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Exploring factors impeding English language instructors from research engagement at tertiary level in Türkiye

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ABSTRACT

Resulting from the emerging demands of higher education, university instructors' roles are extending beyond their supervisory positions to those that require mediating changing conditions and keeping up with new developments. On a daily basis, they have to identify various problems, look for solutions and address them swiftly and methodically. New demands necessitate practicing teachers and instructors to become more research-engaged and informed about challenges, which, however, has aroused controversy over the blurring boundaries between teaching and researching. This study thus investigates English language instructors' research engagement at a state university in Türkiye. The data were collected using a survey developed by Borg (2009). 50 language instructors at the School of Foreign Languages participated in the study, 10% of whom (N=11) volunteered for an interview. The data have been analysed to have a better understanding of whether instructors read and do research and how they justify their preferences. As a result, this paper underlines the potential advantages of guidance for language instructors about being a teacher-researcher in the field of language education.

Keywords
Language instructors, research engagement, teacher-researcher, reflection, professional development.

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Introduction

Teachers' roles have been significantly extended from managing the curriculum and teaching only, to adapting successfully to the changing demands of education systems and students within. On a daily basis, they have to identify some serious problems, confront them and then address them with painstaking care. Therefore, all these demands necessitate teachers to become research-engaged. In this way, they can improve not only themselves but also their teaching skills. Yet, the idea of teachers becoming researchers has aroused lively controversy in the field because many scholars claim that teaching and researching are two different areas of expertise. Both professions require separate skills and knowledge.

The widening gap between practitioners' and scholars' engagement with research has attracted increasing attention from academics who devote themselves to comprehending and bettering the dynamics of language teaching in higher education. It is frequently assumed that teaching practices and research on teaching are fundamentally different areas and require distinct forms of expertise (Medgyes, 2017). Scholars such as Maley (2016) assert that the

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practice of teaching and research do not meet at any point as they move in different directions. Borg (2009) reveals that teachers are reluctant to do research due to a lack of time, lack of knowledge, lack of expertise and limited access to resources. However, as Larsen-Freeman (2015) puts it, not all research has practical implications for class practices. Thus, even if some teachers show interest in reading and conducting research, it is difficult for them to find a direct relationship between what they read and what they put into practice. Also, teachers who are willing to get involved in a study might end up getting demoralised and demotivated because of the details of the research (Borg, 2009). Considering the international literature on teachers' and instructors' research engagements and attitudes, local studies (Inci-Kavak, 2020; Kutlay, 2013; Ustuk & Çomoglu, 2019) have shown parallelism, pointing to a greater agreement on the fact that the number of teachers and university instructors reading research and implementing what they learn is rather inadequate.

Literature Review

Who should undertake the research?

The question "Whose responsibility is to undertake research in the field of education?" has long been discussed. In general, teachers are expected to teach as their primary responsibility and researchers are employed for research. For teachers, research engagement is mostly a personal preference rather than a professional obligation. In other words, while some teachers do not consider research as a role in their contract (Polemeni, 1976), some teachers find it beneficial and thus prefer to be more involved (McKernan, 1988). On the other hand, for most researchers, teachers can only help them collect data and be involved in their studies as subjects, not as the lead person taking important decisions about how to do valid and reliable research. They assume that teachers do not have time, energy and support by their institutions and lack in necessary expertise.

It is clear that teachers and researchers are not in the same boat for doing research. While an academic researcher has the entitlement and any support from the university to do it, a teacher has no such encouragement, so many teachers do not prefer taking on new responsibilities. Understandably, these two professions in different fields of expertise should be evaluated in their positions. For teachers, moving from a comfortable established professional identity (as teachers) to a new one (as a researcher) is another challenge. Hoyle (2001) states that teachers derive work satisfaction mostly from teaching, (not from researching), thus to "carve out a researcher identity as part of their teacher identity" (Gewirtz et al. 2009, p. 581) might be challenging. Researching can be an extra burden unless they are supported by their institutes. It is the widespread belief that "teachers are paid to get students to learn; their job is to teach effectively. They are not paid to understand, document, and generate public knowledge about how students learn and how best to teach them" (Medgyes, 2017, p. 496). In terms of their job titles, teachers' and researchers' roles are completely different from each other. Thus, comparing them in terms of title, power and superiority is meaningless (Medgyes, Gomm & Hammersley, 2002; Medgyes, 2017). These two professions are in charge of "two distinct forms of activity" (Maley, 2016, p. 491) so they are considered to be living in two different worlds on different routes, but it is impossible to say that there are "no links to connect them" (p. 491) In contrary, there are working as a link in the chain since they are both engaged with learning activities in the classroom. They have the same major goal:

better learning and teaching but they have different roles in different contexts for the same ultimate goal (Allison & Carey, 2007).

Another point worth mentioning is that teachers' roles are not limited to the classroom anymore. Qualified teachers are expected to deliver the curriculum only, but also notice any problems that can potentially emerge (Davis, 1995), respond to them and tailor her/his teaching accordingly (Lewis & Munn, 1997). All of these skills require teachers to be research-engaged (Everton, Galton & Pell, 2000; Mortimore, 2000). Despite the increasing expectations on teachers to be research-engaged in many parts of the world, knowledge about their role as a researcher is gradually emerging across the globe (Cochran-Smith, 2005; Erbilgin, 2019).

Educators wear several hats and combine important roles. A researcher who has teaching experience and has total access to the teaching environments or a teacher who has the skills of conducting research would function more effectively than a researcher with no teaching experience or a teacher with no research knowledge (Rose, 2019). These multidimensional identities are highly valued. However, it may not be possible in the real world. In this case, the collaboration between researchers, teachers, practitioner researchers and researcher-teachers can be an option (Banegas & Consoli 2021; Dikilitaş & Wyatt, 2018). Thus, researchers and teachers are co-workers and their world is interconnected (Eisner, 1988).

Teacher Research

It is widely known that the majority of teachers are reluctant to do research despite all the benefits they could bring to their teaching abilities and also to the ELT world. Teachers are unwilling to be research-engaged for some reasons such as

- the lack of expectation that teachers should research and write about their professional practice;
- the demanding nature of teaching which leaves little time and energy for research;
- the current lack of professional confidence and marginalization of teachers from government change agendas; and
- the mismatch between many available research methodologies and teachers' professional ways of working in classrooms (Hancock, 2006).

For a qualified teacher, every learner matters and so s/he should constantly examine her/his own teaching to the best of her/his abilities. To become up-to-date, teachers should see research as an important component of the classroom and thus be involved in classroom research (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). McNiff (1988) also comments on the benefit of doing action research: "Action research presents an opportunity for teachers to become uniquely involved in their own practice" (p. 13). Many scholars such as Medgyes (2018) propose that "action without reflection is impossible" because reflection and action are inseparable terms complementing each other. Pollard and Tann (1987) also stress that "critical reflection and systematic investigation" of teaching practice are integral parts of classroom life (p. 23). Teachers engage in reflection and evaluate their own practices, which can inform the improvement of their teaching-learning practices (Ping et al., 2018). Wyatt and Dikilitas (2016) justify why reflection in research practices are vital because it provides "greater criticality, greater flexibility, deeper awareness of and sensitivity towards context-appropriate pedagogical practices" (p. 16).

As teacher-researchers carry the advantage of having total access to the research participants, they can amass the detailed data more reliably and accurately. Even if researchers, who are experts at scientific research, visited the classroom once or twice a week for a couple of months successively, they would never be involved in teaching as much as a teacher-researcher did. Therefore, teacher-researchers can learn more practically in day-to-day teaching

contexts, which can let them have a better understanding of classroom dynamics and draw more accurate conclusions from them. Teacher research can be inevitably subjective but this can be regarded as a strength in practical terms. Hanks (2017) calls this kind of research "good enough research" because even if it does not meet all the widely-accepted criteria such as objectivity, testing hypotheses, controllability, having large volume and number, statistical information and so on but is still *good enough* because it "contribute(s) to understandings in the field, good enough to build upon, good enough to inspire others' (Hanks, 2017, p. 36). For that reason, although it may have some technical and methodological limitations, Consoli and Dikilitaş (2021) strongly advocate for "good enough research" since it has considerable potential for the fields of education and applied linguistics concerning various forms of language education research. Furthermore, only teachers do have the power to make a change in classroom practice, which ultimately matters. Even if teachers identify problems and address them, putting them in a research paper and making publicly available are not generally among their priorities. However, these efforts and the results revealed are still practically and academically worthwhile. Müjdeci (2020) suggests that modules that can support pre-service teachers' research awareness can also promote teachers' research engagement. As opposed to the findings of action research mentioned in the study by Allison and Carey (2007), action research can develop teachers professionally by increasing their analyzing and problem-solving skills. By training their research skills, teachers improve self-esteem and autonomy in the classroom (Bennett, 1993; Kincheloe, 2003; Kirkwood & Christie, 2006; Lankshear & Knobel, 2004). It feeds directly into their teaching practice (Johnson, 1993) and in return, teachers will derive more satisfaction from their jobs (Widdowson, 1984). In this way, teachers will have the opportunity to choose the best of their educational practice (Whitehead, 1993).

There are some studies aimed to understand teachers' views on educational research. However, research related to teachers' research engagement with educators has been particularly scarce in Turkish contexts. Borg (2009) conducted a study with 505 teachers, 67 of which are from Türkiye. This study has been referred to many times for this issue and has been a milestone in this topic. In 2010, Beycioğlu and his colleagues worked with 300 high-school teachers in Malatya, Türkiye and found that nearly two-thirds of the participants (68%) took conducting research seriously and wanted to do it since their graduation from university. Another study that was carried out in Türkiye at the university level was studied by Kutlay in 2013. She found out that the reasons why instructors are not research-engaged are the same as the other institutions such as heavy workloads, time constraints and lack of professional support. These studies were aligned with the study done by Borg (2009) and yielded similar results in this sense.

Methodology

This study aimed to find out the levels of instructors' research engagement in a Turkish state university. The data were collected via a detailed questionnaire, which was developed by Borg (2009) to understand what they think about research.

Participants

50 English language instructors teaching at the School of Foreign Languages of Gaziantep University in Türkiye volunteered to take part in the study.

Data collection and analysis

The questionnaire as a quantitative tool was complemented with the interview as a qualitative tool because quantitative data can be misleading if used as the only data collection method. In this way, the data collected via the interview helped us to crosscheck the data collected. The questionnaire was administered as a hard copy for the convenience of the instructors. The information from the surveys was supplemented with follow-up interviews. Their answers in the questionnaire were used as the basis of the questions and interviewees were asked to fully elucidate what they meant with their replies. 11 instructors (%22 of the total) volunteered to participate in the interview as the second phase of the study. Their profiles are as follows:

Table 1. Profile of interviewees

Instructors	Gender	Nationality	Qualification	Experience
1	F	American	MA in Literature	3 yrs
2	F	Turkish	MA in Social Sciences	8 yrs
3	F	Turkish	MA in ELT	9 yrs
4	M	Turkish	MA in ELT	10 yrs
5	F	Turkish	MA in Business cont.	14 yrs
6	F	Turkish	BA in ELT	13 yrs
7	F	Turkish	MA in Literature	11 yrs
8	F	Turkish	MA in Education	15 yrs
9	F	Turkish	PhD in ELT	12 yrs
10	F	Turkish	PhD in Education cont.	12 yrs
11	F	Turkish	PhD in ELT cont.	24 yrs

The face-to-face interviews were conducted at the researcher's or the instructors' offices depending on their availability. They often lasted about half an hour. The interviews were also audio recorded so as not to miss important details. The instructors' L1 was used to secure a sincere and relaxing environment. The follow-up interview was made of a tailored and adapted version of the questions asked in the questionnaire. Thus, they had a chance of expanding on any responses they had given to the survey (e.g. You have stated that you sometimes do research, what do you mean by that?). The interview was mainly used to crosscheck, clarify and enrich the data collected by the survey. The interviews were also transcribed and analysed to see whether they are parallel with the survey results. Briefly, the whole data collected via each tool -survey and interview- was brought together to answer the research questions more accurately.

Research questions

In this paper, the following questions were attempted to be answered:

1. To what extent do instructors state they read published research?
    a. Where instructors read research, what resources do they read?
    b. Where instructors do not read research, what reasons do they cite?
2. To what extent do instructors say they do research?
    a. What are their reasons for engaging in research?
    b. Where instructors do not do research, what reasons do they cite?

3. To what extent are instructors' reported levels of research engagement associated with specific background variables such as qualifications and experience?

Results

Background information

A total of 50 instructors who are teaching English participated in this study. 48 questionnaires were completed in hard copy (Note that 2 of them were not used because of missing data in some parts). As shown in Table 2, the majority of the instructors have between 5-14 years of teaching experience in English in this state university.

Table 2. ELT instructors by years of experience

Years	Number	%
0–4	1	2%
5–9	11	23%
10–14	18	38%
15–19	6	13%
20–24	4	8%
25+	8	17%
Total	48*	100%

Table 3. Respondents by highest ELT qualification

Qualification	Number	%
Certificate	0	0%
Diploma	1	2%
Bachelor's	20	42%
Master's	23	48%
Doctorate	4	8%
Other	0	0%
Total	48*	100%

*The total number does not count up to 50 because of missing data.

Table 3 also shows their highest level of ELT qualification. Nearly half of the participants are Master's graduates (48%). This demographic information will also be used to see whether there are any relations between the level of their qualifications and their research engagement.

Reading research

This section aims to get responses about the frequency of the instructor's reading research. If they do not, it also asks questions to find the reasons.

Frequency of reading research

49 instructors reported how often they read published resources. As Table 4 shows; 6% said they never read research, 30% said they do it rarely, 42% said they sometimes, and 20% often (RQ1). Thirty one instructors stated that they 'sometimes' or 'often' read research (63%). This subgroup was asked what resources they read. The results are listed in Table 5 below. The most highly rated answer was 'web-based sources' (33%). Some reported that they appreciate learning by exchanging and discussing ideas with colleagues and experts in these spaces (Castle, 2013; Kosnik et al., 2015). In the interviews, many of them mentioned that they use the Internet a lot to solve some problems in class or look for new ideas to teach a lesson. They

stated there are really useful forums, blogs and websites for tips. Reading articles or books can be time-consuming but the sources on the web are quite easy to reach and time-saving.

Table 4. Frequency of reading research

Frequency	Number	%
Never	3	6,12%
Rarely	15	30,61%
Sometimes	21	42,86%
Often	10	20,41%
Total	49	100%

Some also criticized the complex language of some published studies and one said that: "*it feels like they are not written for us to read but scholars*". Another one said: "*I love reading articles but at the end of the day, there is not a lot to take home from what I have read*". Reading books and academic journals is almost equally popular among instructors in this school (25% and 24%). They combine what they have learnt through these ways with the pedagogy that they find effective and efficient (Marsh, 1987). The ones who said they read academic journals are the instructors who are mostly doing it as a part of the course or diploma such as a Master's, Doctorate, or a project for professional development (RQ1a).

Table 5. Resources instructors read

Resources	Number	%
Web-based sources of research	25	33,78%
Books	19	25,68%
Academic journals	18	24,32%
Professional magazines	11	14,86%
Other	1	1,35%

Table 6. Reported rates of influence of reading

Resources	Number	%
Moderate influence	13	40,63%
Fairly strong influence	10	31,25%
Strong influence	7	21,88%
Slight influence	2	6,25%
No influence	0	0,00%

These instructors who stated they read research are also asked to what extent their reading affects their teaching in the class. It is listed according to its ratings from the highest to the lowest in Table 6. As it is clear from Table 6, nearly one-third of the subgroup (N= 32) stated that they think that what they have read has a moderate effect on what they are teaching in the class (N= 13). In the interviews, they mentioned: "*What I have read does not change what I do all of a sudden*", some others stressed: "*What I have read is not always suitable to my learners' local needs and context*". However, nearly half of the subgroup thinks that reading research has a 'strong' or 'fairly strong' influence on their teaching. Some instructors mentioned that they do not expect quick changes in their classes, they said: "*It is good to be up-to-date and be familiar with the field*". One said who is a PhD candidate: "*Reading raises your awareness about what, how and why I do the things in the class*" (RQ1a).

Reasons for not reading research

Instructors who stated that they 'rarely' or 'never' (N= 18) read research were also asked what their reasons are for their low motivation. The identified reasons were summarized in Table 7.

Table 7. Reported reasons for not reading research

Reasons	Number	%
I do not have time	12	34,29%
I am not interested in research	10	28,57%
Published research does not give me practical advice for the classroom	7	20,00%
I do not have access to books and journals	3	8,57%
I find published research hard to understand	3	8,57%

Lack of time and no interest in research are the main reasons identified. They also stated that published material does not give them practical advice which they need in their teaching on daily basis. As an advantage of teaching at a university, they have access to resources and also they do not have any difficulties in understanding the published materials (RQ1b).

Doing research

Reasons for doing research

Forty-nine instructors reported how often they do research. Interestingly, the frequency of instructors' research reading shows parallelism with their research doing engagement. Table 8 shows that teachers reported how often they employ research (10% never, 30% rarely, 42% sometimes and 16% often) (RQ2).

Table 8. Frequency of doing research

Frequency	Number	%
Never	5	10,20%
Rarely	15	30,61%
Sometimes	21	42,86%
Often	8	16,33%
Total	49	100%

The largest proportion here is 42% and nearly half of the instructors stated that they at least 'sometimes' do research but as Borg (2009) suggested that it needs to be evaluated cautiously because interviews revealed that they do not do it regularly. Here are some examples of how instructors clarified what 'sometimes' mean: "*when I have to do it*"; "*when I was at uni*" (an instructor with 6 years of experience); "*when I have time*"; "*when I face a problem in the class*"

Table 9. Reasons for doing research

Reasons	Number
It is good for my professional development	27
To find better ways of teaching	25
To solve problems in my teaching	20
Part of a course I am studying on	16
To contribute to the improvement of the school generally	16
I enjoy it	15
Other teachers can learn from the findings of my work	8
It will help me get a promotion	5
My employer expects me to	2

The instructors who said they 'sometimes' or 'often' do research (N= 29) were also asked why they do research and Table 9 illustrates their reasons. As it is clear from the statements 'sometimes' does not mean researching regularly. Respondents tend to keep away from the polarized views (never and often in this case) and mark the one in the middle not to stand out from the crowd (RQ2a).

Reasons for not doing research

20 instructors out of 49 reported that they 'never' or 'rarely' do research. They were asked what their reasons are for this. Their answers are listed in Table 10.

Table 10. Reasons for not doing research

Reasons	Number
I do not have access to the books and journals I need	11
I need someone to advise me but no one is available	8
Other teachers would not co-operate if I asked for their help	7
The learners would not co-operate if I did research in class	7
I am not interested in doing research	2
My employer discourages it	2
I do not have time to do research	1
My job is to teach not to do research	1
Most of my colleagues do not do research	0
I do not know enough about research methods	0

More than half of this sub-group stated that they do not have access to the resources and lack of guidance. They also claimed that colleagues and learners would not help them if they wanted to do research. Interestingly, they do not think that their job is only to teach them not to do research or lack of time is not an excuse, they do not have any discouragement from the school. They do not also have any pressure as most of their colleagues do not research, too (RQ2b).

The Relation between Research Engagement and Instructors' Experience and Qualifications

There is not much interest in doing research and no direct relation between research engagement and experience (Table 11). It is inappropriate to say that the more instructors have experience, the more they are research-engaged or vice versa (RQ3). As there are not enough numbers in different experience groups, the chart and any generalization that can be taken out of this data can be misleading. Table 12 below illustrates the relationship between instructors' qualifications and their interest in doing research. In this chart, sometimes, often and rarely/never are separated from each other in two different columns.

Table 11. Relation between instructors' years of experience and their research engagement levels

Argument	0-4 years	5-9 years	10-14 years	15-19 years	20-24 years	25+ years
More often	0	5	14	1	3	5
Less often	1	6	5	4	1	4

Table 12. Relation between instructors' qualifications and their research engagement levels

	Research-engaged Instructors			Research-free Instructors	
Qualification	Sometimes	Often	%	Rarely/Never	%
Diploma	0	0	0	1	2%
Bachelor's	10	3	26,5%	8	16,5%
Master's	10	2	24,5%	11	22,5%
Doctorate	1	3	8%	0	0
Total			59%		41%

As explained in the previous sections, it was evidenced in the interviews that 'sometimes' should not be interpreted as a frequent activity that is done regularly. Here, we can see that instructors who hold Bachelor's and Master's degrees are more research-engaged in this group. Interestingly, nearly half of the MA-graduate instructors are not willing to do research. In the interview, a couple of instructors who are holders of Masters in ELT complained about some issues and they confessed that they lost their interest in the research and the field. They said

that while they were doing their degrees, they had some challenges such as arrogant, egocentric academics, having to travel for a degree, having good contacts to be able to promote, etc. They also admitted that they did not do it because they enjoy being research-engaged, it was only a requirement. Thus, some added that they lost their spirit and so they did not continue their academic studies.

Discussion and Conclusion

The results suggest that instructors appear to be research-engaged at a reasonable level at both levels: reading and doing research. Nearly half of the group is doing a Master's or Master's graduate. Even the instructors who claim that they do research say that it is really hard work and they do not have time and energy left for it. Salter and Tett (2022) clarify what lack of time means for practitioners: making choices about priorities; setting aside time to explore research and (re)conceptualising their professional identities to incorporate research. The results are also consistent with Kyaw's (2021) findings in Myanmar higher education settings. Many factors (personal, institutional, policy-related, and system-related factors) at various layers affect educators' research engagement. They admit that external forces such as course requirements, and academic or financial support help them carry on their academic studies with strengthened motivation levels. Dörnyei (2007) and Banegas and Consoli (2021) also resonated with this statement by lamenting that many teachers get involved in research at the postgraduate level. In other words, echoing what Davey (2013) claims, most researcher-teachers conducted research not because they are aware of the benefits of it on their teaching skills, but only to please the system since they consider research as a requirement of top-down systems, thus, Davey (2013) and others (Passy et al., 2018) believe that unless such initiatives are planned, introduced, conducted and sustained at grass-roots levels, it would not work in the long run.

In line with Davey's (2013) claims, even research-engaged instructors claim that they understand why research-free instructors are not interested in research. That can be the reason why 63% state that they read and 59% claim that they conduct research 'sometimes' or 'often'. Research-engaged instructors read a range of materials. Out of these, web-based materials are the most popular item since they give instructors practical teaching ideas, some of them stated. However, web-based materials are mostly not research-based as the information provided on some educational web pages is not generally retrieved from empirical research. At best, they can be insights from experienced teachers.

Many researchers consider teachers as practitioners and they do not expect teachers to conduct research. In other words, researchers assume that practice should come first for teachers. Watkins (2006) draws an analogy between research and practice and a chicken and egg situation. Whichever comes first: research or practice? Teachers and academicians at universities cannot ignore the potential value of research to teachers. In fact, teachers should be aware of their lack of proper skillset and get support for them (e.g. organizational, collegial, emotional, intellectual, and practical) (Borg, 2009). However, having this kind of support only would not allow them to survive in the research field and they will need to endure and improve themselves gradually to enhance the quality and substance of their work. Similarly, some teachers consider research as something only researchers should do. They are not interested in research at all unless the findings affect their lesson practices. Good (1989) blames teachers for not being professional since they do not spare time to read research. However, many enthusiastic teachers do research in the classroom and they believe that "ivory towers" where

researchers are believed to live should be broken down (Watkins, 2006) and their efforts and contributions should be appreciated and acknowledged.

A definitive point this paper aims to make is not that all teachers should be engaging in research; instead, as discussed before, teachers who will start doing research should be intrinsically motivated. Undoubtedly, it would be unreasonable to expect this effort from every teacher. No matter what they are called: a teacher, a practitioner, a teacher-researcher, an "inquiring teacher" (Allwright, 2003) or a "teacher-inquirer" (Medgyes, 2017), the ones who put the effort in are the ones who foster "researcher spirit" in them. On the other hand, this paper does not direct criticism to the majority of teachers since it is understandable that some have strong justifications for their hesitancy or (un)willingness. That is why, the negative prefixes (un-willingness, dis-ability) have often been used in parenthesis to imply two sides of the issue in this paper.

What the future holds for teacher research and its value is rather mysterious, but "effective partnerships" (Rose, 2002) between teachers and academicians, in which academics and teacher-researchers respect and value each other's expertise (Gewirtz et al., 2009) can be beneficial. This can allow partners to connect scholarship with practice (Cochran-Smith, 2005), which can help each party overcome weaknesses and compensate for them. Therefore, stakeholders should not be in competition; instead, they should flourish in cooperation. In brief, there is an urgent need for a greater alliance and teamwork in research and its classroom applications.

Reflection

As a teacher myself, I do agree that the teaching profession is devalued and many complaints have been thrown at teachers, especially when expectations are not met. The problems teachers face should be addressed. It can sound easy, yet teaching is rather challenging: teachers do not only motivate learners on a daily basis, but they also need motivation and reward to esteem their job and identify themselves in the professional sense. As Ulvik and Smith (2019) highlighted, one of the most important cornerstones of teaching is motivation, which highly affects teachers' attitudes toward research on their research engagement. The initial requirement of engaging in research is the teacher's (un)willingness and (dis)ability. Teachers also need to know what doing research requires: overcoming motivational ups and downs experienced during research projects, personal, professional, expertise and resources support. Freeman (1996, p. 90) states that teachers need to "know the story of the classroom well" to be able to tell it, but they do not have the opportunity for the latter. In other words, they cannot get their voices heard. Reading studies by academics and researching her/himself more and more will help them develop research skills and in return, increase their understanding of the foundations of the research. More importantly, this would bring opportunities for professional development (Watkins, 2006). Above all, there are certain benefits of knowing about the intricacies of the research process. To illustrate, teachers can

- appreciate the benefits of research;
- begin to understand in deeper and richer ways what they know from experience;
- be seen as learners rather than functionaries who follow top-down orders without question;
- be seen as knowledge workers who reflect on their professional needs and current understandings;

- explore the learning processes occurring in their classrooms and attempt to interpret them. (Kincheloe, 2003, p. 18)

As it is clear, this process is not a short-term activity, and, therefore, all the support given should be sustainable. Extrinsic motivation (e.g. research funding or promotion) will gradually develop intrinsic motivation (e.g. self-directedness, autonomy) in time. For acquiring the necessary skillset, induction programs, and in-service programs, professional development programs, workshops should be offered. All of these supports can enhance teachers' commitments and encourage them to have "researcherly dispositions" (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2014) in the long run. To establish a strong research culture, partnerships or cooperative relationships with universities should be created. Local and global professional research networks should be set up for exchanging ideas.

Education is open to continual changes (Öztabay, 2017). The main problem is that the controversy over research in language teaching is heating up and there are claims that there is little evidence of research-driven development in language education (Medgyes, p. 495). I agree that perhaps not all changes are embellished with trendy concepts and buzzwords, but the radical ones necessitate improvements in the contemporary curriculum. Teachers should be aware of the vitality of multi-tasking in teacher education, thus they have to update their skills to survive as learning teachers. Teachers should get trained to be able to keep abreast of prospective reforms in the field. Borg (2009) claims that these changes require the Ministry of National Education to embark on a human resource development program for teachers to authenticate their skills. In this way, teachers can upgrade their position from a subservient to a revolutionary one (Borg, 2009).

Disclosure Statement

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Appendix

Appendix 1. The survey questions

QUESTIONNAIRE

English Language Teachers' Views of Research

What does 'research' mean to you and what role does it play in your life as a professional English language teacher? These are important questions in our field- especially at a time when in many countries teachers are being encouraged to do research as a form of professional development. This survey asks you for your views on these issues and will take 10-15 minutes to complete. Participation in this study is voluntary. Thank you for your interest.

Dr. Vildan İNCİ KAVAK

SECTION 1: READING RESEARCH

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

Never ☐	Rarely ☐	Sometimes ☐	Often ☐

If you choose "Rarely" or "Never", go straight to Question 4 in this section.

2. You said that you read published language teaching research often or sometimes. Which of the following do you read? (Tick all that apply)

Books	
Academic/Professional Journals (e.g. TESOL,ELT Journal)	
Professional Magazines/ Newsletters (ET etc.)	
Web-based sources of research	
Other (please specify)	

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

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

Now go to Question 2

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

I am not interested in research	
I do not have time	
I do not have access to books and journals	
I find published research hard to understand	
Published research does not give me practical advice for the classroom	
Other reasons (please specify)	

SECTION 2: DOING RESEARCH

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

Never ☐	Rarely ☐	Sometimes ☐	Often ☐

If you choose Rarely or Never go straight to Question 3 in this section.

2. You said you do research often or sometimes. Below are a number of possible reasons for doing research.
Tick those which are true for you.

I do research …

a. As part of a course I am studying
b. Because I enjoy it
c. Because it is good for my professional development
d. Because it will help me get promotion
e. Because administration expects me to
f. Because other teachers can learn from the findings of my work
g. To contribute to the improvement of the school generally
h. To find better ways of teaching
i. To solve problems in my teaching
j. Others (Please specify)

Now go to section 3

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

I don't do research because…

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

SECTION 3: ABOUT YOURSELF

1. Country where you work: _____ Male ☐ Female ☐

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

0-4 ☐	5-9 ☐	10-14 ☐	15-19 ☐	20-24 ☐	25+ ☐

3. Highest relevant qualification to ELT (Tick ONE)

Certificate ☐	Diploma ☐	Bachelor's ☐	Master's ☐	Doctorate ☐	Other ☐

This completes the questionnaire. Thank you for taking the time to respond.

Appendix 2. The Interview questions

Semi-structured Interview Questions

1. You said you X read research in the survey. What does it mean?

2. Why do (not) you read research? Can you explain?

3. You said you X do research in the survey. What does it mean?

4. Why do (not) you read research? Can you explain?