

Thematic and Methodological Trends in ELT Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations on Flipped Learning

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Abstract: As flipped learning gained popularity in Turkish ELT academia, more master's theses and doctoral dissertations on flipped learning have been supervised in ELT graduate programs. Therefore, depicting the thematic and methodological trends in ELT master's theses and doctoral dissertations on flipped learning in Turkey seems to be meaningful to provide insights towards the current research tendencies and to point out research gaps for novice researchers in Turkey. Thus, the researcher conducted a descriptive content analysis by reviewing the theses from 2010 to 2021 in the National Thesis Centre database of Turkish Council of Higher Education. As a result, 24 master's theses and 6 PhD dissertations were found eligible for analysis. Findings showed that there has been an increase in the ELT theses studying flipped learning since 2018; the mixed-methods approach was employed most often; in the majority of the theses, quasi-experimental design was employed, followed by case studies; flipped learning was generally implemented to teach grammar, writing, and speaking; and two main research foci were dominant across the theses: achievement and learners' attitudes towards flipped learning. The findings obtained from this study are expected to contribute to future graduate studies conducted on flipped learning in ELT.

Keywords: qualitative content analysis; master theses, doctoral dissertations; flipped learning

Introduction

For today's YouTube generation, who reaches information easily via using technology as medium of communication, the conventional way of instruction seems to be no more effective. Therefore, educators are responsible for catching up with the emerging culture of this digital native generation by using technological tools as medium of instruction and allowing active learning in class time to achieve deeper learning, as is the case with one of the recent blended learning models, the flipped learning approach. As Jon Bergmann, a pioneer of flipped learning, emphasizes, 'flipped learning' directs one basic question, "What is the best use of face-to-face class time with students?" (Şahin& Fell Kurban, 2016), through which the stages of Bloom's taxonomy of the cognitive domain are centred in the instructional design of flipped classrooms, in other words, in- and out-of-class work are organized, as seen in Figure 1 below.

For teaching English language skills, flipped learning has been proved to be efficient in several dimensions in English language teaching (ELT), including, having more communicative activities in class time through freeing in-class time from teaching grammar via sharing lecture videos online (e.g. Correa, 2015; Nguyen, 2018; Temizyurek & Ünlü, 2015; Webb & Doman, 2016); supporting learners' collocation skills (e.g. Alnuhayt, 2018; Suranakkharin, 2017; Zhang, Li, Jiao, Ma, & Guan, 2016); improving learners' willingness to communicate (WTC), and by doing so, developing learners' speaking skill (e.g. Hung, 2015, 2017a; Lee & Wallace, 2018; Lin & Hwang, 2018); contributing to listening skill proficiency by exposing learners to more listening tasks in individual space (e.g. Ahmad, 2016; Leis, 2016); supporting reading skills (e.g. Chavangklang & Suppasetseree, 2018; Karimi & Hamzavi, 2017); improving writing skills by receiving feedback from their teacher in class (e.g. Engin & Donanci, 2014; Pavanelli, 2018); facilitating academic achievement in English (e.g. Başal, 2015; Engin, 2014; Evseeva & Solozhenko, 2015; Hung, 2015; Hung, 2017b; Lee & Wallace, 2018; Sözlü, 2018); and encouraging deeper thinking by providing learners with more time and active learning tasks in class (e.g. Boyraz & Ocak, 2017; Choe & Seong, 2016; McKeown, 2016; Sun, 2017; Zainuddin, 2017).

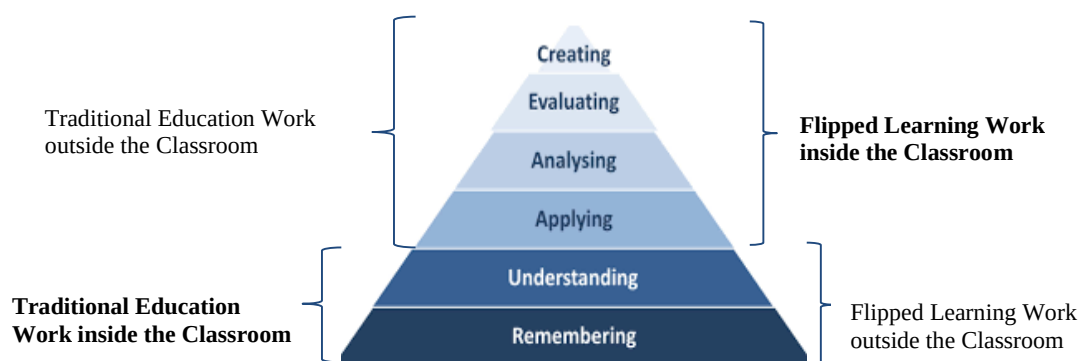


Figure 1. Aspects of traditional and flipped learning mapped against Bloom's Taxonomy (Şahin& Fell Kurban, 2016, p. 16).

As flipped learning have become a phenomenon in education, its popularity has found its place in ELT academic circles as well. Especially after 2010s, in ELT post-graduate programs in Turkey, more master's theses and doctoral dissertations on flipped learning have been handled. As this phenomenon has been subjected to several post-graduate theses, in order to provide insights towards the current research practices and to point out research gaps for novice researchers in Turkey, it seems meaningful to have a holistic view of the thematic and methodological trends in ELT post-graduate theses in Turkey's EFL teaching context. The data gathered from such an analysis will hopefully benefit Turkish graduate students to be informed about the flipped learning implementation in post-graduate ELT research in Turkey.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this present study is to depict the thematic and methodological trends in ELT master's theses and doctoral dissertations on flipped learning in Turkey's context in order to contribute to future graduate studies conducted on flipped learning in ELT field. Accordingly, the research questions of the study are as follows:

1. What are the methodological trends of the theses on ELT flipped learning?
 - 1.1. What is the type (master's or doctoral) distribution of the theses in terms of years (2010-2021)?
 - 1.2. Which research methodologies were employed in the theses?
 - 1.3. Which research designs were employed in the theses?
 - 1.4. What are the participant profiles involved in the theses?
 - 1.5. Which data collection tools were utilized in the theses?
2. What are the thematic trends of the theses on ELT flipped learning?
 - 2.1. What are the research foci of the theses?
 - 2.2. For which language skill was the flipped learning implemented in the theses?
 - 2.3. Which activities were employed in individual space learning in the theses?
 - 2.4. Which activities were employed in group space learning in the theses?
 - 2.5. Which learning tools were employed in the instructional design of the theses?

Research Design

The study was conducted as a descriptive content analysis which is a systematic review to identify the general trends and research results in a particular research discipline (Çalık& Sözbilir, 2014). Through descriptive content analysis, independent qualitative and quantitative studies are reviewed to identify their general trends. Therefore, the prospective researchers, who are planning to study in the particular discipline, are informed about the general trends of previous studies. Accordingly, the study was composed of three fundamental phases: firstly, the review criteria and the keywords for the search were defined; secondly, the inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied to the database search; finally, the theses found eligible were reviewed based on the research questions, and the results were visualized in tables and /or graphics.

Data Collection

The researcher reviewed the open access theses published online from 2010 to 2021 in the National Thesis Centre database of Turkish Council of Higher Education by September 2021. The researcher chose the year 2010 as the starting point as this was when flipped learning became popular in ELT studies. In this study, the following terms were used to identify research on flipped learning. The search keywords were: 'Flipped Learning', 'Flipped Classroom', 'Inverted Classroom', 'Inverted Learning', 'Flipped', and 'Inverted'.

To determine which theses to include in the study, the researcher arrived at some criteria for inclusion and exclusion which are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria of the descriptive content analysis

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication Date	2010 to 2021	Before 2010 and after September 2021
Language	English	Languages other than English
Academic Field	English Language Teaching	Fields other than English Language Teaching
Search Engine	National Thesis Centre database	Search Engines other than National Thesis Centre database
Publication Type	Master Theses & PhD Dissertations	Publications other than Master Theses & PhD Dissertations

To identify the studies via the database searching, the researcher used the PRISMA flow model (Figure 2) to guide the process of identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion of studies. The PRISMA guidelines were proposed by the Ottawa Methods Centre for reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff & Altman, 2009). Initially, 123 theses were detected for review. After excluding duplicates, 100 theses were attained. Applying the eligibility criteria, 56 theses were excluded as their focus of study were other than teaching English. Finally, of the 44 theses studying teaching English, 14 theses were excluded as 13 of them were handled in Educational Sciences department while 1 of them was handled in Instructional Technology Department. Finally, 24 ELT MA theses and 6 ELT PhD theses were found eligible for the review.

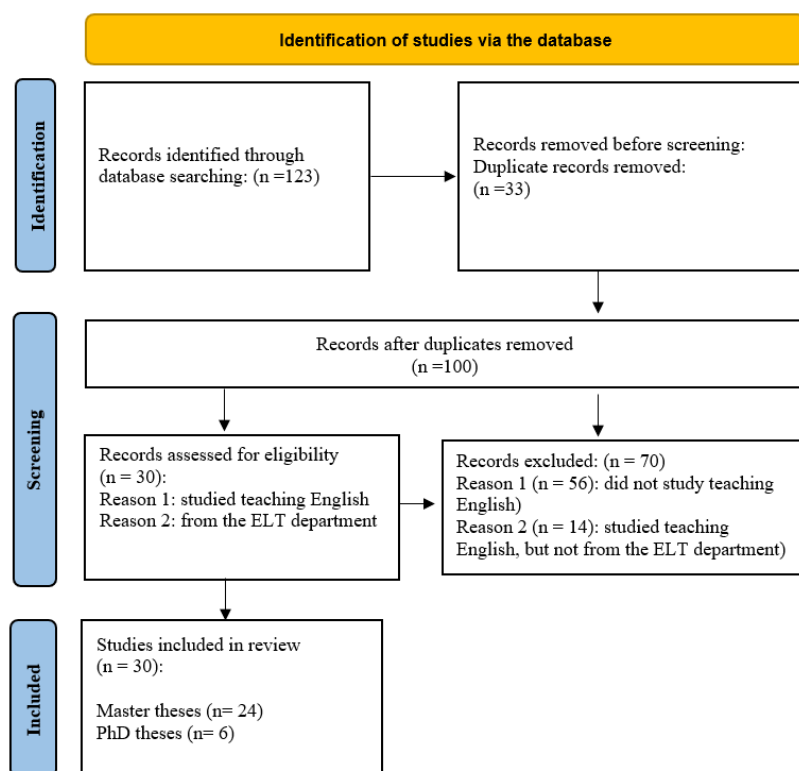


Figure 2. PRISMA flowchart for the review

Data Analysis

To conduct the analysis of the data, firstly, all the theses documents were downloaded from the database and were recorded in a folder with the surnames of the authors; secondly, according to the research questions, tables were arranged, that is, tables were filled with the necessary information after carefully reading each study by using the left-hand-side rows as the criteria while using the right-hand-side rows as the identification of the theses with the writer's surname; finally, the data were reported in detail by giving frequencies and percentages in tables and/ or graphics to show the general tendency of studying flipped learning in ELT post-graduate theses. While doing so, as the researcher used the research questions as medium of analysis, that is, as she moved from the criteria guiding the study to analyse the data, the descriptive content analysis was handled deductively in that sense.

Findings

In this section, the findings of the study are presented according to the research questions, which created two dimensions of the analysis: the methodological and the thematic trends of the theses. The methodological trends are presented under five dimensions: (1) the type (master's or doctoral) distribution of the theses in terms of years, (2) research methodologies, (3) research designs, (4) the participant profiles, (5) data collection tools while the thematic features are presented under five dimensions: (1) the research foci, (2) language skill taught, (3) individual space learning activities, (4) group space learning activities, (5) learning tools employed in the instructional design.

The methodological trends of ELT Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations on Flipped Learning

In this section, the methodological trends of ELT master's theses and doctoral dissertations on flipped learning are presented in frequencies and percentages in tables and/or graphics.

The type distribution of the theses in terms of years

The type distribution of theses across the years is shown in Figure 3 below.

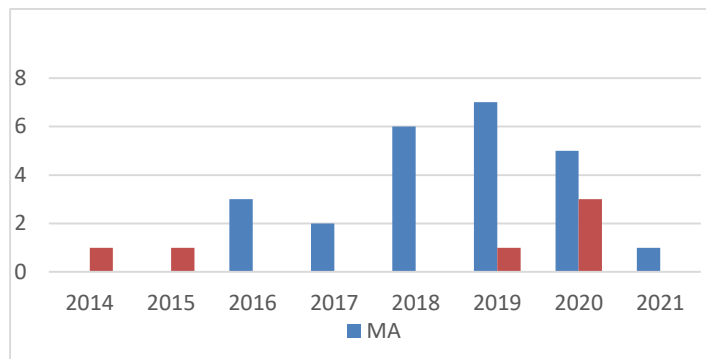


Figure 3. The type distribution of the theses in terms of years

As seen from Figure 3 above, the number of master's theses ($f=24$) on ELT flipped learning outnumber the doctoral dissertations ($f=6$) across the years. As flipped learning gained popularity in academic circles, the number of master's theses started to increase between 2016 and 2019. While a decline in the number of master's theses can be observed in 2020, the number of PhD dissertations increased that year. The reason for the low number of theses in 2021 may be because the review period is limited to September 2021, and there may be more theses after the time limit of the current search.

Frequency distribution of the research methodologies

Table 2. Frequency distribution of the research methodologies

Research Methodology	f	%	
Qualitative	2	7	İlter (2020), Yılmaz (2020)
Quantitative	2	7	Umutlu (2016), Yavuz (2020)
Mixed	26	86	Alpat (2019), Akçor (2018), Aydemir (2019), Bulut (2018), Çavdar (2018), Çalışkan (2016), Çetin-Köroğlu (2015), Çibik (2017), Darıyemez (2020), Dinçer (2020), Ediş (2017), Ekmekçi (2014), Girgin (2020), Gök (2016), Gürlüyer (2019), Karakurt (2018), Kömeç (2018), Özçelik (2021), Özdemir (2019), Özkal (2019), Öztürk (2018), Seçilmişoğlu (2019), Şık (2019), Tosun (2020), Tulay (2019), Yaşar (2020)
Total	30	100	

The research methodologies of the theses on flipped learning in ELT are displayed in Table 2 above. As far as the data concerned, the mixed methodology (86%) was employed most often in the studies while qualitative (7%) and quantitative (7%) research methodologies were equally adopted in the theses.

Frequency distribution of the research designs

Table 3. Frequency distribution of the research designs

Research Design	f	%	Studies
Action Research	2	7	Girgin (2020), İlter (2020)

Quasi-experimental design	21	70	Alpat (2019), Akçor (2018), Aydemir (2019), Bulut (2018), Çavdar (2018), Çetin-Köroğlu (2015), Darıyemez (2020), Dinçer (2020), Ediş (2017), Ekmekçi (2014), Gök (2016), Karakurt (2018), Özdemir (2019), Özkal (2019), Öztürk (2018), Seçilmişoğlu (2019), Şık (2019), Tosun (2020), Umutlu (2016), Yaşar (2020), Yavuz (2020)
Case Study	6	20	Çalışkan (2016), Çibik (2017), Gürlüyer (2019), Kömeç (2018), Özçelik (2021), Tulay (2019)
Phenomenological Research	1	3	Yılmaz (2020)
Total	30	100	

As can be seen from the frequency distribution of the theses in terms of research design in Table 3 above, quasi-experimental design was predominately preferred (70%), followed by case study (20%), action research (7%), and phenomenological research (3%). This tendency shows that qualitative research designs were less preferred when compared to quantitative designs.

Frequency distribution of the participant profiles

Table 4. Frequency distribution of the participant profiles

Participant Profile	f	%	Level of Education	f	%	Studies
Students	21	52.5	Primary	2	5	Özçelik (2021), Şık (2019)*
			Secondary	1	2.5	Özdemir (2019)
			High School	5	12.5	Dinçer (2020), Ediş (2017), Girgin (2020), Kömeç (2018), Seçilmişoğlu (2019)
			Tertiary	12	30	Alpat (2019), Bulut (2018), Çalışkan (2016)*, Çavdar (2018)*, Darıyemez (2020), Gürlüyer (2019), İlder (2020)*, Karakurt (2018), Tosun (2020), Tulay (2019)*, Umutlu (2016), Yavuz (2020)
			Private Language School (Adult learners)	1	2.5	Özkal (2019)
			Tertiary	8	20	Aydemir (2019)*, Akçor (2018)*, Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*, Çibik (2017), Ekmekçi (2014), Gök (2016), Öztürk (2018), Yaşar (2020)
Pre-Service ELT Teachers	8	20	Primary	1	2.5	Şık (2019)*
In-Service Teachers	9	22.5	Tertiary	8	20	Akçor (2018)*, Aydemir (2019)*, Çalışkan (2016)*, Çavdar (2018)*, Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*, İlder (2020)*, Tulay (2019)*, Yılmaz (2020)
			Tertiary	1	2.5	İlder (2020)*
Faculty Members	1	2.5	Primary	1	2.5	Şık (2019)*
Parents	1	2.5				
Total	40	100	Total	40	100	

* In these studies, more than one type of participant profiles was involved.

As can be seen from the frequency distribution of theses in terms of participant profiles in Table 4 above, tertiary level students (30%) were the most preferred participant profile, followed by tertiary in-service teachers (20%), pre-service teachers (20%), high school students (12.5%), primary school students (5%), secondary school students (2.5%), private language school students (2.5%), primary in-service teachers (2.5%), faculty members (2.5%), and parents (2.5%).

Frequency distribution of the data collection tools

Table 5. Frequency distribution of the data collection tools

Data Collection Tools	f	%	Studies
Surveys	23	26.44	Akçor (2018)*, Alpat (2019)*, Aydemir (2019)*, Bulut (2018)*, Çavdar (2018)*, Çibik (2017)*, Darıyemez (2020)*, Dinçer (2020)*, Ediş (2017)*, Ekmekçi (2014)*, Girgin (2020)*, Gök (2016)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, Karakurt (2018)*, Kömeç (2018)*, Özdemir (2019)*, Özkal (2019)*, Öztürk (2018)**, Seçilmişoğlu (2019)*, Tosun (2020)*, Tulay (2019)*, Umutlu (2016)*, Yaşar (2020)**
Pre- and Post-Achievement Tests	18	20.68	Aydemir (2019)*, Bulut (2018)*, Çavdar (2018)*, Çalışkan (2016)*, Çetin Köroğlu (2015)*, Darıyemez (2020)*, Dinçer (2020)*, Ediş (2017)*, Ekmekçi (2014)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, Karakurt (2018)*, Özçelik (2021)*, Özkal (2019)*, Seçilmişoğlu (2019)*, Şık (2019)*, Umutlu (2016)*, Yaşar (2020)*, Yavuz (2020)
Rubrics	3	3.45	Alpat (2019)*, Ekmekçi (2014)*, Özçelik (2021)*
Semi-structured Interviews	21	24.14	Akçor (2018)*, Çavdar (2018)*, Çetin Köroğlu (2015)*, Çibik (2017)*, Darıyemez (2020)*, Dinçer (2020)*, Ediş (2017)*, Ekmekçi (2014)*, Gök (2016)*, Girgin (2020)*, İlter (2020)*, Karakurt (2018)*, Kömeç (2018)*, Özdemir (2019)*, Özçelik (2021)*, Özkal (2019)*, Seçilmişoğlu (2019)*, Şık (2019)*, Tosun (2020)*, Tulay (2019)*, Yılmaz (2020)
Focus group interviews	6	6.90	Alpat (2019)*, Aydemir (2019)*, Bulut (2018)*, Çalışkan (2016)*, Çavdar (2018)*, İlter (2020)*
Observation	6	6.90	Akçor (2018)*, Aydemir (2019)*, Çalışkan (2016)*, Girgin (2020)*, İlter (2020)*, Özçelik (2021)*
Reflective Journals	10	11.49	Aydemir (2019)*, Çavdar (2018)*, Çetin Köroğlu* (2015), Çibik (2017)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, Girgin (2020)*, İlter (2020)*, Özkal (2019)*, Şık (2019)*, Tulay (2019)*
Total	87	100	

* In these theses, more than one type of data collection tools was applied.

**Öztürk and Yaşar included some open-ended questions in their surveys, but did not hold semi-structured interviews, but they gathered qualitative data via these questions.

In Table 5 above, the frequency distribution of the theses in terms of data collection tools can be seen. Accordingly, surveys (26.44%) were the mostly used data collection tools, followed by semi-structured interviews (24.14%), pre- and post-achievement tests (20.68%), reflective journals (11.49%), focus-group interviews (6.90%), observation (6.90%), and rubrics (3.45%).

The thematic trends of ELT Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations on Flipped Learning**Frequency distribution of the research foci of the theses**

Table 6. Frequency distribution of the research foci of the theses

Research Foci	f	%	Studies
Instructors' perceptions of FL	3	4.69	Akçor (2018)*, Şık (2019)*, Yılmaz (2020)
Parents' perceptions of FL	1	1.56	Şık (2019)*
Achievement	21	32.81	Alpat (2019)*, Aydemir (2019)*, Bulut (2018)*, Çalışkan (2016)*, Çavdar (2018)*, Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*, Dinçer (2020)*, Ekmekçi (2014)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, Karakurt (2018)*, Kömeç (2018)*, Özçelik (2021)*, Özdemir (2019)*, Özkal (2019)*, Öztürk (2018)*, Seçilmişoğlu (2019)*, Şık (2019)*, Tulay (2019)*, Umutlu (2016), Yaşar (2020)*, Yavuz (2020)
Learners' digital literacy	2	3.13	Kömeç (2018)*, Tulay (2019)*
Learners' attitudes toward FL	20	31.25	Akçor (2018)*, Bulut (2018)*, Çalışkan (2016)*, Çavdar (2018)*, Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*, Dinçer (2020)*, Ediş (2017)*, Ekmekçi (2014)*, Girgin (2020)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, Karakurt

			(2018)*, Özçelik (2021)*, Özdemir (2019)*, Özkal (2019)*, Öztürk (2018)*, Seçilmişoğlu (2019)*, Şık (2019)*, Tosun (2020)*, Tulay (2019)*, Yaşar (2020)*
Syllabus Design	2	3.13	Ekmekçi (2014)*, İlder (2020)
Self-regulation	2	3.13	Aydemir (2019)*, Tosun (2020)*
Anxiety	3	4.69	Darıyemez (2020)*, Gök (2016), Tosun (2020)*
Autonomy	5	7.80	Çibik (2017), Ediş (2017)*, Dinçer (2020)*, Darıyemez (2020)*, Kömeç (2018)*
Motivation	2	3.13	Girgin (2020)*, Kömeç (2018)*
Willingness to Communicate	1	1.56	Darıyemez (2020)*
Interaction between learners	1	1.56	Aydemir (2019)*
Critical Thinking	1	1.56	Alpat (2019)*
Total	64	100	

* In these theses, more than one research foci were employed.

The Table 6 above demonstrates the frequency distribution of the theses in terms of their research foci. As far as the data concerned, the researchers most frequently preferred to study the concepts of achievement (32.81%), learners' attitudes towards flipped learning (%31.25), autonomy (7.80%), anxiety (4.69%), instructors' perceptions on flipped learning (4.69%), followed by learners' digital literacy (3.13%), motivation (3.13%), syllabus design (3.13%), self-regulation (3.13%) while single theses studied parents' perceptions of flipped learning (1.56%), willingness to communicate (1.56%), interaction between learners (1.56%), and critical thinking (1.56%).

Frequency distribution of the language skills taught

Table 7. Frequency distribution of the language skills taught

Skills to be taught	f	%	Studies
Integrated (All Skills)	4	16.67	Çalışkan (2016), Çavdar (2018), Ediş (2017), Girgin (2020), İlder (2020), Kömeç (2018)
Grammar	6	25.00	Bulut (2018), Dinçer (2020), Karakurt (2018), Seçilmişoğlu (2019), Tulay (2019), Yavuz (2020)
Vocabulary	2	8.33	Özkal (2019), Şık (2019)
Reading	2	8.33	Aydemir (2019)*, Gök (2016)
Listening	1	4.17	Özdemir (2019)
Speaking	4	16.67	Çetin-Köroğlu (2015), Darıyemez (2020), Özçelik (2021), Tosun (2020)
Writing	5	20.83	Alpat (2019), Aydemir (2019)*, Ekmekçi (2014), Gürlüyer (2019), Umutlu (2016)
Total	24	100	

* Aydemir (2019) taught reading and writing.

As can be seen in Table 7 above, flipped learning was mostly preferred in teaching grammar (%25.00), writing (20.83%), speaking (16.67%) and all skills in an integrated manner (16.67%), which was followed by teaching vocabulary (8.33%), reading (8.33%) and listening (4.17%). Additionally, in theses which the researchers studied with pre-service ELT teachers, rather than teaching English skills, flipped learning was implemented to teach the following single courses, which are 'Methodology' (Akçor, 2018), 'Special Education Techniques' (Öztürk, 2018), 'Material Development and Evaluation' Çibik (2018), and 'Learning Technologies in ELT' (Çibik, 2018) in pre-service English teacher education while in Yılmaz's (2020) master's theses, as the participants were in-service ELT teachers, only the attitudes, readiness and challenges of in-service teachers at universities were investigated rather than teaching English or any course in ELT undergraduate programme.

Frequency distribution of the individual space learning activities

Table 8. Frequency distribution of the individual space learning activities

Individual Space Activities*	f	%	Studies
Watching Lecture Videos	29	44.62	Alpat (2019)*, Akçor (2018)*, Aydemir (2019)*, Bulut (2018)*, Çavdar (2018)*, Çalışkan (2016)*, Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*, Çibik (2017)*, Darıyemez (2020)*, Dinçer (2020)*, Ediş (2017)*, Ekmekçi (2014)*, Girgin (2020)*, Gök (2016)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, İlter (2020), Karakurt (2018)*, Kömeç (2018)*, Özçelik (2021), Özdemir (2019)*, Özkal (2019)*, Öztürk (2018), Seçilmişoğlu (2019)*, Şık (2019)*, Tosun (2020)*, Tulay (2019)*, Umutlu (2016)*, Yaşar (2020)*, Yavuz (2020)
Taking Online Quizzes	12	18.45	Alpat (2019)*, Akçor (2018)*, Bulut (2018)*, Çavdar (2018)*, Çibik (2017)*, Dinçer (2020)*, Gök (2016)*, Karakurt (2018)*, Seçilmişoğlu (2019)*, Umutlu (2016)*, Tulay (2019)*, Yaşar (2020)*
Preparing a Quiz-Game	1	1.54	Girgin (2020)*
Writing in an Online Forum	4	6.15	Çibik (2017)*, Gök (2016)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, Yaşar (2020)*
Summarizing	1	1.54	Alpat (2019)*
Note-Taking	1	1.54	Tosun (2020)*
Receiving Teacher Feedback	3	4.62	Alpat (2019)*, Darıyemez (2020)*, Yaşar (2020)*
Reading articles/ assigned chapters of the coursebook	10	15.38	Akçor (2016)*, Aydemir (2019)*, Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*, Çibik (2017)*, Ekmekçi (2014)*, Girgin (2020)*, Gök (2016)*, Özdemir (2019)*, Tosun (2020)*, Yaşar (2020)*
Writing response papers after class	1	1.54	Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*
Writing assignment prior to class	1	1.54	Gürlüyer (2019)*
Speaking assignment prior to class	1	1.54	Darıyemez (2020)*
Pronunciation assignment prior to class	1	1.54	Özdemir (2019)*
Total	65	100	

*In these theses, more than one individual space learning activity was employed.

According to the Table 8 above, as one of the two crucial learning spaces of the flipped learning instructional design, in individual space learning, naturally, the most frequently preferred learning space activities were watching lecture videos (44.62%) and taking online quizzes before class (18.45%), which were followed by reading articles and/or assigned chapters of the coursebook (15.38%), writing in an online forum (6.15%) and receiving teacher feedback before class (4.62%). In single theses, the following individual space activities were adopted as well: preparing a quiz-game (1.54%), summarizing (1.54%), note-taking (1.54%), writing response papers after class (1.54%), writing assignment prior to class (1.54%), speaking assignment prior to class (1.54%) and pronunciation assignment prior to class (1.54%). As mentioned earlier, Yılmaz (2020) investigated the attitudes, readiness and challenges of in-service teachers at universities rather than teaching English or any course in flipped learning; thus, her these could not be placed in the table.

Frequency distribution of the group space learning activities

Table 9. Frequency distribution of the group space learning activities

Group Space Activities	f	%	Studies
Writing	18	17.48	Alpat (2019)*, Akçor*, Aydemir (2019)*, Çavdar (2018)*, Çalışkan (2016)*, Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*, Çibik (2017)*, Ekmekçi (2014)*, Girgin (2020)*, Gök (2016)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, İlter (2020)*, Kömeç (2018)*, Özkal (2019)*, Şık (2019)*, Tulay (2019)*, Umutlu (2016)*, Yavuz (2020)*
Taking Pop Quizzes	1	0.97	Yavuz (2020)*
Taking Online Quiz-Games in class	4	3.88	Girgin (2020)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, İlter (2020)*, Kömeç (2018)*
Preparing Online Quiz-Games in class	1	0.97	Girgin (2020)*

Listening	3	2.91	Çalışkan (2016)*, Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*, Şık (2019)*
Reading	3	2.91	Aydemir (2019)*, Özdemir (2019)*, Şık (2019)*
Discussion	15	14.56	Alpat (2019)*, Akçor*, Aydemir (2019)*, Bulut (2018)*, Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*, Çibik (2017)*, Darıyemez (2020)*, Ekmekçi (2014)*, Girgin (2020)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, Kömeç (2018)*, Öztürk (2018)*, Tosun (2020)*, Tulay (2019)*, Yaşar (2020)
Peer Feedback	7	6.80	Alpat (2019)*, Aydemir (2019)*, Çibik (2017)*, Darıyemez (2020)*, Ekmekçi (2014)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, İlder (2020)*
Teacher Feedback	12	11.65	Alpat (2019)*, Akçor (2018)*, Aydemir (2019)*, Çibik (2017)*, Darıyemez (2020)*, Ekmekçi (2014)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, İlder (2020)*, Kömeç (2018)*, Özçelik (2021)*, Özdemir (2019)*, Umutlu (2016)*
Microteaching	1	0.97	Öztürk (2018)*
Role-Play	8	7.77	Akçor (2018)*, Çavdar (2018)*, Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*, İlder (2020)*, Kömeç (2018)*, Özkal (2019)*, Şık (2019)*, Tulay (2019)*
Short conversation	4	3.88	Çalışkan (2016)*, Darıyemez (2020)*, Özçelik (2021)*, Yavuz (2020)*
Games	4	3.88	Akçor (2018)*, Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*, Özdemir (2019)*, Şık (2019)*
Watching Short Videos (not lecture videos)	2	1.94	Akçor (2018)*, Çalışkan (2016)*
Student Presentations	5	4.85	Çalışkan (2016)*, Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, Kömeç (2018)*, Tosun (2020)*
Group Work	6	5.83	Aydemir (2019)*, Çibik (2017)*, Gürlüyer (2019)*, İlder (2020)*, Özdemir (2019)*, Özkal (2019)*
Grammar exercises	6	5.83	Bulut (2018)*, Çavdar (2018)*, Dinçer (2020), Karakurt (2018), Seçilmişoğlu (2019), Tulay (2019)*
Vocabulary exercises	1	0.97	Özkal (2019)*
Pronunciation exercises	1	0.97	Özdemir (2019)*
Preparing their own videos in class	1	0.97	Girgin (2020)*
Total	103	100	

According to Table 9 above, as one of the two crucial learning spaces of the flipped learning instructional design, in group space learning, the most frequently preferred group space learning activities were writing (17.48%) discussion (14.56%), and receiving teacher feedback (11.65%), which were followed by role-play (7.77%), giving peer feedback (6.80%), group work (5.83%), doing grammar exercises (5.83%), student presentations (4.85%), taking online quiz-games in class (3.88%), having short conversations (3.88%), playing games (3.88%), listening (2.91%), reading (2.91%), and watching short videos about the subject of the course other than lecture videos in class-time (1.94%). Additionally, in single theses the following group space activities were employed: taking pop quizzes (0.97%), preparing online quiz-games in class (0.97%), microteaching (0.97%), doing vocabulary exercises (0.97%), doing pronunciation exercises (0.97%), and learners' preparing their own lecture videos in class (0.97%).

Frequency distribution of learning tools employed in the instructional design

Table 10. Frequency distribution of the learning tools employed in the instructional design

Learning Tools	f	%	Studies
MOOC	1	1.52	Yaşar (2020)

Google Classroom	5	7.57	Alpat (2019)*, Tulay (2019)*, Dinçer (2020)*, Tosun (2020)*, Özdemir (2019)*
Google Document	3	4.54	Alpat (2019)*, Akçor (2018)*, Tulay (2019)*
Google Drive (for sharing video lectures)	1	1.52	Öztürk (2018)
Edmodo	6	9.08	Akçor (2018)*, Çetin-Köroğlu (2015)*, Çavdar (2018), Ekmekçi (2014)*, İlter (2020)*, Karakurt (2018)*
Weebly	1	1.52	Şık (2019)*
Schoology	1	1.52	Darıyemez (2020)*
Coursebook Online Workbook	1	1.52	Dinçer (2020)*
Canva	1	1.52	Girgin (2020)*
EduBlog	1	1.52	Seçilmişoğlu (2019)*
Padlet	1	1.52	Girgin (2020)*
Zaption	1	1.52	Çalışkan (2016)*
Edpuzzle	2	3.02	Aydemir (2019)*, İlter (2020)*
Powtoon	2	3.02	Girgin (2020)*, Yavuz (2020)
Animoto	1	1.52	Girgin (2020)*
Zoom	1	1.52	Tosun (2020)*
GoAnimate	1	1.52	Girgin (2020)*
PosterMyWall	1	1.52	Girgin (2020)*
StoryBird	1	1.52	Girgin (2020)*
Voki	1	1.52	Girgin (2020)*
Voxopop	1	1.52	Çalışkan (2016)*
Mindmeister	1	1.52	Girgin (2020)*
Cram	1	1.52	Girgin (2020)*
Kahoot	6	9.08	Akçor (2018)*, Çalışkan (2016)*, Çibik (2017)*, Girgin (2020)*, İlter (2020)*, Tulay (2019)*
Quizizz	1	1.52	Girgin (2020)*
Quizlet	3	4.54	Çalışkan*, Girgin (2020)*, Tulay (2019)*
YouTube	13	19.69	Dinçer (2020)*, Darıyemez (2020)*, Ediş (2017)*, Ekmekçi (2014)*, Gök (2016)*, Karakurt (2018)*, Kömeç (2018)*, Özçelik (2021), Özkal (2019)*, Seçilmişoğlu (2019)*, Şık (2019)*, Tosun (2020)*, Tulay (2019)*
Twitter	1	1.52	Çalışkan (2016)*
Facebook	2	3.02	Çibik (2017)*, Gürlüyer (2019)
Institutions' LMS	4	6.05	Aydemir (2019)*, Bulut (2018)*, Çibik (2017)*, Gök (2016)*
Total	66	100	

* In these theses, more than one learning tool were employed.

In Table 10 above, the frequency distribution of the learning tools employed in the instructional design were depicted. By learning tools, Learning Management Systems (LMS), online quiz-game sites, social media sites, web sites for editing, creating and sharing videos are intended to mean. Before sharing lecture videos with their students, researchers used screencastifying programs, such as Screencast-o-Matic or Camtasia Studio or Power point slide for its screen casting feature. As can be seen, most frequently used learning tools adopted in individual and group learning spaces in flipped classrooms were YouTube (19.69%), Edmodo (9.08%), Kahoot (9.08%), Google Classroom (7.57%), institutions' own LMS (6.05%), Google Document (4.54%), and Quizlet (4.54%). For the rest of the learning tools used in theses, Table 10 can be viewed.

Discussion and Conclusion

The present study aims to provide an overview of tendencies in flipped learning implementation in English language teaching research in ELT graduate programmes from 2010 to 2021 in Turkey's context, identifying trends and patterns through a content analysis of 30 theses. The research data was analysed under 10 sub-categories which are study years, study types, research methodologies, research designs, participant profiles, data collection tools, research foci, language skills taught, individual space learning activities, group space learning activities, and learning tools employed in the instructional design.

To begin with, according to the distribution of the theses in terms of years, an increase in the theses between 2016 and 2019 was observed, with the highest number in 2019 (n=7). Similar results are found in the studies conducting content analysis on flipped learning as well (e.g. Aydin & Demirer, 2017; Sagir & Sakar, 2017; Filiz& Benzet, 2018). This trend may show that the researchers in ELT field have begun to be more interested in the flipped model since 2016. Additionally, in terms of the types of the theses, it was seen that the number of the ELT master's theses (n=24) is higher than the number of ELT doctoral dissertations (n=6). However, the number of doctoral dissertations has increased since 2020, which shows that as flipped learning becomes more widely known, more comprehensive studies are conducted.

In terms of research methodologies, the mixed methodology (86%) was employed most often in the studies as in the previous content analysis in flipped learning in ELT research (e.g. Aydin & Demirer, 2017; Sagir & Sakar, 2017) while qualitative (7%) and quantitative (7%) research methodologies were equally adopted in the theses. This common preference towards mixed methodology can be because the research topic is related to the implementation of flipped classrooms and researchers generally tended to investigate the effects of variables on one another and prefer qualitative methodology to expand on the research results, rather than using them as the core methodology to build upon their research. In relation to that, quasi-experimental design was predominately preferred (70%), followed by qualitative and/ or quantitative case study (20%), qualitative action research (7%), and phenomenological research (3%). This tendency shows that qualitative research designs were less preferred when compared to quantitative designs. Additionally, in terms of data collection tools, it was found that the researchers often used quantitative tools such as surveys (26.44%) and pre- and post-achievement tests (20.68%), followed by reflective journals (11.49%), focus-group interviews (6.90%), observation (6.90%), and rubrics (3.45%). As seen from the data, qualitative data collection tools appeared to be less frequent to collect data. This may be because qualitative research designs require longer data collection and analysis procedures and this may affect researchers' tendencies when handling their theses. On the other hand, qualitative semi-structured interview (24.14%) is the second most preferred data collection tool following surveys. As most of the researchers conducted mixed-methods in their theses, the findings on the type of data collection tools is consistent with the previous finding, in that the most preferred data collection tools are surveys (26.44%) and semi-structured interviews (24.14%), which characterizes the common type of quasi-experimental research designs. Moreover, in terms of participant profiles tertiary level students (30%) were the most preferred participant profile, followed by tertiary in-service teachers (20%) and pre-service ELT teachers (20%) while high school students (12.5%), primary school students (5%), secondary school students (2.5%), private language school students (2.5%), primary in-service teachers (2.5%), faculty members (2.5%), and parents (2.5%) were less frequently or rarely studied. This tendency may show that

researchers appear to rely on adult learners' more self-regulated learning behaviour when compared to younger learners. However, independent learning behaviour can be better gained in younger ages as earlier as possible. On the other hand, the contributions of the knowledgeable others, who are faculty members, colleagues, or experts in specific fields, for example and parents, without whom teaching practice cannot be fully appreciated in primary and secondary school levels, should be taken into consideration in further studies so as to achieve more comprehensive results in teaching and research practice.

As for the findings on the thematic tendencies of ELT post-graduate theses on flipped learning, in terms of theses research foci, it was determined that the researchers most frequently preferred to study the concepts of achievement (32.81%) and learners' attitudes towards flipped learning (31.25%). This finding is consistent with the previous research (Aydin & Demirel, 2017; Sagir & Sakar, 2017; Filiz& Benzet, 2018) as well. On the other hand, it was revealed that some research topics such as autonomy (7.80%), anxiety (4.69%), instructors' perceptions on flipped learning (4.69%) were less frequently studied while topics such as learners' digital literacy (3.13%), motivation (3.13%), syllabus design (3.13%), self-regulation (3.13%), parents' perceptions of flipped learning (1.56%), willingness to communicate (1.56%), interaction between learners (1.56%), and critical thinking (1.56%) were rarely studied. This may give ideas about common research tendencies and research gaps in post-graduate theses' topics.

Another finding is about the language skills taught in flipped learning implementation. Flipped learning was mostly preferred in teaching grammar (25 %), writing (20.83%), speaking (16.67%) and all skills in an integrated manner (16.67%), as in previous studies (e.g. Filiz& Benzet, 2018) while teaching vocabulary (8.33%), reading (8.33%) and listening (4.17%) were less frequently studied. Further research may benefit from the earlier practices as well as focus on less frequently studied language skills to contribute to ELT teaching practice.

Finally, in terms of the two fundamental elements in the instructional design of flipped learning, which are individual space and group space learning, the most frequently preferred activities may help novice researchers and first-time practitioners of flipped learning on flipped class course design. According to the results, the most frequently preferred individual space activities were watching lecture videos prior the class time (44.62%) and taking online quizzes before class (18.45%), which were followed by reading articles and/or assigned chapters of the coursebook (15.38%), writing in an online forum (6.15%) in addition to receiving teacher feedback before class (6.62%). The variety of individual space learning activities may not only pave the way for designing a flipped classroom for the first time, but they may also give a general idea on how to deliver content in more various ways. As for the group space activities, writing (17.48%) discussion (14.56%), and receiving teacher feedback (11.65%) were most frequently happened in flipped classrooms while role-play (7.77%), giving peer feedback (6.80%), group work (5.83%), doing grammar exercises (5.83%), student presentations (4.85%), taking online quiz-games in class (3.88%), having short conversations (3.88%), playing games (3.88%) were less frequently preferred. In further studies, as teaching listening (2.91%), reading (2.91%), vocabulary (0.97%) and pronunciation (0.97%) were rarely practiced, activities on teaching these skills may most probably be beneficial to be handled in ELT post-graduate theses. Finally, in terms of the learning tools employed in learning spaces in flipped classrooms, YouTube (19.69%) was the most frequently preferred video sharing platform followed by some common LMS platforms, such as Edmodo (9.08%) and Google Classroom (7.57%) in addition to using institutions' own LMS (6.05%). In order to ensure the comprehension of new content taught, quiz-games, including Kahoot (9.08%) and Quizlet (4.54%) were mostly adopted in the studies in addition to Google Document (4.54%) to test learners' readiness for mastering content and skills. The analysis results are hoped to be beneficial for novice flipped learning practitioners and researchers to have an idea on a variety of possible learning tools to utilize in flipped learning implementation.

Consequently, it can be stated that ELT post-graduate theses on flipped learning have been increasing in line with the integration of technology into education. The researcher aims to identify the trends in this research area through a content analysis of 30 theses between 2010 and 2021 in Turkish EFL context. It is expected that the findings of this present content analysis contribute to the post-graduate theses conducted on flipped learning in English language education in Turkey, with the hope to identify research gaps in flipped learning instruction and support future studies.

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Appendix A. The list of the reviewed thesis about the use of flipped learning in English language teaching

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