

## An Investigation of Research Culture on Extramural English in ELT: Implications and Future Directions

### İngiliz Dili Eğitiminde Sınıf Dışı İngilizceye İlişkin Araştırma Kültürünün İncelenmesi: Çıkarımlar ve Gelecekteki Yönelimler

Muhammed KÖK<sup>1</sup>

(Sorumlu Yazar-Corresponding Author)



<sup>1</sup> Ondokuz Mayıs Üniversitesi, Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Bölümü, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı, Samsun, Türkiye.  
muhammed.kok@omu.edu.tr

Geliş Tarihi/Received: 01.06.2025

Kabul Tarihi/Accepted: 18.09.2025

#### Atıf /Cite this article:

Kök, M. (2025). An Investigation of Research Culture on Extramural English in ELT: Implications and Future Directions. *Erzurum Teknik Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi* (23), 111-120.

This article checked by



Content of this journal is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 International License.

#### Abstract

Extramural English is an emerging research area that investigates English as a second/foreign language (L2) learners' out-of-class L2 engagement. In this respect, this study aims to showcase extramural English research tendency in graduate and postgraduate dissertations (M.A. and Ph.D.) conducted in Türkiye in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) between 2014 and 2024. To this end, a descriptive research design was adopted, and data were collected from samples in the Turkish National Dissertations Database. A total of 22 dissertations were analyzed based on a rubric, including predetermined categories (e.g., years of completion, types of dissertations, publication information, target participants, research method, research design, and data collection tools). The findings of the descriptive analysis indicated that research on extramural English still remains at an early developmental stage, particularly within the Turkish context. It was explored slightly more at the master's level, overlooked at the doctoral level, frequently measured through questionnaires and scales, and often examined in relation to affective variables over the last decade. The results point out the scarcity of extramural research undertaken at the graduate level, particularly at the postgraduate level in ELT. Further, the study draws scholarly attention to the possible research gaps, opportunities, and implications for further directions on extramural English.

**Keywords:** Extramural English, Out-of-class Engagement, ELT, Dissertations, Database.

#### Öz

Sınıf dışı İngilizce, İngilizceyi ikinci veya yabancı dil olarak öğrenenlerin sınıf dışı İngilizce katılımlarını inceleyen yeni bir araştırma alanıdır. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma, 2014–2024 yılları arasında Türkiye’de İngiliz Dili Eğitimi alanında yürütülmüş yüksek lisans ve doktora tezlerinde sınıf dışı İngilizce araştırma eğilimlerini ortaya koymayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaçla, betimsel bir araştırma tasarımı benimsenmiş ve veriler Türkiye Ulusal Tez Veri tabanındaki örneklemelerden toplanmıştır. Önceden belirlenmiş kategorileri (örn. tamamlanma yılları, tez türleri, yayın bilgisi, hedef katılımcılar, araştırma yöntemi, araştırma tasarımı ve veri toplama araçları) içeren bir rubrik temelinde toplam 22 tez analiz edilmiştir. Betimsel analiz bulguları, sınıf dışı İngilizce üzerine yapılan araştırmaların, özellikle Türkiye bağlamında, hâlen başlangıç aşamasında olduğunu göstermiştir. Son on yılda, bu konu yüksek lisans düzeyinde biraz daha fazla araştırılmış, doktora düzeyinde ise göz ardı edilmiş, sıklıkla anketler ve ölçekler aracılığıyla ölçülmüş ve genellikle duygusal değişkenlerle ilişkili olarak incelenmiştir. Sonuçlar, İngiliz dili eğitimi alanında yüksek lisans düzeyinde özellikle de doktora yapılan sınıf dışı İngilizce araştırmaların azlığına işaret etmektedir. Ayrıca, bu çalışma, akademik dikkati sınıf dışı İngilizce konusunda olası araştırma boşluklarına, fırsatlara ve gelecek çalışmalara yönelik çıkarımlara çekmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Sınıf dışı İngilizce, Sınıf dışı katılım, İngiliz dili eğitimi, Tez, Veri tabanı.

## Introduction

Second/foreign language (L2) learning has been regarded as a learner-driven activity, with constructivism highlighting learner-centeredness (Uztosun & Kök, 2024). Thus, extramural English (hereafter EE) has raised scholarly attention in L2 settings under the concept of out-of-school or informal digital learning of English. In this respect, it is worth defining that EE is an umbrella term, coined by Sundqvist (2009), to address all sorts of intentional and unintentional L2 learner-driven activities beyond the classroom walls. Its increasing prominence over the past two decades could be attributed to its benefits to learners, such as diverse, self-directed, unintentional, and naturalistic L2 experiences (Cengizhan, 2019; Peters et al., 2019). Further, with advancements in technology and digital tools, the characteristics of EE have been diversified, such as auditory, visual, textual, and interactive modalities (Lee & Drajiati, 2020). Therefore, recent EE activities are various and often multimodal in nature, including auditory (e.g., podcasts, music streaming services and platforms), visual (e.g., videos, reels), textual (e.g., online articles or blogs), and interactive (e.g., games).

The growing popularity of EE, especially in English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) settings, lies in the fact that the formal school climate is restrictive in providing all the necessary L2 input and output that learners require (Cengizhan, 2019). In other words, the formal L2 instruction in school settings is highly limited in terms of the L2 gains it offers EFL learners. This could stem from several reasons, such as teachers' workload, large classes, and exam-centeredness in language education (Uztosun & Kök, 2024). In this respect, the out-of-class L2 engagements of EFL learners are vital, particularly in monolingual settings, since no direct exposure to the target language is possible daily in such settings. Since extramural activities engaged by L2 learners are regarded as an individual difference (Leona et al., 2021), the personal engagement in the target language is highly suggested, contributing to their overall L2 attainment and learning outcomes (Lai et al., 2015). In this vein, Lai et al. (2015) also point out that "the degree to which learners engage in out-of-class learning is associated with their language learning outcomes" (p.3), highlighting the essential role of learners' extramural activities in fostering their overall L2 development.

Almost 20 years of EE research in English language education have further stressed that the degree and density of meaning-focused extramural activities propose various predictive gains on different L2 skills. In other words, the well-established literature on EE has pointed out the predictive role of these activities on L2 learners' competency, exhibiting different L2 gains on reading and listening (e.g., De Wilde et al., 2021), writing (e.g., Olsson, 2012), perceived speaking skills (e.g., Sundqvist & Uztosun, 2024), and vocabulary (Olsson & Sylvén, 2015; Sundqvist, 2019). Beyond the skills, extramural engagement has also been reported to influence affective domains, such as social and cognitive motives (e.g., Hannibal Jensen, 2019), willingness to communicate (e.g., Lee & Drajiati, 2020; Reinders & Wattana, 2015), apprehension and anxiety (e.g., Uztosun & Kök, 2024).

## Theoretical Framework

Extramural activities refer to the voluntary, self-directed, and individual activities that L2 learners engage in outside the formal school settings. These various activities extend beyond gaming, social networking, and digital media (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016). Theoretically, EE can be grounded in Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985), which highlights the critical role of comprehensible input in fostering language acquisition. In other words, EE exposes learners to authentic and contextually rich input often slightly above their current proficiency level, thus supporting incidental vocabulary acquisition. This is also consistent with Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (1990), given that encountering salient linguistic features in learner-initiated activity helps them sustain attention and retention, even without explicit instruction. Thus, it could be asserted that EE is an informal yet powerful area that extends beyond the classroom setting and significantly contributes to learners' L2 development.

EE can also be framed within Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006) from a sociocultural perspective, which regards learning mediated through social interaction and shared practice. Engaging in extramural activities, such as interactive and collaborative online gaming on digital platforms, could help learners operate within their zone of proximal development (ZPD), in which contextual cues or more advanced peers can scaffold their linguistic growth. In addition, EE can be theoretically informed by Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), since it fosters autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which could be crucial for sustaining L2 motivation. From these scholar lenses, EE could be

perceived not solely as an incidental exposure but also as a dynamic learner-initiated space in which cognitive, affective, and social dimensions of L2 intersect, thus broadening the scope of L2 acquisition and pedagogy.

### **Current Study**

Research on EE has witnessed an upsurge of particular interest in Scandinavian countries such as Sweden, Finland, and Norway. It is probably due to the daily integration of English being pervasive there, such as watching subtitled TV. However, considering the publications surrounding EE in Türkiye as an EFL setting, where daily interaction with English is hard to imagine, EE represents a relatively under-researched area. Few research bodies exist (Uztosun & Kök, 2024), and they primarily associate EE with affective and psychological constructs. Considering the graduate and postgraduate dissertations in ELT, Öcel and Bergil (2023) claim that Türkiye has witnessed a considerable increase in their numbers in the last two decades. However, there is a lack of clear understanding regarding how and to what extent EE has been explored in graduate and postgraduate dissertations in ELT as a trendy and emerging research area. Moreover, little is known about the variables it has been associated with, the types of findings reported, and the pedagogical implications suggested. Therefore, it can be claimed that the investigation of EE research culture in the graduate and postgraduate circles, especially in the field of ELT, is still a knowledge gap that requires scholarly attention, even though it has attracted international academic attention.

To this end, this study aims to descriptively analyze dissertations written on EE and gain a deeper insight into its research culture in the graduate and postgraduate circles, particularly in ELT. The study further intends to identify and propose further research areas regarding the gaps in the EE literature and suggest future directions for its research landscape. Thus, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the distribution of dissertations on extramural English (M.A. and Ph.D.) published by Turkish scholars in ELT regarding years of completion, types of dissertations, publication type, target participants, research method, research design, and data collection tools?
2. What are the conclusions and research gaps drawn from these EE-oriented dissertations?

### **Methodology**

The study aims to reveal the research tendency in graduate and postgraduate dissertations (M.A. and Ph.D.) conducted in Türkiye between 2014 and 2024 on extramural English. The study adopts a quantitative paradigm, employing a descriptive research design in line with this objective. Descriptive research designs necessitate a systematic and objective evaluation of the samples (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, procedures such as sample collection, screening samples, and data analysis are mentioned in detail below.

### **Sample Collection**

The selection of the samples was based on the criteria of whether they were published as M.A. or Ph.D. dissertations in the Turkish National Dissertations Database in Türkiye in the field of ELT between 2014 and 2024. For this reason, each thesis published between the aforementioned years was scanned by the researcher using the keywords “extramural English,” “out-of-class,” “English engagement,” and “informal English.” This scanning of the database yielded cumulatively all extramural-related dissertations in ELT. In the end, 22 published dissertations complying with these criteria were chosen for this study.

### **Data Analysis**

Data were collected through samples and analyzed with the help of descriptive content analysis. A dissertation rubric comprising seven main categories was created and utilized to analyze all the samples systematically. In other words, the collected samples were coded and analyzed using a predetermined rubric under seven headings (i.e., years of completion, types of dissertations, publication type, target participants, research method, research design, and data collection tools). This rubric was adapted from an existing instrument, previously modified by Yağız et al. (2016), and was further tailored to align with the research objectives of the current study. By employing such a rubric, each dissertation was analyzed according to

the specified categories, and the findings were then presented descriptively in tables, maintaining a systematic, comprehensive, and consistent evaluation of the samples. The findings are depicted in tables accordingly.

## Findings

The descriptive content analysis indicates that 22 dissertations on EE were completed in Türkiye in the field of ELT between 2014 and 2024. The findings are illustrated in the tables below and discussed in detail accordingly. Table 1 shows the distribution of the types of dissertations.

**Table 1.** Distribution of the Types of Dissertations

Types of Dissertations	Number of Dissertations
M.A.	22
Ph.D.	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>

As seen above, all EE dissertations written between 2014 and 2024 in Türkiye are master's dissertations. However, no study at the Ph.D. level was completed until 2024. This means that no research tendency or interest has been shown at the Ph.D. level, involving a longer and more thorough research process. In other words, a significant lack of scholarly attention, especially at the Ph.D. level, exists regarding EE research culture.

Regarding the details, such as authors, years, and the number of participants employed, Table 2 below shows the comprehensive information on the selected samples under investigation.

**Table 2.** Distribution of Publication Information

The surname of the authors	Publication Years	Numbers of Participants
Karabulut	2024	95
Akman	2024	22
Gökçe	2024	468
Engin	2023	86
Yeşildağ	2023	8
Aydın	2023	186
Bardak	2023	250
Özgür	2022	247
İnci	2021	253
Altuğ	2021	82
Ak-karakuş	2021	81
Girgin-öztürk	2020	57
Kızmaz	2019	50
Cengizhan	2019	244
İşler	2019	144
Bakay	2017	37
Kazem	2016	153
Hamzaoglu	2015	56
Akkaya-önal	2015	6
Aydın	2015	42
Görgün	2015	26
Alpaslan	2015	40

As can be understood from Table 2, M.A. dissertations on EE were regularly written and published in ELT in the last nine years. On the other hand, the number of dissertations recruiting high numbers of participants is higher than those that do not, even though the number of participants varies.

Depicting how many dissertations were written on EE yearly can also provide meaningful information. Thus, Table 3 below shows the distribution of dissertations according to years.

**Table 3.** Distribution of Dissertations According to Years

Years	Number of Dissertations
2024	3
2023	4
2022	1
2021	3
2020	1
2019	3
2018	0
2017	1
2016	1
2015	5
2014	0

Table 3 highlights that dissertations on EE show fluctuations over the years. Even though the peak was in 2015 with five dissertations, there were none in 2014 and 2018. In the last two years, there has been a slight increase in EE interest. Nevertheless, there have been years in which just one thesis was published, such as 2016, 2017, 2020, and 2022. This suggests that EE has not yet grasped stable academic consideration at the M.A. level, pointing out that EE is an under-researched area at the graduate level in ELT, especially in the Turkish context.

Describing the profiles of the target participants recruited by the samples can give insight into who the subjects of dissertations often were, showcasing a general picture regarding the sample characteristics frequently applied in EE research. Therefore, Table 4 below depicts the distribution of the target participants.

**Table 4.** Distribution of the target participants

Target Participants	Numbers
Tertiary level EFL students (including preparatory class)	12
High School	5
Middle School	3
Primary school	2

Table 4 illustrates that dissertations published on EE have addressed varying participant profiles at different educational levels. Nonetheless, the samples recruited tertiary-level EFL students primarily as participants, followed by high school students. Graduate-level researchers seem to have shown little interest in conducting research involving primary and secondary school EFL students, as the number of primary and secondary schools is highly underrepresented. In this respect, the domination of tertiary-level students in EE-oriented dissertations draws attention to the need for more underrepresented students, especially at the K-12 level.

It is important to know what research methods and designs graduate researchers utilize mainly in the EE research culture. Table 5 below illustrates the distribution of the research methods and designs adopted by the dissertations.

**Table 5.** Distribution of the Research Methods and Designs

Research method	Numbers	Research design	Numbers
Mixed Method	11	Survey design	9
Quantitative	9	Quasi-experimental design	6
Qualitative	2	Exploratory Sequential design	4
		Action research design	2
		Convergent design	1

Table 5 shows that graduate-level researchers preferred mixed methods over pure quantitative and qualitative methods. Additionally, quantitative methods were used in nine samples, focusing on numerical data, whereas qualitative methods only appeared in two samples, which indicates a low research tendency in exploratory research designs. This tendency indicates that the EE culture did not show interest in qualitative research, indicating a gap in research methodologies. Moreover, Table 5 shows that the samples employed various research designs, mainly survey and quasi-experimental. The preference for experimental and survey designs highlights the dominance of quantitative research methodology, with less focus on qualitative methods and research designs, thus drawing scholarly attention to the need for conducting more qualitative and longitudinal research in EE.

Identifying the data collection instruments and their types employed by the samples is also important to highlight and show the EE research culture. In this regard, Table 6 below ranks the tools in descending order.

**Table 6.** Distribution of the Data Collection Tools

Types of Tools	Data Collection Tool	Numbers
Questionnaire/Scale	Out-of-class activity Questionnaire	6
	Motivation Scale	2
	Extramural English Scale	2
	Foreign Language Class Anxiety Questionnaire	1
	Learner Autonomy Questionnaire	1
	Informal English Activities Questionnaire	1
	Information and Communication Technologies Questionnaire	1
	Learner Autonomy Questionnaire	1
	Mobile Device Activities Questionnaire	1
	Parent Questionnaire	1
	Basic Psychological Needs of the Second Language Scale	1
	Self-Determination Theory of the Second Language Effort Subscale	1
	Scale of Acceptance of Mobile Learning Tools	1
	Attitude English Learning Scale	1
	Self-regulated Use of Technology for Language Learning Scale	1
	Self-efficacy Scale	1
	Intrinsic Motivation Inventory	1
Interview	Semi-structured Interview	13
	Open-ended Written Question	1
Rubric	Pronunciation Rubric	3
	Willingness to Communicate Rubric	1
Journal	Researcher's journal	1
	Learner journal	1
Exam /Achievement	Speaking Proficiency Test	4
	Vocabulary Test	3
Forms	End-of-course evaluation forms	1
	Weekly practice evaluation forms	1
	Teacher feedback forms	1

Table 6 indicates that although several data collection tools were utilized, questionnaires/scales were the most common, followed by interviews. In other words, dissertations on EE measured EFL learners' extramural engagement mostly via questionnaires/scales and interviews, even though rubrics, journals, exams, and forms were rarely used. Moreover, EE seems to be generally associated with affective factors such as motivation, anxiety, attitude, and L2 willingness to communicate. Furthermore, exams like speaking proficiency and vocabulary tests dominated EE research since other test types of L2 skills



were ignored. Although various tools were utilized in the data collection process, the domination of quantitative methodology adopted in the EE research culture seems to have impacted the instruments in the measurement process.

## Discussion

This study aims to reveal the EE research culture in graduate and postgraduate circles in ELT by analyzing the dissertations written in Türkiye between 2014 and 2024. It further aims to draw attention to the research gaps drawn from the conclusions of the samples. To do so, the distribution of the samples, using several criteria such as years of completion, types of dissertations, publication type, target participants, research method, research design, and data collection tools, was descriptively tabled above. Several findings have been reported, all of which are discussed below accordingly.

The most striking finding of this study is that even though EE is an imperative area to recognize its potentials in offering predictive L2 gains in EFL settings and “a variable that cannot be overlooked in research” (Sundqvist & Uztosun, 2024, p.1659), few studies have been conducted in this research are at the graduate (master) level, with no studies completed at the doctoral level in ELT. Hence, it is fair to state that it remains a largely unexplored area, warranting significant potential for further research. This finding is in line with what the findings in the previous research articles (e.g., Uztosun & Kök, 2024; Sundqvist & Uztosun, 2024) suggest that knowledge and methodological gaps still exist in EE research. Also, Cengizhan (2019) claims that the scarcity of EE research in different contexts draws scholarly attention to the fact that extramural-oriented research is still in its infancy, especially in the Turkish EFL context. A recent study by Uztosun and Sundqvist (2025) further stresses the scarcity of EE studies in the Turkish context. In this respect, the current study could be seen as a pioneering scholarly attempt to inform and guide early career researchers, especially in the graduate and postgraduate circles in ELT, since it quantitatively shows and highlights the evident scarcity of extramural English-oriented research, calling for a research agenda contributing to the underexplored area in ELT. In other words, the current cumulative body of research consistently indicates that Türkiye represents a relatively underrepresented research context, in which further empirical exploration of EE is necessitated.

The second noteworthy finding is that EE was investigated by the samples involving more participants, thus mainly utilizing instruments such as surveys, scales, etc. This finding collaborates with the previous finding reported by Sundqvist and Uztosun (2024). They argue that “the questionnaire is by far the most common instrument employed” (p. 1639) in EE research. In line with them, Cengizhan (2019, p.91) also indicates that “studies that implement data collection tools other than questionnaires and interviews (such as diary and narrative inquiry) are needed”. In the same vein, Uztosun and Kök (2024) point out the same gap in EE, suggesting that “more qualitative and longitudinal studies should be conducted to understand the distinct roles that different EE activities play in L2 learning” (p.28). These well-established studies, along with the findings of the present study, highlight that prospective researchers who are interested in pursuing EE in the graduate and postgraduate circles can be suggested to explore EE more qualitatively by employing more longitudinal, ethnographic, and case designs, where reflective diary, narrative inquiry, observation, focus group discussions and personal journals are utilized as data collection tools. It could be argued that, despite the valuable results of the existing body of quantitative research, the emerging field of EE would benefit from moving beyond survey-based and cross-sectional research designs. In this regard, there is an urgent need for longitudinal qualitative studies administering diverse designs and techniques that could offer a more holistic understanding of how EE shapes L2 learning. This could also allow for a deeper exploration of developmental individual trajectories, extramural patterns, and contextual influences. This type of longitudinal investigation could advance the theoretical understanding of EE and foster more valid insights for EE research and pedagogy.

The third important finding of the study is that tertiary-level EFL students were considered more often than K-12 level learners in the EE research culture. Graduate-level researchers seem to find gathering data at the university level easier than at K-12 level institutions. This could stem from the fact that researchers at the graduate/postgraduate levels have easy access to university students, prep school learners, or teacher educators (Öcel & Bergil, 2023), thus generally choosing convenience sampling. However, this results in the low representation of extramural data from K-12 level learners and teachers. In this respect, K-12 state schools and students are key gaps in the target samples, requiring a research concern in EE. In addition, Sundqvist and Uztosun (2024) draw attention to the complementing extramural research with the specific contexts and culturally relevant information by “using governmental or organizational data” (p.1659). Therefore, the target sample in

extramural research could be recommended to extend to diverse contexts from K-12 levels, mainly including primary, secondary, and high school learners, to corpus and governmental or cultural data-driven samples. In other words, the overreliance on tertiary-level populations in EE research holds the potential to narrow the horizon of EE research and disregard the developmental, motivational, and contextual representation of younger learners. In this regard, the investigated populations in recent samples could bear a partial and potentially biased understanding of EE, which obviously calls for broader inclusion of K–12 contexts in future inquiries.

The fourth important finding regarding L2 skills that extramural researchers have been relatively less interested in could be argued. In other words, the study reports that extramural activities were primarily associated with L2 speaking and vocabulary gains, whereas other L2 skills were ignored. Graduate-level novice researchers might have been influenced by the sources they found in research articles, investigating the relationships between EE and vocabulary or affective factors (e.g., De Wilde et al., 2021; Leona et al., 2021; Peters, 2018; Schwarz, 2020; Sundqvist & Wikström, 2015). This finding could be seen as a call for novice researchers to explore the predictive abilities of extramural engagement of EFL learners on various L2 skills, which are equally vital for holistic L2 development. They can be encouraged to dive into the complex interplay between ignored skills, such as writing, reading, and listening, and EE to expand our understanding of EE's broader influence. Expanding the research focus to include these underexplored skills would offer a more comprehensive and complete understanding of the effects of extramural engagement. Moreover, they are encouraged to design interventional studies incorporating awareness-raising programs on extramural activities, especially at the K-12 levels.

As for the second research question, the study indicates that EE-oriented dissertations in ELT highlight valuable insights and several consistent conclusions. While extramural engagement has been shown to support L2 speaking and vocabulary gains and to enhance positive affective states, the overreliance on tertiary-level participants restricts the generalizability of these findings. It mainly underestimates younger learners whose developmental and contextual dynamics could differ significantly. Furthermore, the predominance of quantitative, cross-sectional designs provides only a partial understanding of EE in the Turkish ELT, often neglecting the complex and longitudinal nature of EFL learners' out-of-class engagements.

Despite these validated conclusions, significant research gaps remain in EE research. There is an apparent underrepresentation of younger learners and K-12 level EFL students, as well as of specific English skills beyond speaking and vocabulary. Moreover, EE lacks longitudinal, qualitative, and mixed-methods studies as an emerging research area, which could help validate the developmental and longitudinal trajectories and context-dependent aspects of EE engagement. Addressing these gaps would broaden the scope of EE research and provide more comprehensive evidence for theory and L2 pedagogy.

## Conclusion and Implications

The current study, bearing the first of its type, enables graduate or postgraduate students and novice researchers to see the research gaps and opportunities in the emerging research area, namely, EE in the field of ELT. In this respect, this study provides a clear picture regarding how and to what extent EE, as a trendy and emerging concept, has been addressed in graduate and postgraduate dissertations written in ELT during the last decade. Therefore, it offers insights into the most associated variables with extramural activities, the profiles of the target participants most recruited by the samples, and the research methodologies, designs, and data collection tools the researchers frequently utilized. In line with the findings, the current results could be summarized as follows:

- EE is an under-researched area in the graduate (master's) and postgraduate (Ph.D.) circles in ELT, with no dissertations written at the Ph.D. level during 2014 and 2024. Hence, it still remains a largely unexplored area at the graduate level, promising significant potential for further research.
- Mixed and quantitative research designs dominate the extramural research culture at the graduate level, thus it seems that qualitative research methodology, including various sorts of designs such as longitudinal, ethnographic, and case designs, can be suggested to be adopted in ELT, with a particular data collection tool such diary, narrative inquiry, observation, focus group discussions, and personal journals.
- In the samples, most of the target population were mainly tertiary-level EFL learners. Including other populations, such as primary, secondary, and high school learners and corpus-driven samples, calls for scholarly attention.



- The types of L2 skills undertaken in extramural research could be extended to other ignored skills in the graduate circle because L2 speaking and vocabulary were found to be frequently taken into academic consideration in the extramural research culture.

The study has some noteworthy implications for further directions on extramural English. In this vein, the following implications can be further considered by researchers to extend the scope and depth of the present study.

- This study could be replicated in other monolingual contexts to see the current role of EE research interest at the graduate and postgraduate levels. In this respect, future researchers should investigate the research culture in different contexts, comparing the research value given on extramural English such as Asia, Europe, Africa, etc.
- It could also be vital to descriptively examine the current EE research tendency in articles published in national and international journals. In other words, future studies can guide novice researchers and graduate-level students by analyzing recent articles so that they can provide an overall picture of the potential gaps and opportunities promised by EE.

**Yazar Katkıları:** *Tek Yazar Fikir ; Tasarım Denetleme ; Kaynaklar ; Veri Toplanması ve/veya İşlemesi ; Analiz ve/veya Yorum; Literatür Taraması ; Yazıyı Yazan ; Eleştirel İnceleme*

**Hakem Değerlendirmesi:** *Dış bağımsız.*

**Çıkar Çatışması:** *Yazar, çıkar çatışması olmadığını beyan etmiştir.*

**Finansal Destek:** *Yazar, bu çalışma için finansal destek almadığını beyan etmiştir.*

**Etik Kurul Belgesi:** *-*

**Author Contributions:** *Sole Author Concept ; Design ; Supervision-Resources; Data Collection and/or Processing; Analysis and/or Interpretation ; Literature Search ; Writing Manuscript ; Critical Review*

**Peer-review:** *Externally peer-reviewed.*

**Conflict of Interest:** *The author has no conflicts of interest to declare.*

**Financial Disclosure:** *The author declared that this study has received no financial support.*

**Ethical Committee Approval:** *-*

## References

- Cengizhan, M. (2019). *The role of out-of-class activities in improving ELT students' vocabulary knowledge* (Unpublished Master's thesis), Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Çanakkale.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage.
- De Wilde, V., Brysbaert, M., & Eyckmans, J. (2021). Young learners' L2 English after the onset of instruction: Longitudinal development of L2 proficiency and the role of individual differences. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 24(3), 439–453. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1366728920000747>
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Springer.
- Krashen, S. D. (1985). *The input hypothesis: Issues and implications*. Longman.
- Lantolf, J. P., & Thorne, S. L. (2006). *Sociocultural theory and the genesis of second language development*. Oxford University Press.
- Lai, C., Zhu, W., & Gong, G. (2015). Understanding the quality of out-of-class English learning. *TESOL Quarterly*, 49(2), 278–308. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.171>
- Lee, J. S., & Drajiati, N. A. (2020). Willingness to communicate in digital and nondigital EFL contexts: Scale development and psychometric testing. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, 33(7), 688–707. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09588221.2019.1588330>
- Leona, N. L., van Koert, M. J., van der Molen, M. W., Rispens, J. E., Tijms, J., & Snellings, P. (2021). Explaining individual differences in young English language learners' vocabulary knowledge: The role of Extramural English Exposure and motivation. *System*, 96. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102402>
- Olsson, E. (2012). *Everything I read on the Internet is in English: On the impact of extramural English on Swedish 16-year-old pupils' writing proficiency* [Licentiate thesis, University of Gothenburg]. University of Gothenburg.
- Olsson, E., & Sylvén, L. K. (2015). Extramural English and academic vocabulary: A longitudinal study of CLIL and non-CLIL students in Sweden. *Apples – Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 9(2), 77–103. <https://doi.org/10.17011/apples/urn.201512234129>
- Öcel, M., & Bergil, A. (2023). The postgraduate theses in ELT between 2019 and 2021: A methodological comparison. *Participatory Educational Research*, 10(2), 43–63. <https://doi.org/10.17275/per.23.25.10.2>
- Peters, E. (2018). The effect of out-of-class exposure to English language media on learners' vocabulary knowledge. *ITL – International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 169(1), 142–167. <https://doi.org/10.1075/itl.00010.pet>
- Peters, E., Noreillie, A. S., Heylen, K., Bulté, B., & Desmet, P. (2019). The impact of instruction and out-of-school exposure to foreign language input on learners' vocabulary knowledge in two languages. *Language learning*, 69(3), 747–782. <https://doi.org/10.1111/lang.12351>
- Reinders, H., & Wattana, S. (2015). Affect and willingness to communicate in digital game-based learning. *ReCALL*, 27(1), 38–57. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0958344014000226>
- Schmidt, R. W. (1990). The role of consciousness in second language learning. *Applied Linguistics*, 11(2), 129–158. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/11.2.129>
- Schwarz, M. (2020). *Beyond the walls: A mixed methods study of teenagers' extramural English practices and their vocabulary knowledge* [Doctoral dissertation, University of Vienna]. <https://theses.univie.ac.at/detail/56447>
- Sundqvist, P. (2009). *Extramural English matters: Out-of-school English and its impact on Swedish ninth graders' oral proficiency and vocabulary* (Doctoral dissertation), Karlstad University.
- Sundqvist, P. (2019). Commercial-off-the-shelf games in the digital wild and L2 learner vocabulary. *Language Learning & Technology*, 23(1), 87–113. <https://doi.org/10.10125/44674>
- Sundqvist, P., & Sylvén, L. K. (2016). *Extramural English in teaching and learning: From theory and research to practice*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Sundqvist, P., & Wikström, P. (2015). Out-of-school digital gameplay and in-school L2 English vocabulary outcomes. *System*, 51, 65–76. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2015.04.001>
- Uztosun, M. S., & Kök, M. (2024). L2 skill-specific anxiety and communication apprehension: the role of extramural English in the Turkish context. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 18(1), 17–31. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2023.2217170>
- Uztosun, M. S., & Sundqvist, P. (2025). Extramural English activities and their relationship with L2 English proficiency at a Turkish university context. *The Literacy Trek*, 11(1), 56–78. <https://doi.org/10.47216/literacytrek.1691753>