

**A Critical Evaluation of Graduate Theses Written in
the Field of ELT in North Cyprus**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to reach a common evaluation by analysing the research methods and subject orientations which have been used in MA and PhD theses written in the English Language Teaching Departments of the universities in North Cyprus in the last ten years. In this research, a literature review was done and data were collected by document analysis technique. The data were collected from the libraries of the universities and the collected data were transferred to electronic medium. The data were analysed quantitatively. For this purpose, 109 MA theses and 10 doctoral theses have been analysed. The results showed that the most popular topic is “Language Skills in English Language and Teaching” at MA level. On the other hand, for PhD level the most researched topic is “Teacher Education in English Language and Teaching”. As far as the year distribution is concerned, “2014” was the year with the highest number of theses. Regarding methodology, the most commonly used method is “the Quantitative method”, together with “the Questionnaire” as the most frequently used data collection instrument. In terms of research context, “Higher Education” had the highest rank. The implications of these results are also discussed.

Keywords: MA and PhD Theses, master’s, doctoral, Dissertation, Graduate, Postgraduate

ÖZ

Bu çalışmanın amacı, İngilizce öğretmenliği bölümlerinde son 10 yılda yazılan yüksek Lisans ve doktora tezlerinde kullanılmış olan araştırma yöntemlerini , konu yönelimlerini ve yıllara göre yazılan tezleri analiz ederek genel bir değerlendirmeye ulaşılmak istenmiştir. Araştırmada kaynak taraması yapılmış olup veriler doküman analizi yöntemiyle toplanmıştır. Veriler üniversitelerin kütüphanesinden toplanmıştır ve toplanılan veriler sayısal olarak elektronik ortama aktarılmıştır. Nitel özellikte olan bu çalışma döküman analizi yöntemiyle yürütülmüştür. Bu amaçla, 109 adet Yüksek Lisans ,10 doktora tezi çalışmasına ulaşılmış, istatistiki analizler ile birlikte, tezlerin hepsi belirtilen ölçütler doğrultusunda incelenip mevcut durum ortaya konulmuştur. Sonuçlara bakıldığında Yüksek Lisans düzeyinde en popüler konunun “Language Skills in English Language and Teaching” olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Öte yandan, doktora düzeyinde en çok araştırılan konu “Teacher Education in English Language and Teaching”dır. Yıl dağılımları ele alındığı zaman “2014” en çok tez yapılan yıl olmuştur. Metodoloji konusu en sık kullanılan yöntem, en sık kullanılan veri toplama aracı“ Anket” ve “Nicel Yöntem”dir. Araştırma bağlamında, “Yüksek Eğitim” en yüksek dereceye sahip olmuştur. Bu ortaya çıkan sonuçlar tartışılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yüksek Lisans ve Doktora Tezleri, Yüksek Lisans, Doktora Tez, Üniversite Mezunu, Lisansüstü

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	iii
ÖZ	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 The Purpose of the Study	2
1.2 Significance of the Study	2
1.3 Research Questions	2
2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	4
2.1 Background of Research Approaches	4
2.2.1 Quantitative Research	5
2.2.2 Qualitative Research	8
2.2.3 Mixed-Methods Research	11
2.2.4 Summary of the Research Approaches	14
2.3 Relevant Studies	15
2.4 Research Gap.....	15
3 METHODOLOGY.....	17
3.1 Research Design	17
3.2 Research Context.....	17
3.2.1 FLE Departments in North Cyprus Universities.....	18
3.2.2 Background of the MA Program	18
3.2.3 The Process of Seminar Course for Each University	19

3.2.4 MA Thesis Completion Process	20
3.2.5 Admission Requirements	22
3.2.6 Background of PhD Program.....	24
3.2.7 PhD Qualifying Exam, Thesis Monitoring and Thesis.....	25
3.2.8 Admission Requirements for PhD	28
3.3 Data Collection Tools and Analysis	29
3.4 Procedures of the Study.....	31
4 RESULTS	33
5 DISCUSSION	40
5.1 Major Findings and Discussion	40
5.2 Implications	44
5.3 Recommendations for Further Research	45
5.4 Limitations.....	46
REFERENCES.....	47
APPENDIX.....	51
Appendix A: Definition of Key Terms.....	52

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Differences between Research Approaches in Terms of Research Design and Research Methods	14
Table 2. The MA Core Courses of the Universities	23
Table 3. The MA Elective Courses of the Universities	24
Table 4 The PhD Core Courses of the Universities	29
Table 5. The PhD Elective Courses of the Universities.....	29
Table 6. Topics Have Been Written in MA Level	34
Table 7. Topics Have Been Written in PhD Level.....	35
Table 8. Methods Have Been Used by Postgraduate Students	37
Table 9. Instruments Have Been Used by Postgraduate Students	38
Table 10. Research Context for Postgraduate Studies	39

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Distribution of MA and PhD Theses by year	36
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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents information about the research; the purpose of the study; the research questions and the significance of the study.

For hundreds of years, individuals have endeavoured to learn remote/second languages through formal instruction. The techniques and methodologies utilized have changed through the years, having been affected by the developments in language and pedagogy. Such change has been pioneered by research in higher education institutions. One of the most important social functions of the universities is to produce knowledge, to make scientific studies and to bring out new inventions. Therefore, graduate studies in universities are of great importance especially in the production of scientific knowledge.

Recent changes in the world resulted in changes in all fields from education to management, from business to international relations. As one of the fields that is widely affected by global changes, the field of education underwent changes in terms of learner needs, learners profile and thus, teacher needs and teacher profiles.

The field of English language teaching is affected by global changes, rapid developments in technology and communication as well as the multi-cultural setting

of classrooms in almost all countries. Such changes call for more research to identify the emerging needs of both learners and teachers to achieve the most reliable results.

As in all fields, in the field of ELT there have been trends towards different topics for researchers. Most recently, the growing trend has been for social media in the 21st century and the 21st century skills for English teachers and learners. Depending on the global changes, the popularity of a research topic may last for a short period of time or for longer periods.

1.1 The Purpose of the Study

With the above mentioned problem statement in mind, this study aims to analyze the graduate (Master's and Ph.D.) dissertations written in the English Language Teaching departments of the universities in North Cyprus in order to provide a current database for researchers in the field. The present research is limited to the field of language education.

1.2 Significance of the Study

The current study is significant because it is designed to:

- Identify the recent trends in the field of ELT in North Cyprus regarding content/topic, and method;
- Meet the need for a database about dissertations in North Cyprus as a printed database of the graduate dissertations written in North Cyprus;
- Function as a guide for future researchers to explore the most recent trends in language education.

1.3 Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What topics have been used by the postgraduate students in their dissertations and how are these topics distributed across universities in North Cyprus?
2. What research methods and instruments have been used by the postgraduate students in their dissertations written in North Cyprus?
3. What are the most popular research contexts for postgraduate studies in North Cyprus?

This chapter provided information regarding the purpose of study, aims, significance, research design, research questions and next chapter will present the literature review.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents information regarding the background and structure of postgraduate programs of Foreign Language Education (FLE) departments of the five North Cyprus universities, historical background of research methods and relevant studies done in the field.

2.1 Background of Research Approaches

There are three main research approaches which can be adopted by researchers in any given research context: Quantitative, qualitative or mixed-methods. The first two are generally considered as opposite, however; they are the ends of a continuum with the third method placed in the middle of the same continuum (Creswell, 2014). Irrefutably, the three methodologies are not as discrete as they initially show up. Qualitative and quantitative approaches ought not be seen as unbending, particular classifications, perfect inverses, or divisions. Rather, they speak to various finishes on a continuum. A concentrate will in general be more subjective than quantitative or the other way around. Mixed method lives amidst this continuum since it fuses components of both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Newman & Benz, 1998). The factors influencing the choice of research approach are the research problem and questions, personal experiences of the researcher and the audience the research is aiming at (Creswell, 2014). This section will discuss the approaches and their differences according to the three components they incorporate: philosophical paradigms they originated from, the research design which refers to the style, and he

research methods which indicates the specific strategies for data collection, analysis, interpretation and validation (Creswell, 2014).

2.2.1 Quantitative Research

Quantitative research approach emerged from post positivist paradigm which is also known as the scientific method or empirical science. The post positivist paradigm has four main characteristics: determination, reductionism, empirical observation and measurement, and theory verification (Creswell, 2014). This paradigm is inspired by authors such as Mill, Durkheim, Newton and Locke (Smith, 1983). Based on these characteristics, this approach is used "for testing impartial hypotheses by looking at the relationship among factors. These factors, thus, can be estimated, regularly on instruments, so that numbered data can be investigated utilizing measurable procedures" (Creswell, 2014, p.4).

In terms of design and method, quantitative research designs are generally conducted in one of the two main ways: survey research and experimental research. In survey research numeric descriptions are derived from questionnaires or structured interviews (Fowler, 2008). In experimental research, the results of a specific treatment method are observed through various group structures. Such experiments can either be true experiments where subjects are randomly assigned or quasi-experimental with non-randomized assignments (Keppel, 1991).

The quality of any quantitative research is measured through reliability, measurement validity and research validity. Reliability refers to the consistency between the data collection instruments and the collected data. This can be calculated through two ways: calculating the correlation between two sets of scores; and calculating a statistic known as Cronbach alpha which focuses on internal consistency (Bachman,

2004). Measurement validity, also known as construct validity, indicates whether the test measures what it was aimed to measure and multiple perspectives can be used to ensure measurement validity. Lastly, research validity is divided into two: internal validity is ensured when the outcomes of the study are influenced by solely the measured or controlled variables. External validity, then again, alludes to the degree the discoveries of the investigation can be summed up to different contexts or gatherings of members (Dornyei, 2007).

According to Dornyei (2007), there are certain threats to research validity in quantitative research: participant dropout rate; the Hawthorne effect which refers to changing attitudes or behaviours of participants due to the awareness of the study; improvement of participants' performances due to several practices; physical or mental change in participants due to maturation; participants' attempts to meet expectations, also known as social desirability bias; when external experiences affect participants' performances during the study.

In quantitative research, sampling which is the selection of participants can be done through probability sampling, or non-probability sampling. Probability sampling methods include random sampling where participants are chosen randomly, for example by giving participants numbers and drawing numbers; stratified random sampling where participants are randomly selected within certain groups; systematic sampling through which "every nth member of the target group" (Dornyei, 2007, p. 97) is selected; and cluster sampling is selected units of larger populations and studying the participants within that unit (Dornyei, 2007). The non-probability sampling methods consist of quota and dimensional sampling where certain groups are selected; similar to stratified random sampling, but participants are selected

within those groups non-randomly. Secondly, in snowball sampling, researcher selects few participants meeting the study criteria and asks them to suggest more participants. Lastly, with convenience or opportunity sampling, researcher selects participants who meet the research criteria due to convenience such as geographical closeness, accessibility, free time, or willingness to participate (Dornyei, 2007).

The analysis of the collected data can be done through various methods based on the aim of the study: descriptive statistics and frequencies; t-tests for comparing two groups; ANOVA for comparing three or more groups; correlation analysis; non-parametric tests such as chi-square test, Spearman's rank order correlation, Mann-Whitney U test, Wilcoxon signed-rank test, and Kruskal-Wallis test; and advanced statistical procedures such as two-way ANOVA, factor analysis, or cluster analysis (Dornyei, 2007). In accordance with the standardized nature of all aspects in quantitative research, the final report of the study includes specific sections: introduction, literature and theory, methods, results, and discussion (Creswell, 2017, p. 4).

To conclude, the main characteristics of quantitative research can be listed as: using numbers; using prior categorization; focusing on variables rather than cases; using statistics and language of statistics; using standardized procedures and objective reality; and looking for generalizability and universal laws. The strengths of the quantitative research approach are: it is "orderly, thorough, entered, and firmly controlled, including exact estimation and delivering dependable and replicable data that is generalizable to different contexts"(Dornyei, 2007, p. 34).

According to some other authors, the Quantitative research is portrayed by the terms 'observation' (Leach, 1990) and 'positivism' (Duffy, 1985). It gets from the logical

strategy utilized in the physical sciences (Cormack, 1991). This exploration approach is a target, formal methodical procedure in which numerical information discoveries. It depicts, tests, and analyzes circumstances and logical results connections (Burns and Grove, 1987), utilizing a deductive procedure of information achievement (Duffy, 1985). Quantitative research is also less time-consuming and easier to implement as the analysis can be done through computer software. However, quantitative research provides an average of the responses, the reasons behind responses cannot be explained and exploratory nature is limited (Dornyei, 2007).

2.2.2 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research approach originated from two paradigms: constructivism and transformative. The former focuses on understanding, different member implications, social and historical development, and hypothesis generation. Constructivist paradigm emerged from the works of Berger and Luekmann (1967) and Lincoln and Guba (1985). The latter, on the other hand, concentrates on political issues, power and justice oriented, collaborative, and it is change-oriented (Creswell, 2014).

According to Neuman (2009), transformative paradigm originated from the works of Marx, Adorno, Marcuse, Habermas and Freire. Transformative approach should be combined with politics and social oppression regardless of the level it takes place (Mertens, 2010). Taking components from both paradigms, the qualitative research approach is used:

For examining and understanding the significance individuals or gatherings credit to a social or human issue. The method of research incorporates creating inquiries or frameworks, data regularly assembled in the member's setting, data examination inductively increasing from points of interest to overall themes, and the examiner making understandings of the significance of the information. (Creswell, 2014, p.4).

As for research design and method, qualitative research design can include narrative research, phenomenological research, grounded theory, ethnography, case studies, action research, or discourse analysis. In narrative research, participants are asked to share moments from their lives and these are retold by the researcher (Riessman, 2008) and these stories are combined with the stories of the researcher's (Clandinin and Connelly, 2004). As for phenomenological research, it originates from philosophy and psychology where researcher describes the experiences of individuals regarding certain phenomena and is mainly done through interviews (Giorgi, 2009; Moustakas, 1994). Originating from sociology, in grounded theory, an abstract theory is generated from the views of participants (Charmaz, 2006; Corbin and Strauss, 2007). Ethnography emerged from anthropology and sociology and the researcher investigates mutual behavioral patterns within a cultural group in its natural setting over a long period of time. Lastly, in case studies the researcher conducts a detailed analysis of a certain case, usually through evaluation through various data collection instruments and over a certain period of time (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009, 2012).

Similar to quantitative research, there are certain factors that ensure the quality in any qualitative research study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) defined these factors with their quantitative equivalents as follows: (i) credibility, the truth value of a study, equivalent of internal validity; (ii) transferability, applicability in other contexts, equivalent of external validity; (iii) dependability, consistency of findings, equivalent of reliability; and (iv) confirm ability, neutrality of the findings, equivalent of objectivity.

The threats that may harm the quality of qualitative research include insipid data which refers to uninteresting or low-quality data from participants; quality of the researcher is crucial as, unlike quantitative research, the researcher has a more active involvement in the research process; and anecdotalism and lack of quality safeguards refers to ensuring that the study is not solely based on a well-selected examples but rather examination of all data collected (Dornyei, 2007).

Similar to quantitative research, snowball sampling, opportunistic sampling and convenience sampling can also be used in qualitative research. In addition to these three sampling methods, the following can also be implemented: homogenous sampling where participants with similar past experiences are selected; typical sampling through which participants with typical experiences to the study are selected; in criterion sampling, participants who meet a predetermined criteria are selected; maximum variation sampling, participants with major experiential differences are selected to observe potential variations in the study; extreme or deviant case sampling, participants with opposing or extreme experiences are selected to help observe the limits of the study; and critical case sampling.

The analysis methods for qualitative data are not as varied as quantitative data: content analysis and grounded theory can be used as well as computer-aided qualitative data analysis (Dornyei, 2007). The reporting of quantitative data may vary but it generally focuses on individual meaning and supports various perspectives on the issue (Creswell, 2014). Although there is no standard structure, qualitative reports use more words than numbers, thus they are greater in length compared to quantitative reports.

In conclusion, the main characteristics of qualitative research are having emergent research design; non-numerical nature of qualitative data; natural research setting; offering insider perspective; having a small sample size; and interpretative analysis of the data. Based on these characteristics, the strengths of the qualitative approach include exploratory nature; understanding complexity; giving reasons for findings; expanding the understanding; long-term study of dynamic issues; flexibility for change when faced with problems; and rich data for the report. The weaknesses, on the other hand, are sample sized and less generalizability; researcher's role in the study; lack of principles for those who are used to quantitative research; too complex theories; and time-consuming and labor-intensive (Dornyei, 2007). In addition, the weakness of qualitative data concerns the probability that a few scientists can progress toward becoming overpowered by the information gathered. They may end up confounded by their failure to restrain the extent of the investigation, concentrating a couple of reasonable zone (Bryman, 1988). In this circumstance, the exploration can turn out to be inadequately engaged an incapable.

2.2.3 Mixed-Methods Research

Mixed-methods research approach emerged from pragmatism which focuses on the outcomes of actions; it is problem-centered, pluralistic and is real-world practice oriented. This approach is used to “request including gathering both quantitative and qualitative information, incorporating the two types of data, and utilizing unmistakable structures that may include philosophical suspicions and hypothetical systems” (Creswell, 2014, p.4). Pragmatic paradigm originated from the ideas of Peirce, James, Mead and Dewey (Cherryholmes, 1992).

Mixed-methods research is grouped under three main designs and methods: convergent parallel mixed methods which include collecting qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously; explanatory sequential mixed methods during which first quantitative data is collected and qualitative data is used later for details; and exploratory sequential mixed methods which starts with collecting qualitative data to explore views of participants and data is used for quantitative data. These three main designs can also be turned into more complex and detailed mixed-methods designs: transformative mixed methods build on theories of social justice or power and order of types of data can vary; embedded mixed methods refer to the design where one of the two data types is used more dominantly; multiphase mixed methods design is generally used for long-term studies where various strategies are implemented (Creswell, 2014).

Mixed-methods research designs should follow the quality guidelines and consider the threats to the study based on the specific combination or design they adopt either by giving equal consideration to both quantitative and qualitative quality factors and threats or by giving more importance to one of them according to the combination.

The possible reasons for selecting mixed-methods studies can include: to have a better understanding of an issue; verifying one set of findings with another, which is also referred as triangulation; qualitative and quantitative sets of data complement the findings; the sequential use of qualitative and quantitative data lead to the development of the second phase; combination of two sets of data can reveal dichotomies or paradoxes which may inspire new questions or perspective; and researchers wish to expand the scope of the study by involving both approaches (Dornyei, 2007).

In addition, mixed methods research can have two distinct drives, as planned by Johnson et al. (2007, p. 124):

Qualitative dominant [or qualitatively driven] mixed methods research is the type of mixed research in which one relies on a qualitative, constructivist-poststructuralist-critical view of the research process, while concurrently recognizing that the addition of quantitative data and approaches are likely to benefit most research projects. Quantitative dominant [or quantitatively driven] mixed methods research is the type of mixed research in which one relies on a quantitative, postpositivist view of the research process, while concurrently recognizing that the addition of qualitative data and approaches are likely to benefit most research projects. (p. 124)

In accordance with quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods, mixed-methods studies can analyse data through data transformations, extreme case analysis, typology/category development, multiple level analysis and computer-aided mixed methods data analysis (Dornyei, 2007). While writing mixed-method reports, certain factors should be considered such as audience sensitivity, research design sensitivity, and result sensitivity (Dornyei, 2007).

To sum up, mixed-methods approach may combine qualitative and quantitative studies simultaneously or sequentially, by giving equal importance to both or choosing one approach as more dominant. The strengths of the mixed-methods approach include strengthening the findings through the use of multiple methods; multi-level analysis of complex phenomena; improving validity; and reaching multiple audiences. The weaknesses may include not having a clear reason for choosing mixed-methods; not having careful consideration and distinction of qualitative and quantitative methods and strategies specific to those approaches; researcher not being sure regarding the rationale behind choosing mixed-methods study (Dornyei, 2007).

2.2.4 Summary of the Research Approaches

The differences between three research approaches in terms of the design they adopt and specific research methods they implement for data collection and analysis are summarized in Table 1 (Creswell, 2014, p.17).

Table 1. Differences between Research Approaches in Terms of Research Design and Research Methods

Quantitative Methods	Qualitative Methods	Mixed Methods
Pre-determined	Emerging	Both pre-determined and emerging
Instrument based questions	Open-ended questions	Both open- and closed-ended questions
Performance data, attitude data, observational data, and census data	Interview data, observation data, document data, and audiovisual data	Multiple forms of data drawing on all possibilities
Statistical analysis	Text and image analysis	Statistical and text analysis
Statistical interpretation	Themes, patterns interpretation	Across databases interpretation

Table 1 summarizes the different data collection methods, data collection instruments, data analysis techniques, and data interpretation strategies adopted by each research approach.

2.3 Relevant Studies

There have been very few similar studies conducted in various fields (evaluation of theses on religion education by Yorulmaz, 2016; overview of guitar education theses by Oztutgan, 2016; assessment of theses written on educational policies in Turkey by Ozdem, 2015) in Turkey, which is the closest context to North Cyprus. One of the most similar studies was pursued by Şimşek, Özdamar, Becit, Kiliçer, Akbulut, Yildirim (2008) by doing an evaluation of the doctoral theses written in five major universities in Turkey in the field of educational technologies in terms of research methods, format and content. Another similar study was conducted by Görler (2017) in the field of fine arts which focused on the analysis of music master's theses in terms of research methods and topics. However, there is no relevant study available in the literature in the context of North Cyprus.

2.4 Research Gap

All graduate dissertations written in all universities located in Turkey are registered in an online database under Higher Education Council (HEC). However, no such system was found in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. It is a struggle for current researchers from North Cyprus or anywhere in the world to have access to these dissertations produced. This study was designed to address this gap by creating a profile of research activities at MA and PhD levels accessible for researchers. For this purpose, the study examined the postgraduate theses written at the five major universities in North Cyprus in order to explore the trends in topic preferences and implemented research methodologies. It is hoped that the results of the study will serve as a database for future researchers.

This chapter provided background information about the ELT departments of TRNC universities; historical background of research approaches and their principles; and

relevant studies. The next chapter presents the methodology, research design of the study.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents information about the research design, research context, data collection tools and data analysis techniques.

3.1 Research Design

The present study used the quantitative research model based on document analysis via the use of screening technique as the data collection method. Screening technique is usually based on a large amount of data, as much information is needed to describe any phenomenon. Another characteristic of screening research is that it is generalizing. Since it does not provide an environment in which variables are controlled, it cannot define the cause and effect relationship between the subjects. It focuses on general trends rather than individual differences. Screening techniques are based on descriptive data from a large number of participants rather than detailed observations about individuals, so they cannot examine the role of individual differences (Lavrakas, 2008)

The screening technique which enables the researcher "... to record the observations of science, to determine the relationships between events, and to make generalizations on the fixed relationships that are controlled" (Yıldırım, 1966, p. 67).

3.2 Research Context

The research consists of master's and doctoral theses written in the last 10 years in the departments of English Language Teaching of the universities in North Cyprus.

3.2.1 FLE Departments in North Cyprus Universities

The backgrounds of the Foreign Language Education Departments of the five universities used in this study are summarized in this section. The names of the universities are not used due to ethical concerns and anonymity reasons. The universities are given pseudonyms throughout the study as University A, University B, University C, University D, and University E.

The Foreign Language Education Departments of all North Cyprus universities were established between 1995 and 2010. All undergraduate programs are accredited by the Higher Education Council in Turkey and some of them have international accreditations as well.

All universities offer master's degree with thesis and non-thesis options; students are required to completed different numbers of courses depending on whether they are enrolled in the thesis or the non-thesis program. All five universities, except two of them offer a Ph.D. program; however, only one university recruits Cypriot and international students to its Ph.D. program.

3.2.2 Background of the MA Program

When the five universities are examined in general, they are divided into two as master's degree with thesis and master's degree without thesis.

In four of the universities, the MA program with thesis offers 7 courses which are distributed as 3 core courses and 4 elective courses, a seminar and a thesis.

On the other hand, only one university includes 8 courses which are divided as 4 core courses and 4 elective courses, a seminar and a thesis in MA program with thesis.

In each university, for the non-thesis MA program, the students need to complete ten courses (6 core courses and 4 elective courses and one project. And the duration of the courses with non-thesis is 1-1,5 years in each university.

The duration of the courses with thesis is 1-2 years in each university. Students must graduate within a total of 3 years. By the end of the four semesters, the candidates who have effectively finished all credited courses indicated in the program and who have a base CGPA of 3.00 out of 4.00 are assessed and upon the suggestion of the thesis supervisor and the approval of graduate study committee and department/program head, their term of studies can be extended for 2 additional semesters.

3.2.3 The Process of Seminar Course for Each University

Step 1: The seminar course must be taken most recent by the third semester.

Step 2: The seminar course is either kept running by a facilitator delegated by the department chair or the thesis supervisor of the understudy.

Step 3: The point of the seminar course is to improve the understudy's aptitudes in leading exploration in a region of enthusiasm for the understudy, ideally a subject identified with the theory work, and revealing the examination discoveries both verbally and recorded as a hard copy.

Step 4 : In the use of the seminar course, the understudy, under the supervision of the thesis supervisor/course facilitator, indicates a subject, leads a literature review, and prepare a composed report what's more, an oral presentation thinking about systems for scientific research and research and publication ethics. The introduction date is declared by the relevant department. It is obligatory for understudies who are enrolled to the seminar course to attend the presentations.

3.2.4 MA Thesis Completion Process

The MA thesis completion process involves several stages:

Stage 1: The thesis topic of the understudy decided in counsel with the thesis supervisor is imparted to the Institute Directorate most recent before the second's over semester through the important structure endorsed by the thesis supervisor, graduate investigation committee and the relevant department/program chair. Understudies whose theses have been endorsed are relied upon to enlist for the thesis each semester as of the third semester of enrolment, the most recent.

Stage 2: A student who is studying at an MA program with thesis, puts the exploration discoveries into writing as per the graduate thesis composing rules set by the Institute Directorate, and orally defends his/her thesis before a jury.

Stage 3: Before the defence, and in events where the thesis defence redundancy is asked the understudy finishes his/her thesis and submits it to supervisor.

Stage 4: Supervisor of the thesis presents it, together with his/her approval for defence, the approval or exclusion type of the Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Board and the plagiarism software report relating to the thesis being referred to the Institute Directorate through the relevant department chair's office.

Stage 5: Following the accommodation of a thesis to the Institute Directorate, a thesis jury is designated in accordance with the suggestion of the relevant department/program and the supervisor and the approval of the Director of the Institute inside seven days, the most recent. The thesis jury comprises of

least 3 and most extreme 5 members, including the thesis supervisor and at least one external member. In case of the jury consisting of three members, the co-administrator cannot turn into a jury member.

Stage 6: The thesis jury gathers out on a date approved by the Institute Directorate and chooses the leader of the jury. Thesis supervisor cannot be chosen as the leader of the jury. The thesis jury comprises of the assessment of the composed theory and the thesis proposal of the up-and-comer and the inquiry answer area. The thesis jury takes a place in an open environment with the cooperation of scholarly staff, graduate understudies, and the group of spectators who have skill in the field.

Stage 7: Having assessed the written thesis and the defence presentation of the student, the jury achieves one of the choices by straightforward dominant part: "Theory Defence Satisfactory" (TS), "Proposition Defence Satisfactory Subject to Modifications" (TI), "Theory Defence to be Renewed" (TR), or "Postulation Defence Rejected" (TJ).

Stage 8: An understudy whose thesis has been rejected is expelled from the Institute. An applicant, who was assessed as "Postulation Defence to be Renewed" is required to repeat the defence before the jury within three months following the first jury.

Stage 9: Important rectifications to the thesis, assessed as "Proposal Defence Satisfactory Subject to Modifications" must be finished inside one month, the most recent and submitted to the jury, accordingly.

Stage 10: A candidate whose thesis is assessed as "Satisfactory" is required to submit bound copies of the thesis to the relevant department which will, thus, submit the copies to the Institute Directorate inside seven days

following the thesis jury date. The Institute Directorate may concede a one-week expansion for the accommodation of bound upon application.

Stage 11: Bound thesis with the candidate's graduation proclamation letter are sent to the Institute by the division.

Stage 12: In three months following the submission of the thesis, the Institute sends an electronic copy of the thesis to HEC with the point of adding to the scientific research and relevant activities.

3.2.5 Admission Requirements

As the universities are connected to distinct, the application requirements are different for some nationalities except these documents. The common documents are, English proficiency test if any, an official transcript of bachelor level, reference letter from the university which they were graduated, the details of scholarships if any, a photocopy of passport or ID card and a passport sized photograph. Also, documents should be prepared as an English, if they are not.

For, the Turkish Republic citizens must have a program relevant valid ALES score of a minimum of 55 and ALES is not required for master's programs without thesis requirement, for TRNC and international students the above mentioned documents are sufficient. In addition, there is no difference of the application forms among universities but the scores are expected of the English proficiency test are different. If students do not have an exam result such as IELTS, TOEFL or YDS they have to take the language proficiency exam organized by the universities. In this proficiency exam, each university has a base score. If students fail from the proficiency exam, they have to take an extra English classes to be able to start the departments.

For 4 universities, these are the minimum scores expected from exams such as TOEFL (65) , IELTS (5.5) and YDS (65) .On the other hand, the number of dams is 80 in the proficiency exam which is prepared by the universities.

Only one university expects these scores as a minimum of these exams TOEFL(70),IELTS (6.0) and YDS (70). The expected score from the proficiency exam prepared by the university is 90.

For each university, if the student gets a lower grade than the target score of the proficiency exam determined by the university, he/she will ponder English courses together with Ma program courses or will consider intensive English courses first (with no MA program courses) before you begin your program.

The following table represents the MA core courses of the universities.

Table 2. The MA Core Courses of the Universities

Approaches, Methods and Techniques
Language Teaching Practice
Second Language Acquisition
General Linguistics
Research Techniques
TEFL Methodology
Communicative Language Teaching

As can be seen from the table above, there are six core courses (i.e. Approaches, Methods and Techniques Language Teaching Practice, Second Language Acquisition, General Linguistics, Research Techniques, TEFL Methodology and Communicative Language Teaching) which are common in all MA programs in all those five universities.

The following table represents the MA elective courses of the universities

Table 3. The MA Elective Courses of the Universities

Reflecting Teaching
English for Specific Purposes
Sociolinguistic
Materials Development and Evaluation
Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL)
Professional Development
English Syntax
Language Transfer
Advanced Writing Skills
ELT Curriculum
Teaching young learners
Teacher Cognition

As displayed in the table above, elective courses vary from program to program in the five universities in North Cyprus.

3.2.6 Background of PhD Program

When all universities are examined, it is concluded that 2 universities do not have a PhD program. In addition to these, only 2 universities have a PhD program on ELT department. Also only one university does not have HEC approval which means it only allows enrollment among Cypriot and international students.

When the two universities are compared who has approval from HEC, it is seen that the number of courses are different. One university, requires students to take seven (3 core and 4 elective) courses, one seminar, one thesis, qualification exam and thesis proposal. And the other one, involves eight (four core and four elective) courses, one seminar, qualification exam, thesis proposal and thesis.

On the other hand the PhD program that only recruits Cypriot and international students, involves seven (3 core and 4 elective) courses, one seminar, qualification exam and one thesis.

3.2.7 PhD Qualifying Exam, Thesis Monitoring and Thesis

Everything mentioned in this section applies to two universities.

Seminar courses and program courses process are same as aforesaid in the MA section.

After the successful consummation of the seminar and courses, the PhD qualifying exam estimates the understudies' broadness of knowledge just as the profundity of their comprehension in their field and their examination capacities in their PhD studies.

The PhD qualifying exam is sorted out and kept running by a PhD qualifying committee comprising of five members named upon the suggestion of the department/program chair and the assent of the Institute Directorate. The committee structures exam juries with the aim of designing, planning and regulating exam in various branches of knowledge. The exam jury comprises of five academic members, ideally, at least two of whom are from an external institution and one of whom is the thesis supervisor. The thesis supervisor has the right to vote.

The qualifying examination is directed inside 15 days before the last day of classes on a date determined by the chair of department/program. The examination comprises of composed and oral parts. Understudies, who prevail in composed exam,

take the oral test which is open to visitors consisting of faculty members, graduate understudies, and experts in the respective field.

The exam jury, by assessing the exhibition of the understudy in composed and oral examinations, chooses by an absolute majority whether the understudy is fruitful (QS) or not (QU). The final conclusion will be communicated with the relevant form to the Institute inside three working days following the PhD qualifying exam.

Understudies who are assessed as ineffective, need to register for the qualifying exam in the following semester. The understudy re-takes the area/s from which s/he failed.

An understudy who fails the exam twice will be expelled from the Institute.

The exam jury may request that an understudy, who passed the exam, takes course(s) notwithstanding different courses taken, relying on the prerequisite that they don't surpass 1/3 of the total credit esteem, regardless of whether the understudy finished the course load. The understudy is required to successfully finish the courses allotted by the Institute.

A thesis monitoring committee is designated for every understudy who has passed the qualifying exam within one month following the date of the exam upon the ideal perspectives on the thesis administrator, relevant department/program chair and the approval of the Institute Directorate.

Thesis monitoring committee is comprised of three faculty members counting the thesis supervisor of the understudy, one member from the respective department/program, and one external member outside the department/program. In case of a co-supervisor being present, she /he may also attend the committee meetings without the right to vote.

The understudy, who passes the PhD qualifying exam, prepares his/her thesis proposal which incorporates the aim of the research, methodology, and study plans, in six months, And the students should send the hard copy to the committee of members 15 days before.

A student whose thesis topic proposal is rejected has the right to choose a different topic and a new thesis supervisor. A student who continues with the same thesis supervisor will repeat the thesis topic proposal defense within three months and a student who changes the thesis subject and thesis supervisor will repeat the thesis topic proposal defense within six months.

The thesis monitoring committee meets once every semester for a student whose thesis topic proposal was accepted and monitors the progress.

The students who are approved by the members come to the thesis defense stage. The defense phase of the thesis is the same as mentioned in the master's thesis. The only difference is the number of members that will participate in the defense. This number is increasing at the doctoral level such as 5 faculty members, three of whom are from the thesis monitoring committee of the student and at least two of whom are professors from an external institution, and the thesis supervisor, or, in situations

where the co-supervisor is present amongst the jury members, seven full members and one substitute member.

On the other hand, there is no information about this process of the university which has not been approved by HEC.

3.2.8 Admission Requirements for PhD

Universities also vary in terms of course length and admission requirements. One university determines the duration of education as 2-5 years, while the other two universities determine this period as 3-5 years.

The minimum CGPA required for applying to the program for each university is 3.00. In order to apply to the program, the students must have graduated from the related departments.

The required documents for each university are the same except for the language proficiency exam such as an official transcript of MA level, reference letter from the university which they were graduated, the details of scholarships if any, a photocopy of passport or ID card and a passport sized photograph.

As for the language proficiency exams, the minimum scores expected in only one university are TOEFL (75), IELTS (6.5), YDS (75). In the remaining two universities, the minimum expected scores are TOEFL (70), IELTS (6.0) and YDS (70). Also, one of the university does not have approval from HEC, because of that YDS is not required as a language exam.

The following table represents the PhD core courses of the universities

Table 4 The PhD Core Courses of the Universities

Applied Linguistics
Current Research Topics in ELT
Studies in Second Language Acquisition
Approaches to Teacher Education

The following table represents the PhD elective courses of the universities

Table 5. The PhD Elective Courses of the Universities

Literature in TEFL
Curriculum Design and Evaluation
Applied Linguistics for Language Teachers
The Psychology of Foreign Language Teaching
Special Studies
Aspects of Bilingualism / Multilingualism

3.3 Data Collection Tools and Analysis

The main source of data is the postgraduate theses submitted to the ELT departments of universities in North Cyprus. A total of 109 master's theses and 10 doctoral theses were examined. The results of the screening from the library of 5 universities in North Cyprus will be examined as the related studies, subject and method, and the current situation will be revealed. Document analysis used in quantitative research was used as data collection tool. In the data analysis, the distributions of master's and doctoral theses in the field of English Language Teaching are given in the last 10 years. Graduate and doctoral studies in the distribution; Quantitative and analyse have been made according to data collection tools, years, researched topics and research models.

The data obtained from the study were uploaded to SPSS program and the frequency distribution of the data was made and the results were indicated with number and

percentage (%). The distributions of the grouped information are presented and interpreted in tables and graphs.

Document Analysis is an orderly system for auditing or assessing records—both printed and electronic (PC based and Internet-transmitted) material. Like other analytical techniques in subjective research, document analysis necessitates that information be analysed and translated so as to evoke significance, increase understanding, and create observational knowledge (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; see additionally Rapley, 2007). Document analysis is a social research strategy and is a significant research instrument in its own right, and is a precious piece of most plans of triangulation, the mix of techniques in the investigation of a similar marvel (Bowen, 2009). Before the research, the analyst must have a plan for the process in detail to reach reliable results (O’Leary, 2014). A specialist can utilize plenty of writings for research, in spite of the fact that by a long shot the most well known is probably going to be the utilization of composed reports (O’Leary, 2014). There is the question of what number of records the scientist should accumulate. Bowen recommends that a wide exhibit of reports is better, in spite of the fact that the inquiry ought to be more about nature of the record as opposed to amount (Bowen, 2009). O’Leary likewise acquaints two noteworthy issues with think about when starting record investigation. The first is the issue of bias, both in the creator or maker of the record, and the specialist also (2014). The specialist must think about the subjectivity of the creator and furthermore the individual inclinations the individual in question might bring the research. Second main issue is the "accidental" proof, or inactive substance, of the archive. Latent substance alludes to the style, tone, motivation, actualities or conclusions that exist in the archive. This is a key

initial step that the scientist must remember (O'Leary, 2014). Documents that might be utilized for methodical assessment as a major aspect of an examination take an assortment of structures. They incorporate; journals, diaries, survey data, radio etc... Analysts ordinarily audit earlier writing as a component of their examinations and fuse that data in their reports. In any case, where a rundown of broke down documents is given, it regularly does exclude past investigations. Most likely, past examinations are a source of data, necessitating that the analyst depends on the portrayal and understanding of information as opposed to having the crude information as a reason for investigation.

3.4 Procedures of the Study

Step 1: The ethics committee was informed that the data would be collected by document analysis.

Step 2: After that, researcher communicated with the libraries of the universities and explained the both purpose and significance of the study. The researcher asked them if they had any electronic database or not for the theses. Furthermore, the researcher asked about if it is allowed to take the picture of theses.

Step 3: Within 5 universities, only one of the university had the data for conducting the theses. However, the researcher had to gather and jot down all of the theses from computer and gave the librarian to find out the theses in the library.

Step 4: The researcher checked all of the theses ‘‘ abstract’’ pages .Moreover, if there was not enough data in abstract page, then the researcher had to look at the information from the methodology pages in detail.

Step 5: For the other 4 universities, the researcher went to the libraries and searched about the theses which were written in the last ten years in the area of English Language Teaching.

Step 6: Except the first university, the researcher spent minimum 3 hours to and maximum 5 hours to conduct the data. For the first university, it took three days to collect the data for the researcher.

This chapter provided details on the research methodology of this study: data collection, research design and method, and data analysis. The next chapter presents the results of research questions.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

In this section, the findings of the data analysis are presented in the order of the research questions and overall evaluation of the results is also provided.

Research Question 1: What topics have been used by the postgraduate students in their dissertations and how are these topics distributed across universities in North Cyprus?

The following table presents topics have been written in MA level.

Table 6. Topics Have Been Written in MA Level

MA	N	%
Language skills in English Language Learning and Teaching	22	20,1
Learner characteristics in English Language Learning and Teaching	15	13,7
Technology in English Language Learning and Teaching	13	11,9
Language areas in English Language Learning and Teaching	12	11
Learner autonomy in English Language Learning and Teaching	6	5,5
Language learning strategies in ELT	5	4,5
Language teaching in EFL	5	4,5
Teaching materials in English Language Learning and Teaching	5	4,5
L1 USE in EFL classrooms	3	2,8
Learner centred instruction in ELT	3	2,8
Pragmatic awareness in English Language Learning and Teaching	3	2,8
Teacher education in English Language Learning and Teaching	3	2,8
Young learners in EFL classrooms	3	2,8
Culture teaching learning in EFL	2	1,8
Native and non-native speaker in EFL classrooms	2	1,8
Testing and assessment in English Language Learning and Teaching	2	1,8
An exploration of student and lecturer perceptions in ELT	1	0,9
EFL teachers' awareness of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in EFL	1	0,9
English idioms and proverbs in ELT	1	0,9
Role of translation in English Language Learning and Teaching	1	0,9
Teachers' attitude towards supervision in ELT classrooms	1	0,9
Total	109	100

The analysis of the 109 theses showed that the researchers focused on language skills in English Language Learning and Teaching (20.1%). In addition, learner characteristics in English Language Learning (13.7%) is the next favourite topic. After that technology in English Language Learning follows the list (11.9%), also language areas in English Language Learning and Teaching is one of the top topics, (11%). Learner autonomy in English Language Learning and Teaching topic (5.5%) has been identified as subject in many researches. It was determined that the topics were studied few times in the field such as; learner autonomy in English Language Learning (5.5%), language learning strategies in ELT (4.5%), language teaching in ELT (4.5%), teaching materials in English Language Learning and Teaching (4.5%). L1 USE in EFL classrooms (2.8%), learner centred instruction in ELT (2.8%),

pragmatic awareness in English Language Learning and Teaching (2.8%), teacher education in English Language Learning and Teaching (2.8%), young learners in EFL classrooms (2.8%) have been used just three times. Culture teaching learning in EFL (1.8%), native and non-native speaker in EFL classrooms (1.8%) and testing and assessments in English Language Learning (1.8%) have been used more than once. Lastly, an exploration of student and lecturer perceptions in ELT(0.9%), EFL teachers' awareness of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in EFL, English idioms and proverbs in English Language Learning and Teaching (0.9%), role of translation in English Language Learning and Teaching and teachers' attitude towards supervision in ELT classrooms (0.9%) have been used just once.

The following table presents topics have been written in PhD level.

Table 7. Topics Have Been Written in PhD Level

PhD	N	%
Teacher education in English Language Learning and Teaching	5	50
Writing skills in ELT classrooms	2	20
A longitudinal study of freshmen in EFL classrooms	1	10
Native and non-native speaking English Language teachers	1	10
Technology in EFL classrooms	1	10
Total	10	100

10 different studies have been conducted in doctoral programs in different universities. In this research, researchers focused on teacher education in English Language Learning and Teaching (50%). Additionally, writing skills in ELT classrooms have been used two times (20%). For the other topics such as; a longitudinal study of freshmen in EFL classrooms (10%), native and non-native speaking in English Language teachers (10%) and technology in EFL classrooms (10%) have been used only once.

The following figure presents the distribution of theses written in MA and PhD level by years.

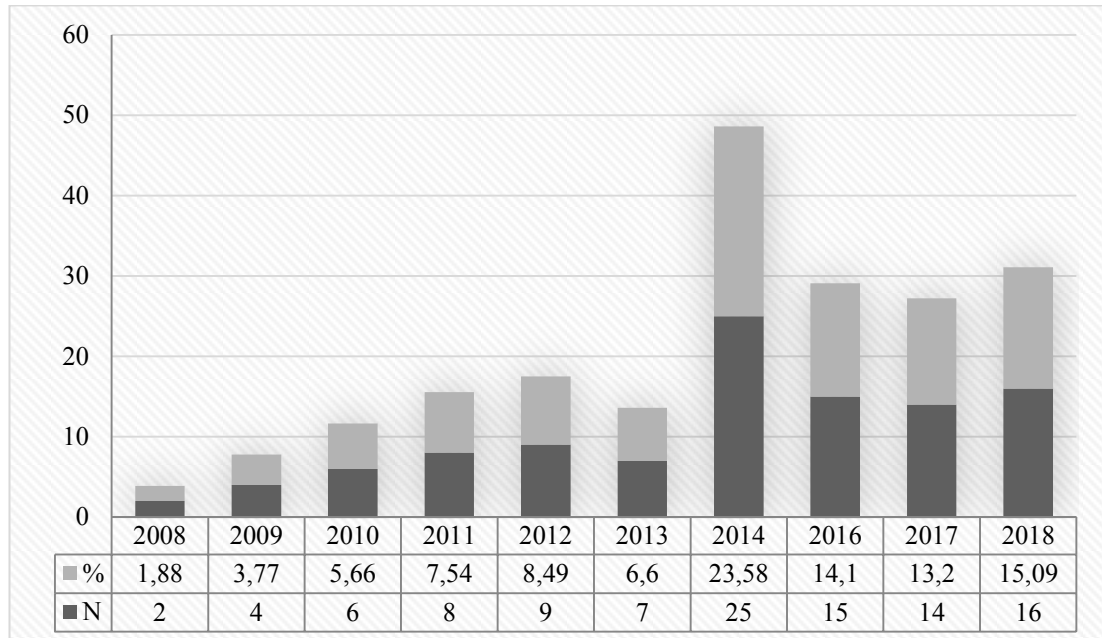


Figure 1. Distribution of MA and PhD Theses by year

According to the distribution of studies by years, it was determined that 25 (23.58 %) studies were conducted in 2014 at most. Secondly, 16 (15.09%) studies conducted in 2018. Thirdly, 15 (14.1%) studies in 2016 and in 2017 14 (13.2%) studies were conducted. The list goes down with 7(6.6%) studies in 2013, 9 (8.49 %) studies in 2012, 8 (7.54 %) studies in 2011, 6 (5.66 %) studies in 2010 and 4(3.77%) studies in 2009. In the figure, the less year is in 2008 with 2 (1.88 %) studies.

Research Questions 2: What research methods and instruments have been used by the postgraduate students in their dissertations written in North Cyprus?

The following table presents research methods have been used by postgraduate students in their dissertations.

Table 8. Methods Have Been Used by Postgraduate Students

Methods	MA	PhD	MA	PhD	MA	PhD	MA	PhD	MA	PhD	Total
	UNI A		UNI B		UNI C		UNI D		UNI E		
Quantitative Method	20	1	19	-	2		4		6		52
Qualitative Method	2	2	7	1	1		4		1		18
Mixed Method	18	6	11	-	1		6		7		49

When the method sections of the researches in the graduate education are examined, it is observed that, firstly, the quantitative method is used more frequently and the second method was the mixed method which is preferred 49 times. The qualitative method was the least preferred method in 18 different studies.

The following table presents instruments that have been used by postgraduate students in their dissertations.

Table 9. Instruments Have Been Used by Postgraduate Students

Instruments	N	%
Questionnaire	48	33,3
Interview	37	25,7
Observation	13	9,02
Pre-test	12	8,33
Post-test	6	4,16
Survey	3	2,08
Speaking test	3	2,08
Reading-writing test	3	2,08
Pro-test	3	2,08
Video	2	1,38
Composition	2	1,38
Multiple tools	1	0,7
Blog posts	1	0,7
Open-ended questions	1	0,7
Audio records	1	0,7
Books	1	0,7
Test paper	1	0,7
Document Analysis	1	0,7
Playback Session	1	0,7
Post Vocabulary Test	1	0,7
Pronunciation test	1	0,7
Library source	1	0,7
Total	143	100,0

When looking at the data tools used to collect data, firstly the researchers were determined to use the questionnaire (33.3%) more frequently. However, they try to obtain data by interviewing (25.7%) in their studies observation (9.02%), pre-test (8.33%), post-test (4.16%), survey (2.08%), speaking test (2.08%), reading-writing test (2.08%), pro-test (2.08%), video (1.38%) and composition (1.38%) have been used few times. On the contrast, multiple tools (0.7%), blog posts (0.7%), open-ended questions (0.7%), audio records (0.7%), books (0.7%), test paper (0.7%), document analysis (0.7%), playback session (0.7%), post vocabulary test (0.7%), pronunciation test (0.7%), library source (0.7%) have been used only once.

Research Questions 3: What are the most popular research contexts for postgraduate studies in North Cyprus?

The following table presents the most popular research context for postgraduate studies.

Table 10. Research Context for Postgraduate Studies

Educational level	N	%
Primary Schools	8	12,5
Secondary Schools	8	12,5
High School	8	12,5
Higher Education	40	62,5
Total	64	100,0

According to the findings obtained in the studies, studies at the higher education level were more prominent. At the other levels, it was determined that the research was conducted equally.

This chapter provided the analysis results with tables. The next chapter will present conclusion and suggestions for the further research.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

In this section, the major findings are discussed, implications, suggestions of the study and limitations are presented.

5.1 Major Findings and Discussion

According to the results, at MA level the most popular topic was language skills in English Language Learning and Teaching, which are reading, speaking, writing and listening. Many studies have been conducted on this topic, indicating that there are problems with the subject. In order to provide solutions to such problems, the researchers focused on this issue.

The other top topic is learner characteristics in English Language Learning and Teaching. When this topic was content-analysed, it became clear that students had anxiety about foreign language learning, lack of motivation and lack of self-confidence. No one can deny that learning a new language is a long and difficult process. Individual differences can make this process even harder. At this point, teachers should carefully identify their students' characteristics and have a student-centred education system. Students should overcome difficulties in learning a foreign language concerns by the help of the teacher. Therefore, the authors aimed to shed light on educators' and students' issues by focusing on this subject and to show how students can overcome these problems and what more a teacher can do to help students.

Another the most preferable third topic is technology in English Language Learning and Teaching. Technology has gained more importance in the last 10 years. In particular, the importance of technology in education and training is increasing. Innovation in the field brings with them problems such as inefficient infrastructure of schools, connection problems, and computer. There are also factors such as equipment deficiencies, financial difficulties and overcrowded classes, which are considered as external factors. In addition, teachers' educational status, approach to technology, knowing how to use technology are further related factors to be considered.

When you look at the least researched topics, the exploration of student and lecturer perceptions in English Language Learning and Teaching, EFL teachers' awareness of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder in EFL and English idioms and proverbs in English language learning and teaching. This implies that such topics have been studied previously and there might not be anything new to add. However, not focusing on these topics for thesis-writing does not mean that there are no problems to be examined in those areas. Researchers might have difficulties to reach enough information or data to analyse. That is why, we can clearly see that authors are only oriented towards trendy topics.

As for the dissertations written at the PhD level, are mostly directed towards teacher education in English Language Learning and Teaching which shows that authors identified certain problems in this area such as teacher identity, reflections, and attitudes towards students. These studies can be seen as attempts to find solutions to those problems in this area.

The next topic researchers focused on is writing skills at PhD level. Writing skills have an important role in learning a language or particularly for academic purposes. In particular, as the level of education progresses, they may be directed to this issue to avoid mistakes that should not be made.

Statistically, topics such as a longitudinal study of freshmen in EFL classrooms, native and non-native speaking English Language teachers and technology in EFL classrooms have received similar attention from researchers. The revelation of the topics studied for PhD theses can offer ideas for future PhD theses in finding new topics or perspectives to study and avoid the same topics especially for publication purposes.

The results concerning the distribution of theses by year show that 25 studies were conducted in 2014 at most. Because, student registration was higher in the previous years and this was one of the reasons affecting the distribution factor by years and the fact that access to the data is from the library is one of the reasons affecting the results.

The theses were written at least in 2008. In 2008 students did not attach much importance to the master's and doctoral degrees. Being a university graduate was enough for many workplaces. Naturally, this factor affected to these years factor of the year.

In terms of methods, the quantitative approach is the most preferred one. The quantitative method is believed to provide more concrete data while qualitative

method requires more time and effort and is based on opinions mostly. That is why the qualitative data might be preferred less.

Regarding data tools, the questionnaire is the most widely used instruments. The questionnaire appears to be a convenient tool for researchers to use. One reason for this choice could be that the implementation of the questionnaire and analysis of the results take relatively less time. Also it can be applied to a large number of participants and is easier to generalize results.

According to the results, the second most used instrument is interview because interviews are can be helpful for getting the story behind a member's encounters. The questioner can look for after through and through information around the point. Interviews may be significant as follow-up to explicit respondents to surveys, e.g., to furthermore look at their reactions.

The next most researched instrument is observation, since it appears outstanding technique for data gathering. It does not require much particular information. In distinctive systems like gathering, study thus forth. In diverse techniques like meeting, survey, the examiner needs to depend upon information given by the respondents. Therefore, these are winding systems and here the operator does not have any approach to investigate the exactness of the data given by them. In any case, in discernment the passer-by can clearly check the accuracy from the viewed. He can apply diverse devices to test the immovable nature of their lead. So all the time the data assembled through recognition is more strong than these accumulated through gathering or survey. In addition to these three methods, we can see that these

tools are not preferred among the authors, which are pronunciation test, post vocabulary test and library source.

In the research context, higher education is the most researched area. It is obvious that in order to reach the foundations of the problems and to reach the solution clearly, the researches were applied to higher education students, which means higher education learners have been the target of the solutions. Researchers were trying to identify the problems from their experiences.

Primary school, secondary school and high school were the least researched level of educational contexts. This can be due to the time and effort required to collect relevant permissions to collect data in state and private schools. The procedures for obtaining permission from universities might be easier to complete and thus, less time-consuming for the researchers.

5.2 Implications

According to the results, most of the researchers focused on the same subjects and ignored many issues in the field. Based on this information, there are many areas that need further attention and to solve problems. On the other hand, regarding to the results, most of the researchers focused on higher education. There may be several reasons why researchers prefer this level. One of these reasons may be the possibility to concentrate on more comprehensive topics at the university level. In other words, it means being able to focus on different and diverse thesis topics.

The other reason is that university-level participants may be more familiar with the issues and questions in the field of study.

5.3 Recommendations for Further Research

According to the results obtained, it is recommended that researchers should focus on different topics and take into consideration the list at the table 3 which are English idioms and proverbs in English Language Teaching, role of translation in English Language and Teaching, teachers' attitude towards supervision in ELT classrooms, the least researched. Studies for increasing the diversity of the thesis topics can also be offered for each university.

The number of studies conducted in the field of doctoral studies draws attention. The total number of theses that can be reached in the last 10 years is just 10, thus preventing general information about the subjects written in that field. Therefore, it is not right to suggest that it should be directed further to other topics.

Other than this, according to the information obtained from the tools used to collect data, it may be suggested to make an effort to increase the diversity of the method. For instance, triangulation and mixed method can use more by students, which it helps them valued study their studies and can be helpful.

The results showed that the researchers choose higher education level for their researchers. It might has many reasons such as if they were done in primary level, secondary or high school they had to take permission from parents which means university students make their research pretty much easy. Researchers should focus on more to investigating the problems with foreign languages in primary school, secondary school and high schools. To find out the problems from the early ages will be more helpful. In other words, with their studies and results can be helpful to change the education system or curriculum, if it is necessary with their results.

5.4 Limitations

I estimate that this number is greater but because of the theses could not be reached due to archiving, technical problems and ban on publication. That is why; I managed to access only 109 MA and 10 PhD theses. The results would be different if all the data were available.

This chapter provided major findings, discussion of major findings, recommendations for further research and limitations.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A: Definition of Key Terms

Dissertation	“A very long piece of writing done as part of course of study.”
Graduate (UK)	“Someone who has studied for and received a degree from a university.”
Graduate (US)	“A person who has finished their school, college or university education.”
Postgraduate (UK/US)	“A student who has one degree and now studies at a university for a more advanced degree.”
Thesis (Singular) – Theses (Plural)	“A long piece of writing that you do as part of an advanced university course.”

(Taken from Cambridge Dictionary (<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/>))

For the purposes of this study, the UK definitions of the terms ‘dissertation’ and ‘thesis’ are used.