

English Language Teaching Articles Published in the TR Indexed Journals: A Systematic Analysis from 2020 to Present

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Abstract

With the increasing volume of literature on English Language Teaching (ELT) globally, Türkiye is actively working to enhance its language teaching practices. Therefore, a significant number of studies have focused on this issue by examining various ELT contexts. To shed light on the recent ELT research trends in education faculty journals, this exploratory descriptive research provided an analysis of studies conducted in the field of ELT in Türkiye. By filtering the education faculty journals of Turkish universities indexed by the TR Index published between 2020 and 2023, the analysis listed 23 journals and 122 ELT studies they published. The articles were analyzed using document analysis, and qualitative content analysis was employed to determine the type of research, keyword trends, methodology, sample features, data collection tools, and language used in the articles. The results shed light on current publication trends in the field and highlighted possible research gaps for future studies.

Keywords: education faculty journals, English language teaching, systematic analysis

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Introduction

The Higher Education Council (HEC) influences Türkiye's scholarly landscape significantly, impacting scholars across all disciplines. In that sense, the promotion criteria to be an associate professor developed by the HEC drive Türkiye-based researchers to publish in international journals while also requiring a minimum of two articles indexed in the Turkish Academic Network and Information Centre (ULAKBİM) (Ortaçtepe Hart & Aydın, 2023). The TR Index (formerly known as National Databases-NDs until the end of 2013) was developed by ULAKBİM in accordance with international standards. Its purpose is to ensure researchers' access to national and scientific content in electronic format, reflecting one of ULAKBİM's primary missions of developing products that showcase Türkiye's scientific knowledge accumulation. The TR Index consists of journals in the fields of Natural Sciences and Social Sciences, including basic sciences, health sciences, and social sciences.

The national scientific journals that make up the scope of the TR Index are selected by committees consisting of ULAKBİM TR Index experts and experts/academics in relevant subject areas based on Journal Evaluation Criteria. Turkish scholars from various fields are expected to publish in any of these journals in the TR Index. However, in the last few years, it was observed that the pressure to publish ULAKBİM-indexed articles has had unintended consequences on Turkish scholars (Ortaçtepe Hart & Aydın, 2023). It has led to longer turnaround times for Türkiye-based journals, with some taking up to two years to complete peer review processes and others resorting to charging manuscript submission fees.

According to the statistics shared by the HEC for the academic year 2021-2022, there are currently 97 active education faculties in Türkiye. Approximately 17% of these faculties belong to foundation universities (YÖK Statistics, 2022). With this increasing number of education faculties, the number of academic journals they publish has risen in the few last years as well. In the same vein, as an important component of education faculties, English language teaching (ELT) departments started to produce a great deal of research and publish them in these journals. Like other fields, HEC shaped all publication policies in the field of ELT in Turkish universities, too. Regarding this publication trend, schools of foreign languages, ELT departments, English/American language and

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literature departments, linguistics departments, and translation and interpretation departments started to contribute to ELT-related studies in Türkiye (Alptekin & Tatar, 2011).

What is more, the investigation of ELT research trends utilized in the published articles has also been the focus of some studies. Both national (Alptekin & Tatar, 2011; Aydınli & Ortaçtepe, 2018) and international researchers (Ker et al., 2013; Lazaraton, 2005; Richards, 2009) carried out analyses to disseminate the knowledge of current ELT research trends to all researchers in the field. For instance, Lazaraton (2005), in her examination of four applied linguistics journals over a seven-year period, pointed out the perceived deficiency among professionals in their ability to conduct empirical research and discovered that nearly 90% of the published articles relied on quantitative methodologies. Moreover, Richards (2009) emphasized the challenges faced in qualitative research in ELT since 2000. He identified difficulties in implementing methods like interviews as well as researchers' potential knowledge gaps.

Dating back to the timeline of the analyses of ELT research trends in Türkiye, firstly, Alptekin and Tatar (2011) investigated the research conducted in Türkiye between 2005 and 2009 in the field of applied linguistics and foreign language education by including articles, presentations, and dissertations into their analysis with the aim of depicting the history of ELT in Türkiye. They divided the research into categories of foreign language teaching and teachers, foreign language learning and learners, foreign language teacher education, listening and speaking, reading and writing, measurement and evaluation, and language and culture. They revealed that academics tend to avoid publishing in local journals for several reasons, such as promotional and financial incentives tied to refereed and indexed international journals as well as the higher status of international journals compared to those published locally at that time.

Building on Alptekin and Tatar's (2011) state-of-art article, Aydınli and Ortaçtepe (2018) examined around 140 articles published in locally accessible peer-reviewed academic journals by Turkish scholars. They analyzed the articles through thematic analysis and detected English language learning and language learners, ELT and language teachers, and in-service and pre-service teacher education/professional development as the main categories. Regarding the methodology of the reviewed studies, they found that surveys, interviews, and open-ended forms were common. However, the absence of genuine mixed-methods research was their observation in the reviewed studies; therefore, mixed-methods remained an underdeveloped area in the Turkish ELT academia. They also declared that due to the rigorous promotion criteria set by the HEC, Turkish academics must publish extensively, often prioritizing quantity over quality to meet the requirements for advancement.

In their follow-up systematic review, Ortaçtepe Hart and Aydınli (2023) reviewed over 170 articles published in locally accessible online peer-reviewed academic journals in Türkiye between the years of 2016 and 2022. They explored a diverse range of current topics in applied linguistics and foreign language education in Türkiye and organized them into three primary domains: language acquisition and learners, classroom dynamics and teaching methods, and teacher training and professional growth. Their previous findings were rediscovered in this review, too. To illustrate, while several studies utilized triangulation by gathering data through various methods such as surveys and subsequent interviews, there was limited utilization of simultaneous mixed-methods designs. Besides, topics like instructional technologies were popular among the researchers.

Another review of ELT studies published between 2005 and 2015 in the Turkish context was performed by Yağız et al., (2016) by examining national and international journals. They indicated that Turkish researchers primarily focused on language learning and teaching in the field of ELT. They also employed quantitative research methods, especially descriptive tools and analysis techniques. Likert-type questionnaires were frequently employed in the studies and the samples were typically comprised of undergraduate students and teachers. On the other hand, it was observed that qualitative and mixed-methods studies were not carried out. For the qualitative methods, interviews were the mostly preferred tools. The key themes identified were language learning/acquisition, language teaching, and teacher education, yet technological developments in ELT could not find a place in these studies. They also revealed that researchers were not eager to perform complex research methodologies and non-experimental research.

Taking all these endeavors into account, it is obvious that systematic reviews in language education support critical analysis by assessing the quality and rigor of present studies, making it easier for practitioners to rely on findings with strong evidence. Analyzing data collection tools, sample characteristics, and methodological trends helps refine research practices and contribute to the advancement of language teaching; therefore, they are invaluable for synthesizing research findings, fostering methodological improvements, and guiding policy and practice. In that sense, it is of utmost importance to present systematic information about the current ELT research

trends in the education faculty journals in Türkiye. As summarizing multiple studies is valuable for researchers, offering a comprehensive view of the field posits importance (Falkingham & Reeves, 1998). In that wake, analysis of scientific publications aids in understanding the historical development and present state of a research area, which provides valuable insights to researchers (Chang et al., 2010).

With this in mind, the objective of this research is to investigate research trends of English language teaching studies published in the education faculties' journals in Türkiye indexed by the TR Index from 2020 to 2023. Unlike the state-of-the-art reviews conducted by Ortaçtepe Hart and Aydınli (2023) or Alptekin and Tatar (2011), this study adopted a descriptive exploratory research approach to depict the current state of ELT research in the selected journals, thereby providing a foundation for future studies. To achieve this goal, the study focused on how articles are related to ELT distributed in the TR Index in terms of:

- a. Journals of publication,
- b. The distribution of issues, volumes, and indexes by journals,
- c. Type of research,
- d. Keyword trends,
- e. Methodology,
- f. Sample features,
- g. Data collection tools,
- h. Language of the articles?

Methodology

Research Design

The current study adopted an exploratory descriptive research design as it aimed to present a holistic view of ELT research published in the journals of education faculties in Türkiye. By using a document analysis method which aims to examine written materials, usually adhering to predetermined criteria or guidelines to maintain consistency and comprehensiveness in evaluation (Bowen, 2009), it indicates progress and transformation. Additionally, document analysis can be used without requiring any observation or interviews with or without other data collection tools (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2011).

Inclusion Criteria

Prior to the analysis, Jesson et al.'s (2011) six essential steps for conducting a systematic review were adopted in this study. (1) Establishing a protocol detailing the scope, methodology, and criteria for inclusion and exclusion, (2) performing a thorough search and selecting studies that align with the criteria set in the protocol, (3) evaluating studies for quality, (4) extracting data according to predefined criteria, (5) synthesizing the findings and (6) compiling a comprehensive report were the steps followed.

This research specifically targeted the TR Index in Türkiye. Therefore, journals indexed in the TR Index, which is an index consisting of journals selected according to internationally recognized journal evaluation criteria by committees of subject matter experts and academics, were included in the search. Also, for journal selection, all journals based on “educational faculties of Turkish universities” were included in the search. Even though the field of some other journals was education, they were not included in the analysis as this systematic review aimed at specifically journals of education faculties. Next, this systematic review included the volumes of the journals from the years 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. The period from 2020 to 2023 was selected to capture recent trends in English language teaching studies, which provided an up-to-date view of research focus areas, methodologies, and publication patterns in the field, reflecting any shifts. By focusing on this recent period, the study aimed to offer insights into the current priorities and emerging trends within ELT research in Türkiye. All issues of each specific indexed volume in the TR Index were examined and included in the analysis. The volumes of the selected journals were not involved if the journal was not indexed in any of the specified years.

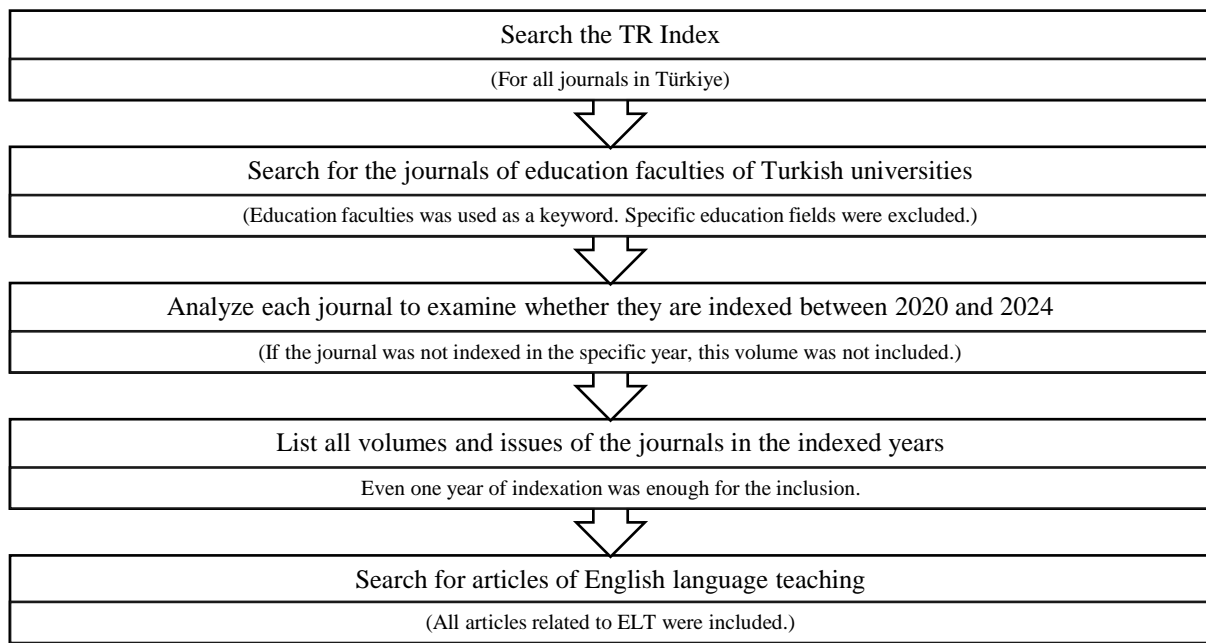
Article Search and Screening

The process of determining related studies is demonstrated in Figure 1. Firstly, the TR Index was searched for all journals in Türkiye. Later, “the journal of education faculty” was used as a search term to narrow down the selection. The names of the journals and their university connections were checked to involve them in the analysis.

In that case, 31 journals were listed. However, one of them was not an education faculty journal; hence, it was eliminated. Also, some journals were aimed at specific departments of education faculties such as commerce and tourism, math and science education, or special education; therefore, three of them were not included. 27 journals were under review at the time. As a next step, 27 journals were controlled to see whether they were indexed or not in the years 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. If the journal was indexed in any of these years, it was involved in the query. In this final step, 23 education faculty journals were queried. For the review, only indexed volumes of these journals were analyzed, and all issues were listed. In the final step, relevant publications were decided by reading their titles, abstracts, and keywords to check their field relevance to ELT. Following the initial screening, all selected articles were checked again to decide whether they met all criteria. In this close examination, their abstract, methods, and research questions were assessed in the full texts to determine their pertinence to the field of ELT. 122 articles were identified in line with the criteria for the analysis.

Figure 1

Process of Selecting Publications for the Systematic Review



Data Coding

Deductive and inductive methods were performed to code the articles in this research. A meticulous coding protocol was devised to code the features of the articles by using an “Article Assessment Form” devised by the researchers. Each article was assessed based on this form. The form included information about the numbers of the articles, volumes and issues, keywords, abstracts, type of research, keyword trends, methodology, sample features, data collection tools, and language of the articles; therefore, the coding procedure was separated into these primary categories: type of research, keyword trends, methodology, sample features, data collection tools, and language of the articles.

Data Analysis

In this study, the qualitative content analysis method was used to analyze the data. Qualitative content analysis is used to compress unprocessed data into categories or themes using a systematic valid inference and interpretation (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Preparing the data, defining the units of analysis, developing categories and a coding scheme, coding all the data, assessing the consistency of coding, and drawing conclusions are the steps of content analysis. In this research, the data were organized and analyzed following these steps.

Results

The Distribution of Issues, Volumes and Indexes by Journals

At the end of the document analysis, 23 education faculty journals published by Turkish universities were included in the query based on the predetermined criteria. Table 1 shows the selected journals' names and the years they were indexed in the TR Index. "X" identifies the years the journals were not accepted in the TR index.

Table 1

List of the Selected Journals and the Years They Were Indexed by the TR Index

The Name of the Journal	2020	2021	2022	2023
Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi		X		
Ahi Evran Üniversitesi Kırşehir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi		X		
Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi Dergisi				
Atatürk Üniversitesi Kazım Karabekir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi			X	X
Bartın Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	X	X	X	
Başkent University Journal of Education				X
Bayburt Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi				
Buca Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi				
Çukurova Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi			X	
Erzincan Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi		X		
Gazi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi			X	
Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi				
İnönü Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi		X		
Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	X	X		
Marmara Üniversitesi Atatürk Eğitim Fakültesi Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi		X	X	
Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi		X	X	X
Mersin Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi				
Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi				
Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi				
Pamukkale Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi				
Trakya Eğitim Dergisi	X	X		
Uludağ Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi				
Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi				

*X shows the years that journals were not indexed.

Considering Table 1, some of the journals ($n = 10$) were indexed consecutively for four years: 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. Following this, seven journals were indexed for three years, and four journals were accepted to the index for two years. However, two journals were only indexed for only one year. Additionally, most of the selected journals were in the index in 2023. Moreover, 2021 was the year most of the journals were not in the TR Index. Out of 23 journals checked in this analysis, 10 journals (10%) release three issues annually, seven journals (30%) publish four issues, and six journals (26%) publish two issues in a year.

In total, 77 volumes and 204 issues that adhered to predetermined criteria were accepted in this analysis. Table 2 demonstrates the total number of volumes and issues included for each selected journal as well as the number of issues that journals published in every volume.

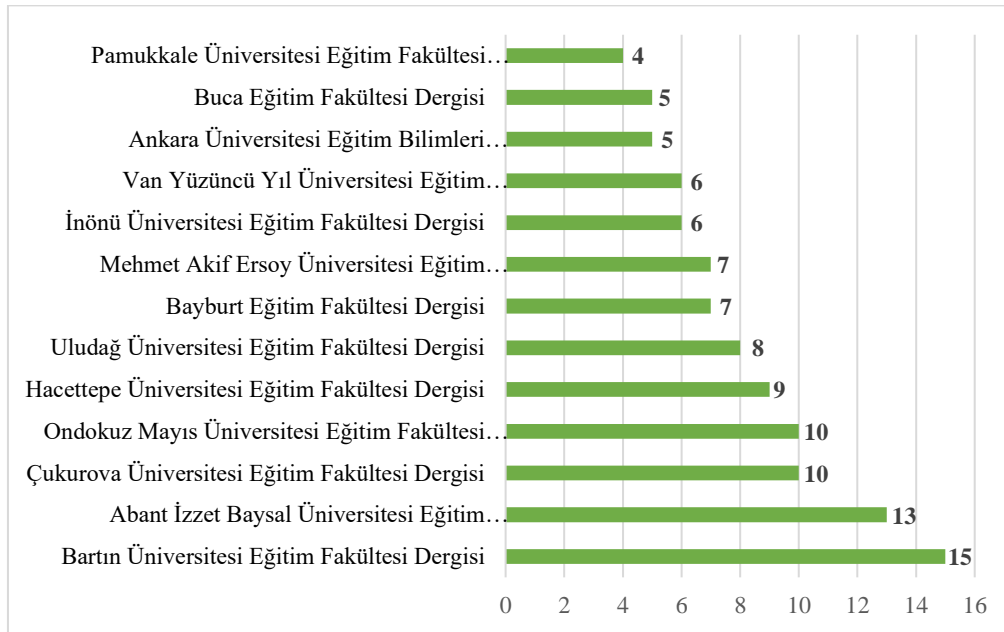
Table 1

Total Number of Volumes and Issues Included for Each Selected Journal and the Number of Issues that Journals Published in Every Volume

The name of the journal	Total number of volumes included	Total number of issues included	Number of issues published in a year
Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	3	12	4
Ahi Evran Üniversitesi Kırşehir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	3	9	3
Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi Dergisi	4	12	3
Atatürk Üniversitesi Kazım Karabekir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	2	4	2
Bartın Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	1	4	4
Başkent University Journal of Education	2	4	2
Bayburt Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	4	16	4
Buca Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	4	16	4
Çukurova Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	3	9	3
Erzincan Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	3	12	4
Gazi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	3	9	3
Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	3	12	4
İnönü Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	3	9	3
Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	2	4	2
Marmara Üniversitesi Atatürk Eğitim Fakültesi Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi	2	4	2
Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	1	4	4
Mersin Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	4	12	3
Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	4	8	2
Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	4	8	2
Pamukkale Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	3	9	3
Trakya Eğitim Dergisi	1	3	3
Uludağ Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	4	12	3
Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi	4	12	3
Total	77	204	

Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi, Bayburt Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, Buca Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, Mersin Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, and Van Yüzüncü Yıl Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi were indexed in the TR Index for four years; therefore, they were the journals with highest number of volumes in this analysis. However, Bartın Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi and Trakya Eğitim Dergisi were indexed in the TR Index for only one year. Concerning the selected issues, Bayburt Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi ($n = 16$) and Buca Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi ($n = 16$) lead in terms of issues included in this analysis. In contrast, Trakya Eğitim Dergisi ($n = 3$) had the lowest number of issues eligible for the selection criteria of this analysis.

At the end of the document analysis, 122 articles related to the field of ELT were contained. Figure 2 illustrates the top journals with the highest number of published ELT studies in this analysis. Based on this figure, Bartın Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi ($n = 15$) stands out with the highest number of published works in ELT. Following it, respectively, Abant İzzet Baysal Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi ($n = 13$), Çukurova Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi ($n = 10$), and Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi ($n = 10$) account for the most publications.

Figure 2*Top Journals with the Highest Number of Published ELT Studies*

On the other hand, Muğla Sıtkı Kocaman Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi ($n = 1$), Mersin Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi ($n = 1$), Marmara Üniversitesi Atatürk Eğitim Fakültesi Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi ($n = 1$), Başkent University Journal of Education ($n = 1$), and Ahi Evran University Kırşehir Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi ($n = 1$) published only one article in the field of ELT. Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi ($n = 0$) did not release any articles in this field in the specified volumes.

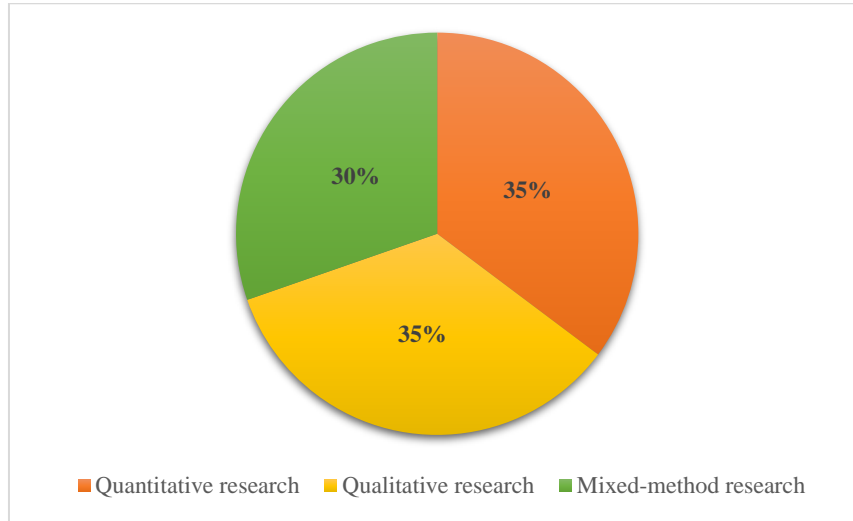
This analysis revealed three types of research on the basis of journals' own labels for the publications. 119 ELT articles were labelled as "research article" in the selected journals. Only one article was labelled as "review", and another article was tagged as "systematic review and text analysis" in the journals.

Keyword Trends

Pertaining to the keywords of the studies, teacher ($n = 48$) was the most preferred keyword in the articles. English ($n = 36$), foreign language ($n = 35$) and EFL (English as a foreign language) ($n = 28$) pursued them. Articles also chose English language teaching ($n = 10$), teacher education ($n = 9$), feedback ($n = 7$), evaluation ($n = 6$) and self-efficacy ($n = 6$) as other keywords. Following them, university students ($n = 6$), technology ($n = 6$), and attitude ($n = 5$) were also mentioned more than once in the studies.

Methodology

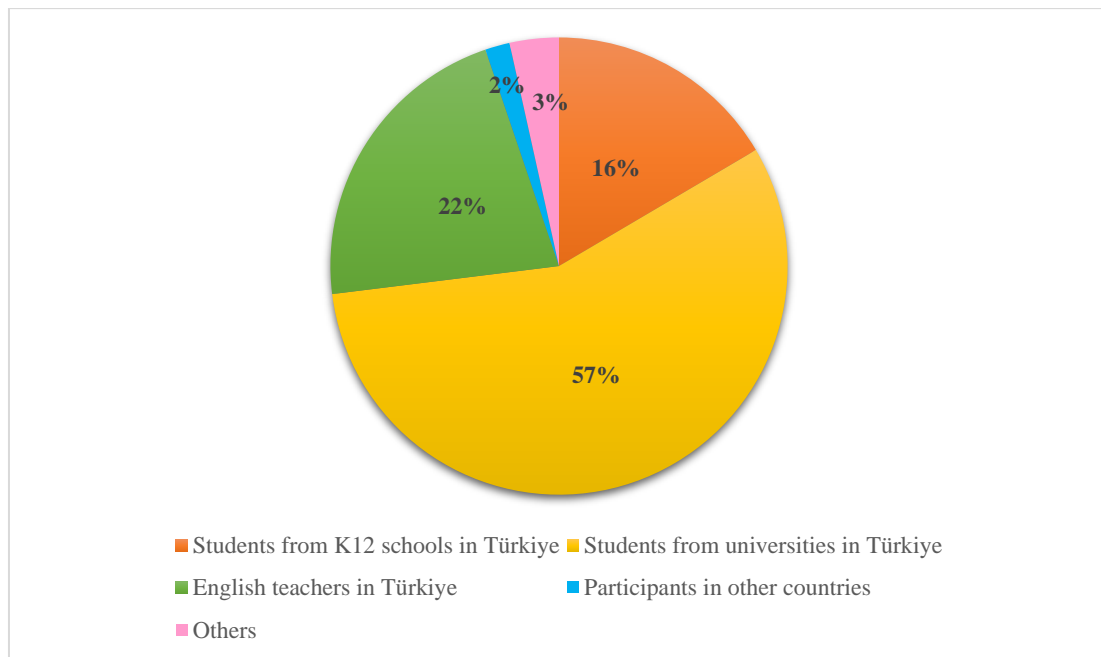
Concerning to the methodology adopted in the selected articles, the quantitative approach ($n = 43$) and the qualitative approach ($n = 42$) were almost equally preferred in the research papers. Mixed-methods studies ($n = 37$) followed them. Figure 3 presents the distribution of methodology in the selected studies.

Figure 3*The Distribution of the Research Methodology*

Additionally, although majority of the selected studies followed a descriptive study model ($n = 110$), some other research methods were also available in the studies. To illustrate, experimental studies ($n = 4$) and meta-analysis ($n = 4$) had equal percentages. Quasi-experimental ($n = 2$), ethnographic case study ($n = 1$) and action research ($n = 1$) followed them respectively.

Sample Features

In reference to the participant samples in the selected studies, five main contexts were revealed: a) students from K12 schools in Türkiye, b) students from universities in Türkiye, c) English teachers in Türkiye, d) participants in other countries, and e) others. Figure 4 illustrates the distribution of the sample features in the selected ELT studies.

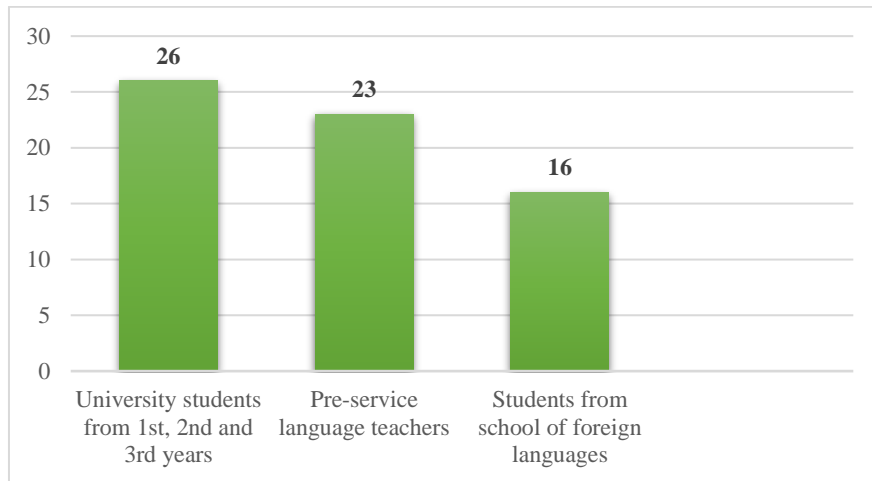
Figure 4*The Distribution of the Sample Features*

Based on this categorization, university students from Türkiye ($n = 65$ studies) formed the majority of participants in the selected studies. English teachers in Türkiye ($n = 25$) held the second place in the sorting. Respectively, students from K12 schools ($n = 19$) and others ($n = 4$) followed them. At the end of the list, participants in other countries ($n = 2$) took part in.

Upon closer inspection, majority of the participants from the university context was selected from university students from 1st, 2nd, and 3rd years ($n = 16$) in the analyzed ELT studies. Subsequently, pre-service language teachers ($n = 23$) were involved in the studies. Succeeding it, students from school of foreign languages ($n = 16$) were selected. Figure 5 shows the distribution of university student participants in the selected ELT studies.

Figure 5

The Distribution of University Student Participants

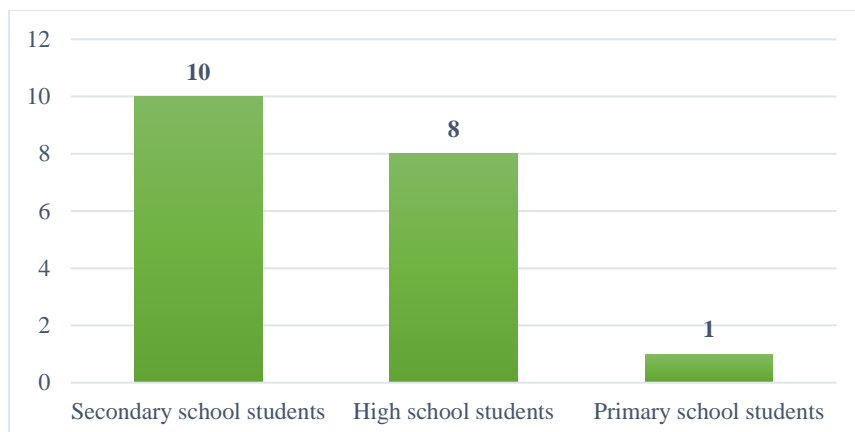


As the second preferred participant group in the studies, English teachers in Türkiye formed a big sample group. In 18 of the selected studies, participants were English teachers from K12 schools. Additionally, English language instructors at universities ($n = 6$) pursued them.

Among the students from K12 schools, most of the participants were selected from secondary school students ($n = 10$). High school students ($n = 8$) and primary school students ($n = 1$) were also recruited in the studies. Figure 6 demonstrates the distribution of the participant students from K12 schools.

Figure 6

The Distribution of the Participant Students from K12 Schools



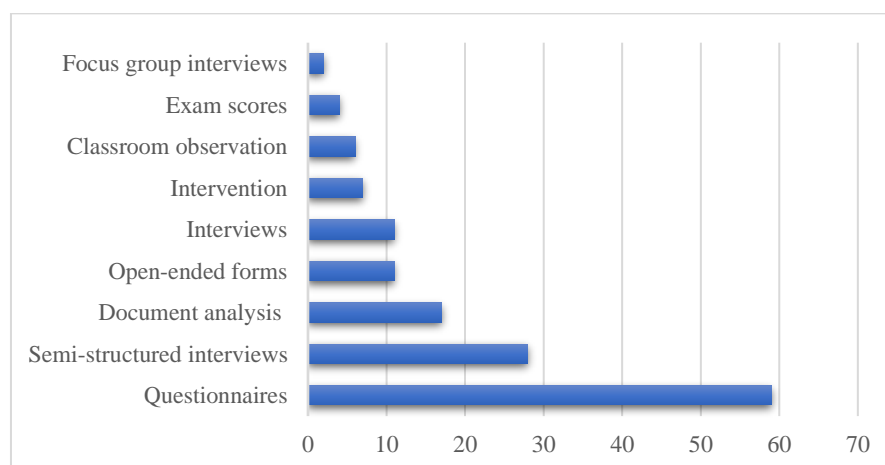
Regarding the participants in other countries ($n = 2$), pre-service language teachers were included in one study. Similarly, English teachers from K12 schools were selected in another study. Finally, for the last category, two studies consisted adult students from language schools. One study preferred CELTA program candidates, and another study took in young learners.

Data Collection Tools

When data collection tools were examined in the selected ELT-related articles, questionnaires, which are quantitative data collection tools ($n = 59$), held the top figure. By adopting a qualitative approach, some studies preferred semi-structured interviews ($n = 28$) in the second line. Additionally, studies conducted in the field of ELT sometimes made use of document analysis ($n = 17$), open-ended forms ($n = 11$), and interviews ($n = 11$) in the row. The analyzed articles differentiated interviews from semi-structured interviews. While interviews were regarded as more structured data collection tools in these studies, semi-structured interviews were opted for as a more flexible qualitative data collection tool. Therefore, this analysis grouped them into different categories. Chasing these top tools, intervention ($n = 7$) and classroom observation ($n = 7$) were performed in the selected ELT studies. Finally, exam scores ($n = 4$) and focus group interviews ($n = 2$) were allocated in the studies more than once. Figure 7 demonstrates the most used data collection tools in the selected ELT studies in the journals.

Figure 7

The Most Used Data Collection Tools



Moreover, most of the ELT studies performed relatively rarely selected data collection tools in their studies in this data set. Narrative interviews, constant comparison method, journal analysis, sequential explanatory pattern, conversation analysis, self-reports, translation tests, meta-synthesis, journal writing, teacher written feedback analysis, student paper analysis, critical incidents analysis, functional analysis, written responses, personal reflections, read aloud task, picture description task, responding to a real-life situation, speaking activity, descriptive analysis form, writing journals, meta-analysis, comprehension test, literature review, writing paragraphs, expert opinion, essay writing, frequency analysis, group discussion, metaphor analysis, achievement tests, speech analysis, and rewrite-modify tasks are other tools that were used only once in the studies.

Language of the Studies

In reference to the language of the published studies, most of them were written in English ($n = 97$). Nonetheless, the number of articles written in Turkish ($n = 35$) was not less in comparison.

Discussion & Conclusion

The current study searched ELT studies in the journals of Turkish universities' education faculties indexed in the TR Index in the years 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023. After the document analysis, it was seen that 23 journals met the inclusion criteria, with 122 publications in the field of ELT. A total of 122 studies were subjected to content analysis via the assessment form designed by the researchers.

To commence with, taking part in an index and maintaining their place in this index are important for journals. All of the selected journals for this analysis were indexed in the TR Index, yet some of them could not maintain a consistent indexation period in the selected years. Several explanations might be offered for this inconsistency in the indexation periods of the examined journals. A prominent one is that the quality and relevance variations might have led to this inconsistency, as well as the lower publication frequency of the journals. In addition, these journals might have failed to comply with the indexation criteria.

Another issue detected in this analysis is the number of ELT publications per journal. Some of the journals included higher numbers of ELT studies, such as Bartın Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi. The rationale behind it might be related to the number of submissions they received. Moreover, the editorial policies of the journals might have been influential in the fields of studies they accepted for publication. Also, albeit being indexed less than other journals, authors might have prioritized publishing in the journals with stronger reputation within the ELT community in an attempt to gain better visibility and impact among their peers.

What is more, the majority of the selected journals preferred publishing research articles rather than reviews or systematic reviews and text analysis. This preference might reflect the perception that research articles, with their emphasis on methodological rigor and theoretical contributions, carry more academic prestige. This finding has implications for researchers aiming to publish in TR Indexed journals, suggesting that focusing on research articles may align better with editorial preferences.

Considering keyword trends in the selected ELT articles, commonly established topics in the field such as teacher education, feedback, and evaluation were consistently emergent, which shows that the journals in the TR Index were still interested in these defacto topics. However, albeit less in number, some journals published articles on popular topics such as technology or attitude. This could possibly be elucidated by the research inclination of researchers in Türkiye who prefer publishing in these relatively new fields in line with the findings of Ortaçtepe Hart and Aydınli (2023), indicating the tendency of researchers to publish in instructional technologies.

Regarding the methodology of the examined ELT articles, the numbers of quantitative and qualitative studies were nearly the same, which did not incorporate with the findings of Yağız et al. (2016), finding the dominance of quantitative studies and lack of qualitative studies. Nonetheless, mixed-methods studies were fewer in number compared to quantitative and qualitative studies in this analysis, collaborating with the findings of Yağız et al. (2016), Aydınli and Ortaçtepe (2018), and Ortaçtepe Hart and Aydınli (2023). This could be further clarified by the researchers' egalitarian attitudes towards the qualitative and quantitative studies without favoring only one of them. Nonetheless, these results showed that more importance should be uttered to mixed-methods studies, which ensures triangulation as well as the reliability and validity of the study. Another issue raised by this analysis is the types of studies. A vast majority of the ELT studies were descriptive studies in these journals. Still, there were few instances of experimental, meta-analysis, quasi-experimental ethnographic case studies, and action research. This finding was in line with Yağız et al. (2016), indicating the scarcity of experimental and quasi-experimental studies and the abundance of descriptive studies between the years 2005 and 2015. The difficulty of conducting these research types compared to descriptive studies might be the reason behind this discrepancy between the numbers of the study types. Due to the complex, time-consuming, and resource-intensive nature of these studies, they might be challenging for researchers. By the same token, owing to the restrictions of collecting data in some institutions or lack of resources might trigger researchers to adopt descriptive research methodology. Encouragingly, the limited presence of experimental studies highlights a potential area for future growth in ELT research.

The sample characteristics of ELT studies further illuminate research tendencies. Therefore, the selection of sample posits of utmost importance as it should represent the whole population. Considering the sample features in this analysis, most of the selected ELT studies recruited university students from Turkish universities as their participants in line with the results of Yağız et al. (2016). This might be explained by the convenience of collecting data in the university context, as most of the researchers work at universities. Diving deep into features of the university students as participants of the studies, it was seen that pre-service language teachers studying at ELT departments were chosen as participants. The justification for it might have been the participant group's relevance to the ELT field and their practices, which directly fall under the purview of ELT studies such as their practicum experiences. As another focused group, the studies picked students from the schools of foreign languages of the universities. This group provides a wide variety of English levels with a lot of classes allowing the application of comparison or intervention studies, which might be the possible reason for this selection by the researchers. As the second largest participant group, ELT studies kept an eye on English language teachers in Türkiye, which

incorporated the findings of Yağız et al. (2016). Unlike the expectations, English language teachers were mostly favored rather than university instructors in the studies. The reason behind this might be the desire of the researchers to bridge the gap between the theory and the gap in the field of ELT, and for this reason, they specifically focused on the K12 teachers.

Among the K12 school student participants, secondary school students were chosen in most of the articles. When looked deeper to analyze its reasons, it was observed that some of these studies also included high school students as another participant group. The fact that researchers of multi-authored studies work at different types of schools as teachers might be the rationale. As expected, high school students were also selected as a participant group. The convenience of data collection from this group might be a sensible motive for this tendency. In contrast, primary school students were not favored in the studies, which might be because of the difficulty of data collection from this group of learners as well as the applied ELT curriculum in these schools. As ELT starts in the second grade and is mostly focused on vocabulary teaching, researchers might not have been inclined to collect data from them.

Touching on data collection tools utilized in these studies, it was observed that questionnaires were the most chosen data collection tools in this analysis, which shows a similar pattern with Yağız et al. (2016) and Aydın and Ortaçtepe (2018). Additionally, it was the most preferred tool in quantitative studies among other quantitative data collection tools. The cause of this tendency might be explained by the goal of ensuring standardization to maintain consistency across participants, enabling efficiency in terms of saving time and resources, increasing cost-effectiveness, and easing the data analysis processes. Also, the easiness of utilizing questionnaires with large number of participant groups and the availability of many questionnaires that the researchers could use might have caused this phenomenon. In relation to the qualitative data collection tools, semi-structured interviews were the most selected tool although a wide variety of tools such as open-ended forms, semi-structured interviews, interviews, and self-reports were available in the investigated ELT studies. With its more nuanced understanding of the participant and the richness of the elicited data, the flexibility of the tool might be a reason for the selection of this tool by the researchers. Moreover, it was preferred as it builds a good rapport between the researcher and the interviewee as well as leading to the discovery of new themes.

The current analysis revealed the percentages of the languages of the examined ELT articles published in the TR Indexed journals. Although the number of articles published in English is higher than Turkish articles, the articles published in Turkish unexpectedly constitute more than one-third of the overall selected ELT articles, which is quite a high number for a study searching ELT. This could possibly be elucidated by the lack of confidence of Turkish researchers in writing in a second language despite the potential for greater international visibility. Addressing this issue through academic writing support programs could enhance the global impact of ELT research from Türkiye.

The findings of this analysis provided some perspectives for researchers and journal editors. Firstly, this study might be beneficial for the researchers who plan to study in the field of ELT on the point of comprehending the general tendencies in the TR Indexed journals in recent years. Through this analysis, they can recognize gaps in methodology, participant selection, data collection tools, and topic trends. By doing so, researchers can produce more influential studies for the field and address critical questions effectively. Concurrently, they can align their research with journal expectations. For journal editors, the findings indicated the significance of maintaining consistent indexing and diversifying the range of methodologies and sample group in the accepted studies. Besides, the findings called for editorial policies encouraging more experimental and mixed-methods studies to yield a more balanced research landscape in the field of ELT. Additionally, they showed the urgent need to support researchers in publishing in English as it improves the visibility and impact of the TR Indexed journals internationally.

In the similar vein, the findings of this study initiated a call for methodological and thematic diversification which might serve as a model for other Turkish-indexed journals by encouraging a shift toward more innovative and impactful research practices. This change will influence journals and academic publishing in Türkiye will become more competitive and of higher quality.

The results of this study had some important implications. The results pointed out methodological and participant selection flaws in academic writing research. By analyzing them, academics can produce more rigorous studies which will be pertinent to the field in the future. They also indicated that increasing methodological variety and the inclusion of cutting-edge research fields can help the TR Indexed journals improve their reputation and

impact. This may also have broader ramifications for other journals in Turkish indexes, as it supports them to have similar improvements to align with international standards.

The results of the study also pointed out some hints for researcher education. Insights from the study can guide educators to design curricula which aim to equip future researchers with the required skills to produce publishable work aligning with current academic demands. Incorporating instruction on diverse genres of academic writing may allow a broader range of scholarly contributions, ensuring innovation and inclusivity in the field of ELT.

To conclude, this study offered a foundation for future research in the field of ELT. This research only aimed at ELT studies in the TR Index. For future studies, this analysis might be extended by including journals indexed in other databases to have a more comprehensive perspective. Comparative studies between locally indexed and internationally indexed journals could reveal more insights into research quality and trends. Finally, similar studies might be carried out to disseminate the knowledge to other fields.

Disclosure Statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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TR Dizinli Dergilerde Yayımlanan İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Makaleleri: 2020'den Günümüze Sistematiik Bir Analiz

Öz

İngiliz Dili Eğitimi (ELT) alanındaki literatür hacminin küresel olarak artmasıyla birlikte Türkiye, dil öğretim uygulamalarını geliştirmek için aktif olarak çalışmaktadır. Bu nedenle, çeşitli ELT bağlamlarını inceleyen birçok çalışma bu konuya odaklanmıştır. Eğitim fakültesi dergilerindeki son ELT araştırma eğilimlerini aydınlatmak amacıyla, bu keşfedici tanımlayıcı araştırma, Türkiye'de ELT alanında yapılan çalışmaları analiz etmiştir. 2020-2023 yılları arasında TR Dizin'de indekslenen Türk üniversitelerindeki eğitim fakültesi dergileri filtrelenerek, 23 dergi ve bu dergilerde yayımlanan 122 ELT çalışması incelenmiştir. Makaleler belge analizi yolu kullanılarak incelenmiş ve araştırma türü, anahtar kelime, metodoloji, örneklem özellikleri, veri toplama araçları ve makalelerde kullanılan dil dağılımlarını belirlemek için nitel içerik analizi uygulanmıştır. Sonuçlar, alandaki mevcut yayın eğilimlerine ışık tutmuş ve gelecekteki çalışmalar için olası araştırma boşluklarını vurgulamıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: eğitim fakültesi dergileri, İngiliz dili eğitimi, sistematiik analiz