances were considered and valued as research by most of the participants. These findings align with Allwright (1983) who explained that the literature focused on the classrooms intending to answer what makes teaching good in the 19s. ER became more problem-centered as research was based on solving the teachers' problems that were faced during their teaching. Moreover, the teachers' descriptions of good research mostly centered on the ones that were carried out using practice-based tools, especially where they could record classroom events by taking notes, recording videos or observing and analyzing these tracks after the classroom. This finding paralleled with Nunan (1989), who expressed the benefits of TR. However, these findings also support Crookes (1993), who criticized the language of TR as one that has a narrow scope and lacks connection to the social or political agenda, since the findings in this study showed that the classroom is the main focus in language teacher research.

On the other hand, it was revealed that the scientific aspects of research such as applicability, being published, reliability, and validity are the main concerns of the teachers besides the statistics, objectivity, testing hypotheses, variable samples, and generalizability. These findings are consistent with Borg (2009), who also explained the teachers' research perception. However, while 'being published' and 'generalizability' were revealed as the less important aspects of the research in Borg's (2009) study, the findings of this study indicated that being published and generalizability are important for the Turkish primary school EFL teachers. Another study that these findings corroborate with is Banegas (2018), who studied with language teachers in Argentina. In accordance with the findings in his study, being systematic, publishing findings, objectivity, applicability in the classroom, and generalizability were also accepted as the characteristics of good academic research by Turkish primary school EFL teachers. Moreover, the findings of Şahin and Arcagök (2013), who carried out their study with the participation of Turkish primary school teachers, have similarities with the findings

of this study. Applicability in the classroom and being published were also considered the needed features of good research in both studies.

Overall, these findings illustrate that Turkish primary school EFL teachers' views of good research seem to be parallel to the claim made by Carter and Halsall (1998). They indicated that TR should be conducted on teaching practice, yet the data should be collected and analyzed systematically with a particular aim to clarify.

5.2.2. What are the teachers' perceptions of their institutional research culture?

The second research question in the study aimed to investigate the Turkish primary school EFL teachers' thoughts of institutional research culture at the school where they work. The relevant research claims that the collaboration and contribution of colleagues and management are among the critical things that empower TR (e.g., Burns, 1999). Drawing on this, the role of the research culture in the institution determines the level of teachers' research engagement; thus, it entailed the investigation of teachers' views of institutional research culture. The findings illustrated that the institutions mainly have a positive attitude toward research engagement. They encourage research engagement and provide online or pressed sources for reading research, and colleagues are also reported as collaborative and engaged in research. This finding is also supported by Williams and Coles (2007) who argued that accessibility to the sources, teachers' time, and literacy level were important factors that lead teachers to be engaged in research, but this must be coupled with a good attitude towards research.

Nevertheless, even if these were stated less frequently by the participant teachers, it was found that some institutions were reported as inactive, not engaged with research and not encouraging the teachers for the research engagement. As a matter of fact, Anwaruddin and Pervin (2013) reported that lack of institutional support and not having an encouraging attitude in the institution were the most profound factors which affected teachers' research engagement. Similarly, Borg and Liu (2013) found out that the institutional support given to the teachers for research engagement were inconsistent, and this inconsistency decreases the teachers' level of engagement with research. Colleagues with negative attitudes towards research engagement are also another factor that demotivates the teachers from engaging with research.

To conclude, the findings reported here suggest that the support of management and colleagues in terms of research engagement play a determining role in the motivation

and the level of research engagement for the primary school EFL teachers. Consistent with the literature, while the institutions' positive attitude towards research may motivate the teachers to engage with the research, the negative or neutral attitude may reduce teachers' research engagement over time. In addition, Johanningmeier and Richardson (2008) reported that TR impacts teaching in learning, the nature of learning, the economic profits of schooling, the schools' role in improving countries' productivity, and the effect of the school in economic developments. Therefore, it can be inferred that the quality of teaching practice at an institution depends on the institution's attitudes towards research since the teachers' understanding of research is reported as mostly related to enhancing the teaching practice.

5.2.3. What is the frequency of teachers' reading published research?

The study specifically questioned the participants on their engagement in published research and asked them to state their reasons and concerns. The findings showed that the majority of primary school EFL teachers claimed to *often* read the research. Most of the read sources include web-based sources, books and academic journals. Besides, the teachers follow web-based sources such as social media groups, broadcasts, or interviews because they find the language of these sources non-technical and easy, which corroborates the findings of Mehrani's (2015) study. However, the interview findings revealed that teachers were confused about published research and lesson materials. The teachers mostly stated that they search for the lesson materials like songs, games and activities besides reading about classroom management and teaching methods and techniques. These findings seem to reflect those of Borg (2007) who claimed that the teachers read research as long as it provides ideas for classroom practice. On the other hand, some of the teachers who read published research indicated that sometimes they search for articles related to the problems that they face during teaching in the classroom, and they mostly stated such professional reasons as improving their classroom management skills, and improving their teaching methods for young learners. These findings support the results of the study by Borg and Liu (2013) who argued that research engagement is characterized by the search done by the teachers for immediate and direct positive impacts on their classroom practices.

The level of influence of these readings on the teaching practice was generally reported as *moderate*, *fairly strong* or *strong*. Furthermore, the findings reveal that

reading research affects the teaching process by contributing to the teachers' professional development, enhancing teacher and learner motivation, and enhancing professional confidence. It was reported that the teachers feel prepared and competent in their profession as they read the research, and this feeling helps them get motivated to be engaged in research. In line with the literature, the instructors from all over the world in Borg's paper (2009) shared the same concerns that were summarized as personal, pedagogical, or professional reasons for doing these searches. Besides, he stated in his study (2007) that teachers' reading research is the level of relationship between the evidence of published research or unpublished research, such as broadcasts, interviews, or social media groups, and its' relation to the classroom practice, as evidenced by the views of teachers in this study.

The study provided evidence indicating the reasons that the participant teachers stated for not reading research. The teachers who *never* or *rarely* read published research consisted nearly half of the participants. Although it was reported that the institutions provide the time for research engagement, the most stated reason for not reading research was lack of time because of the workload. This finding is in accordance with the previous studies (e.g., Alhassan & Ali, 2020; Banegas, 2018; Borg, 2009; Dikilitas & Wyatt, 2018; Şahin & Arcagök, 2013). The finding that the teachers *rarely* or *never* read research since they do not have access to the books and journals for reading research is consistent with the findings reported on by Banegas (2018), and Alhassan and Ali (2020). These researchers concluded that the teachers in their study claimed that they did not have the opportunity to access published research. These findings also confirm the study of Williams and Coles (2007) who reported that teachers' level of reading research depends on their time and accessibility to the sources. Another finding reveals that some of the teachers who do not read published research also reported that they are not able to find any practical advice for the classroom in the sources from which they read research, thus they lose interest in reading research, a finding that is in line with that was reported by Alhassan and Ali (2020). Another reason that emerged from the interviews was the lack of motivation. Contrasting to the literature, some of the teachers tend to lose interest and motivation towards their field, and as a result, they are less motivated to read the research.

5.2.4. What is the frequency of teachers doing research?

The frequency of teachers doing research was investigated in the questionnaire, and the teachers were asked to explain the reasons for their doing or not doing research in the interview. The findings reveal that more than half of the participants *sometimes* or *often* do research, and the teachers who *never* or *rarely* conduct research consisted less than half of the participants. Those who *rarely* do research were more than the ones who *never* do research.

5.2.4.1. What are the stated reasons if they conduct research?

Concerning the reasons for doing research, the findings indicated that professional development, solving the problems in teaching and finding better ways of teaching were the motivation for teachers in doing research. This evidence is in parallel with that was reported by some other researchers (e.g., Banegas, 2018; Borg, 2009; Dikilitaş & Wyatt, 2018; Mehrani, 2015). The other motivation of teachers in doing research was getting a promotion which was also considered as a determiner for teachers' doing research in the study of Borg and Liu (2013), and Köksal and Razi (2011), but meeting the expectations of their employer was not reported much in this study as a motivating factor for doing research, when compared to the other studies in the literature (Banegas, 2018; Borg, 2009; Borg & Liu, 2013; Dikilitaş & Wyatt, 2018; Şahin & Arcagök, 2013). There is evidence, in line with Borg's study (2009), suggesting that the teachers have a misconception about conducting research. Observations, trying new techniques and materials, and taking notes about their performances were the acts that were done and considered research by the participants. Even if these are very important tools in carrying out research and are merely tools, they are not considered to constitute full-blown research in scientific sense. Moreover, some participants were aware that these acts were not related to doing research. They believed it was necessary to convert their notes into an article and back it up by reviewing other written material and publishing the results. However, Allwright (1997) defended this point of view by arguing that TR should not be compared to quality academic research if it is aimed to encourage doing research.

5.2.4.2. What are the stated reasons if they do not conduct research?

In accordance with the previous studies (Alhassan & Ali, 2020; Allison & Carey, 2007; Banegas, 2018; Borg, 2009; Dikilitaş & Wyatt, 2018; Şahin & Arcagök, 2013), it

was found that lack of time because of the workload and not being interested in research are the main factors that prevent teachers from doing research. Another finding also shows that teachers do not have any concerns about doing research since they think it is not a part of their job. Supporting that, Banegas (2018) expressed that teachers believe the research can be conducted by university-based professionals rather than teachers. Apart from that, Gao and Chow (2011) and Borg (2009) argued that teachers do not conduct research because of not knowing how to do it. The lack of academic writing training and methodological knowledge has been a big impediment to the teacher-researchers. The picture is almost the same in this study as some teachers stated that they lose their motivation for doing research because of not having an advisor around who would give academic guidance. Supporting the findings as to the teachers' views about institutional attitude towards research, there is evidence showing that having colleagues who do not conduct research is also a factor that reduces the teachers' level of willingness to do research. In accordance with Banegas (2018) and Borg (2007, 2009), the reason for not doing research is also about the personal factors. It was found out in this study that losing their interest in their field, either relevant to the other reasons or not, reduces the frequency of teachers' doing research.

5.3. Implications

According to Kincheloe (2003), TR provides teachers with a better understanding of their teaching, increases the quality of teaching, and helps teachers understand the learners' learning process. Also, being in the research setting allows teachers to observe the research results they or their colleagues do. Drawing on this and considering the findings of this study, the teachers' research engagement level should be increased. In line with the findings, the first step would be adjusting the teacher training programs in a way that makes room in the curriculum for ELT student-teachers to have various opportunities to get involved in research projects in the role of a student-teacher-researcher. This may help student-teachers feel more confident and knowledgeable about reading or doing research. The stated reasons for being engaged or not being engaged in research have important implications for developing in-service training programs to help build school resources to benefit from, how to use the published research evidence, and how to conduct research. Considering the lack of confidence and guidance that prevent teachers from being engaged in research, a project can be planned to enable teachers to reach academic

researchers. This may also support increasing the scientific value of TR, which is blamed for its poor quality (Hargreaves, 1996).

Secondly, the role of institutional culture in determining the perceptions and level of engagement of research is highlighted by the literature (Borg, 2007, 2009; Gao & Chow, 2011). The findings regarding the participant primary school EFL teachers' opinions about the institutional research culture suggest the need for similar in-service training provisions such as seminars managed by the schools in collaboration with the academic community at universities. Designing and implementing small scale action-research projects could be beneficial for the teachers to take their early steps in enhancing their awareness of what scientific research means and how to do it. The promotions or the kinds of appraises should be considered and planned at schools to motivate teachers for being research engaged. Another aspect of motivation could be peer support or other teachers' doing research. Research collaboration among the teachers from different subject fields at schools can be promoted to produce interdisciplinary research outputs, which could result in fostering an institutional culture with positive attitudes towards research.

To reiterate, heavy workload and lack of time were the most frequently cited reasons for the participant teachers for not doing research. These findings should draw our attention to eliminating or reducing the effect of this factor hindering TR. The policy makers and curriculum designers and school management in particular should pay special attention to the design EFL teaching programs so that the EFL teachers can have spare time for research engagement.

5.4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the support of TR engagement has been on the scope of literature for a long time because the general claim is that teaching and ER have an indispensable relation. The participating primary school EFL teachers are aware of this relationship and are trying to be engaged in the research process in general. While the scientific inquiries of academic research are accepted as proper research, the research attempts are based on professional activities and concerns like improving the teaching quality, self-assessment, and professional development. These findings support the idea that searching for techniques and materials to enhance teaching and motivate students to learn English is considered as conducting research by most teachers. Contradicting to this finding, Zeichner (2007) stated that the problems in the educational context cannot

be resolved through immediate searches and solutions. In line with this criticism in the literature, the findings support the idea that teachers' research lacks the scientific characteristics of research like reliability and validity, variable methods of data collection, systematic data analysis, and publishing consideration. The core aim of supporting language teachers' engagement in research is reported as a beneficial tool to challenge and update the traditional approaches and bridge the gap between academic research evidence and classroom practice to empower classroom practice, institutional culture, and educational policy. The extent of being engaged in the research depends on the concepts like; institutional factors, teacher-related factors, and educational policy-related factors. In similar studies (e.g., Borg, 2009; Borg & Liu, 2013; Yuan et al., 2016), getting a promotion or employer pressure is displayed as the highlighted reasons for research engagement. Still, this study presented that the high-ranked concerns are professional development, finding better teaching methods and solving problems in the teaching process that is related to all of the above-mentioned concerns. The institutional and self-related factors seem appropriate for the research engagement, but the teachers' workload and the reluctant colleagues decrease the level of engagement (Borg, 2007). In the case of primary school EFL teachers, time and workload stand out among the other reasons for not being engaged in research. Their research engagement needs to be focused on since their job requires more effort than the other teachers of higher levels (Banegas, 2018), and their contributions deserve more recognition (Gao & Chow, 2011). The findings also suggest that the consistency between the published research and teaching practice is among the other factors that can directly affect teachers' reading or motivation for doing research. Considering all of the findings, the study provided evidence for primary school EFL teachers' research views, the research culture in primary schools, and the reasons for the level of research engagement.

5.5. Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

This study provided important implications for the policy makers to encourage TR, specifically in primary school EFL contexts, yet it is not without limitations. If all participants had been interviewed or even more than this number, it may have provided more detailed explanations of the questionnaire findings. A broader sample would also be more effective in understanding the investigated questions and reaching more sound conclusions. The data collection tools were the adapted questionnaire of Borg (2009)

which was carried out online via Google forms due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the semi-structured interviews conducted through Skype for the same reason. Conducting face-to-face interviews could have lasted longer, and more detailed answers might have been obtained. In addition to the questionnaire and interviews, different data collection tools might be used to investigate primary school EFL teachers' perceptions and research engagement levels.

Further studies may also examine whether there is any relationship between the professional backgrounds of teachers and their perceptions or level of research engagement. Additionally, fewer studies focus on primary school EFL teachers even if the age of learning English has been taken down to primary school second graders for nearly seven years.

The study was conducted in the urban state schools, but there is abundant room for the teachers who works in rural areas. A comparison between the teachers in urban and rural schools might be made, or only rural schools can be considered for further research.

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