

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Assessment in Second Language Teaching in Türkiye: A Review of Theses from 2018-2023

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Ethical Statement

The collected data did not involve any human interaction; therefore, an ethical committee approval was not needed. I, hereby, assure that this review paper is my own, original work and it is not considered to be published elsewhere; it reflects my own research and analysis in an honest and total manner, and I will take full responsibility for the content.

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Conflict of Interest

I have not been into any situation which could rise any conflict of interest.

ABSTRACT

This study presents a review that encompasses and summarizes all master's theses and doctoral dissertations related to the second language assessment published in the National Dissertation and Thesis Database of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) between the years 2018 and 2023. A total of 96 master's theses and doctoral dissertations were included in the analysis. The study displays several numerical data and subsequent interpretations regarding the distribution of studies across years, sub-topics, research designs, sampling methods, and the conclusions drawn. The primary objective of this study is to share a review of current postgraduate research into second language assessment in Türkiye and serve as a reference for further studies in the field. The significance of the study emerges from the fact that this study contains the most up-to-date data in the field of second language assessment. Additionally, the limitations in the form of understudied sub-topics, research designs, sampling methods, etc. which may present new opportunities for researchers, are also identified, and discussed.

Keywords: Assessment, evaluation, second language assessment, foreign language assessment.

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INTRODUCTION

Education can be described as an ongoing journey without an endpoint. One can effortlessly ascertain that this journey is quite arduous and challenging because it incorporates with plenty diverse learning and teaching methodologies, various approaches and classroom management techniques, and myriad teacher education programs. In this intricate, challenging, and prolonged journey, there will be as many hindrances as there are supporters who will assist. Nevertheless, as we pursue our journey, we might realize that both would provide input which we can use as a road map to avoid being lost. They are institutions, educators, peers, and computer programs that assist us throughout our expedition by imparting knowledge about the forthcoming challenges, the requisites, and the underlying rationales for these necessities. Since the dynamic and complex process of education is prone to getting lost and failing to reach the desired destination if not assessed adequately.

In this context, assessment plays a vital role in the development of education processes, which are intended to be depicted through metaphorical expressions in the previous paragraph. Miller et al. (2009), share the main objective of classroom instructions as supporting learners to reach the intended goals, therefore, achieving the intended goals can be accomplished by arranging learning goals for desired learning outcomes, planning learning activities and assessing the process periodically. To be more straightforward, the primary role of assessment is to determine to which extent the learning objectives have been achieved throughout the instructional process. In other words, Miller et al. (2009) draw attention to the contribution of assessment not only for the instructors but also the learners (in terms of clarifying learning outcomes, providing goals and feedback, information for surpassing obstacles of learning, and determining the subsequent instructional objectives) and institutions (in terms of the applicability and achievability of the instructional objectives, making use of the instructional materials, the efficiency of instructional methods).

Concordantly, Cheng and Fox (2017) describe assessments' objectives as categorization of students for instruction planning, acquiring information of student progression, identifying strong and weak sides of teachers' own methods and instruction, enhancing the motivation of learners, and establishing learners' final grades. Additionally, McKay (2006) highlights the relative aims of assessment and emphasizes that educators have the authority to determine the instructional material and ascertain if learners are able to meet the curriculum goals through assessment. Furthermore, Rea-Dickins & Gardner (2000) emphasize to the fact that the determinations concluded by the assessment can be identified as low-stake decisions and high-stake decisions, thus high-stake decisions play an important role in influencing learners' lives. Additionally, another important statement is that many assessment procedures are significantly more high-stake for students than we initially perceive.

The topic of assessment, which has a crucial role since the beginning of education processes and therefore language learning processes, has been vigorously affected by approaches to language teaching. Through the mid twentieth century, the assessment applications were taken over by the behavioristic approach that mainly focuses on discrete points, behaviorism and structural linguistics which puts heavy emphasis on grammar and vocabulary items and tests through multiple-choice. Nonetheless, the former approach has been replaced with Oller's (1980) language competency idea, specifically a unified set of interactive abilities. In the mid-1980s, with the major influence of Canale & Swain's (1981) framework of communicative competence, assessment tasks began to incorporate on the focus of a communication-based. The notion that previous assessment tasks lacked authenticity were contrived and did not reflect the real-life language use had gained even stronger support. Building upon this notion, Bachman & Palmer

(1996) also emphasized the significance of strategic competence and implied that both pragmatic and strategic abilities must be included in language testing. As a result, test designers began to identify real-world tasks, paying particular attention to the authenticity of tasks and the genuineness of texts. Since tests were far from being real-life centered and needed to be as authentic as possible, traditional testing was not applicable to every student and every skill. Consequently, instructors began to use alternative assessment tools (as termed in present) such as portfolios, journals, self and peer observations, self and peer assessments. In the present day, language courses and programs have embraced a student-centered curriculum and therefore issues such as dynamic assessment, assessment of pragmatic competence and the use of computer technology in assessment are at the forefront of discussion in present (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010).

It is readily apparent that assessment is an essential issue in all aspects of education and therefore language education, yet the topic is exceedingly understudied. As Green (2020) points out, teacher training programs do not put adequate emphasis on assessment and often dismiss the topic with only a few sessions without dwelling on it extensively. With the rapid advancement in technology, alternative assessment methods are proliferating, thus researchers and instructors' focus is also shifting into these processes. To observe the impact of such changes on assessment, the main focus of this study is to examine theses written on assessment in Türkiye over the past five years. As a matter of fact, the main significance of the study stems from this observation, in view of the fact that there are no or handful globally (Global references for assessment SR) or locally (Local references for assessment SR) available assessment reviews that fulfill the qualifications of reviewing assessment trends and meet the requirements to become up to date. Particularly, for the purpose of comprehending and interpreting current trends, methods, and topics under investigation, periodic reviews are necessary. Therefore, this study aims to depict the portrait of foreign language assessment in Türkiye over the past five years by addressing the following research questions:

1. How has the subject of assessment been distributed in theses within Turkish postgraduate research over a period of the last five years (2018-2023)?
2. What are the contents of the aforementioned theses?
 - 2.1. What are the subtopics that have been studied?
 - 2.2. What research designs have been employed?
 - 2.3. What sampling methods have been utilized?
 - 2.4. Who are the participants involved?

By answering these questions, the researcher's intention is trying to portray the research gap in the field and provide information to researchers, educators, and institutions in order to guide them on which areas, with whom, and how they conduct their future work.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study is based on the PRISMA guideline (2021), thus follows a checklist based on the terms of it. A systematic search has been conducted on the National Dissertation and Thesis Database of Council of Higher Education (CoHE,

hereafter) in order to outline a general framework regarding assessment. Instead of searching for studies conducted only in Türkiye through other educational databases, CoHE was chosen due to the fact that all the studies are already conducted within the context of Türkiye and have an approval from the the CoHE, thus providing a quality check for the studies. Additionally, there was no perceived need to be conducted by applying a systematic search on different databases since the focus is on postgraduate research. Aiming to carry out this systematic search successfully, the following criteria have been applied: (i) Setting the criteria: inclusion and exclusion criteria were shaped long before the search process in order to discern efficiently between every outcome of the systematic search and relevant theses. (ii) Identification: the second stage of the systematic search is determining all the relevant theses according to the first phase of the search. (iii) Examination: as for being the last stage of the systematic search, all the relevant theses were examined, reviewed, discussed, and construed (Page et al., 2021).

Data Collection and Analysis

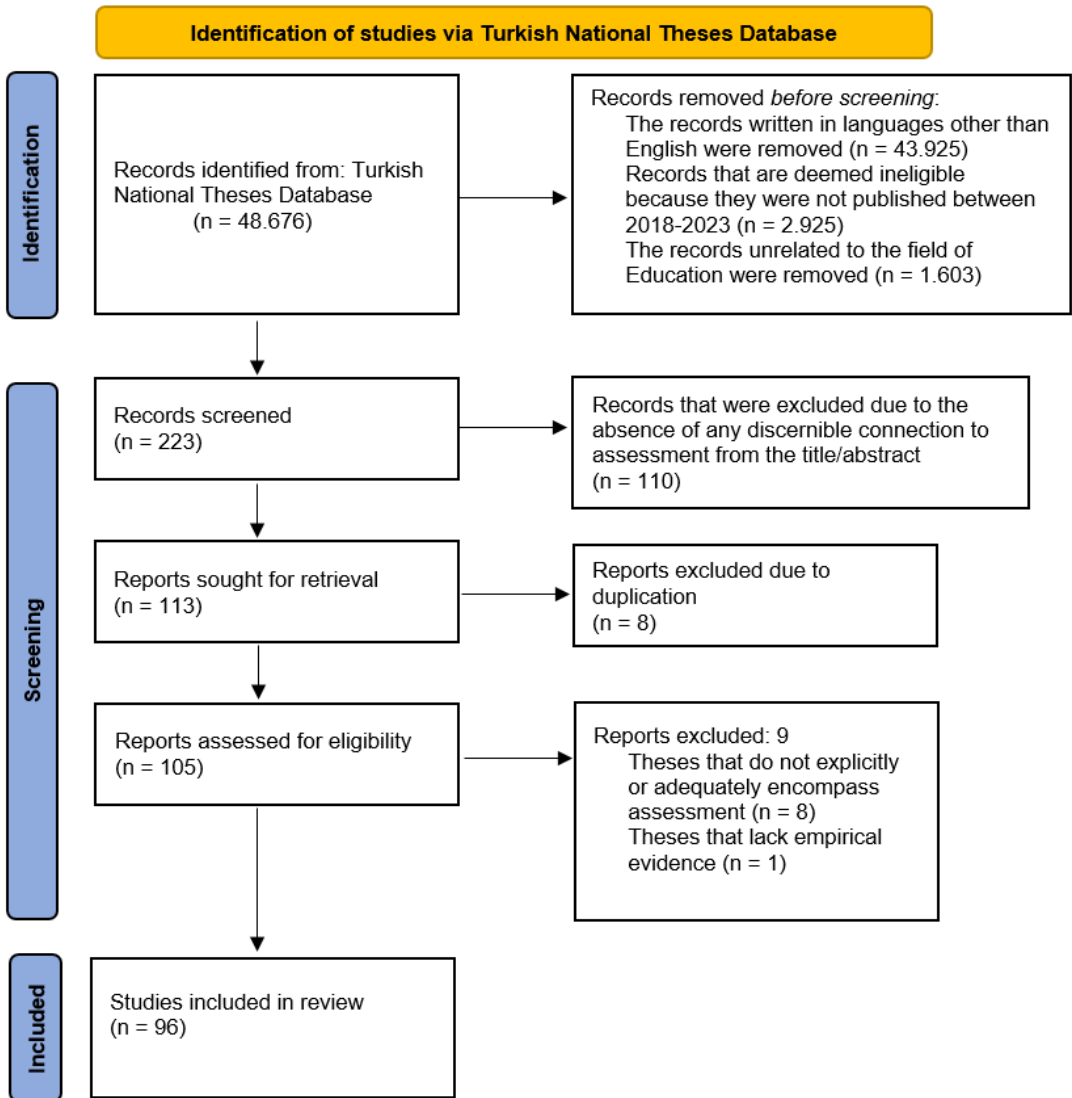
As stated above, the first stage of the systematic search has been on setting the criteria in order to facilitate the systematic search. Table 1 presents the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the review:

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
The thesis must be written in English.	Theses that are not written in English.
The thesis must have been published between 2018 and June 6 th of 2023.	Theses published outside the dates of 2018 and June 6 th of 2023.
The thesis must be directly related to the field of language education.	Theses that are not related to the field of language education.
The thesis must include an empirical study.	Theses that do not include an empirical study.

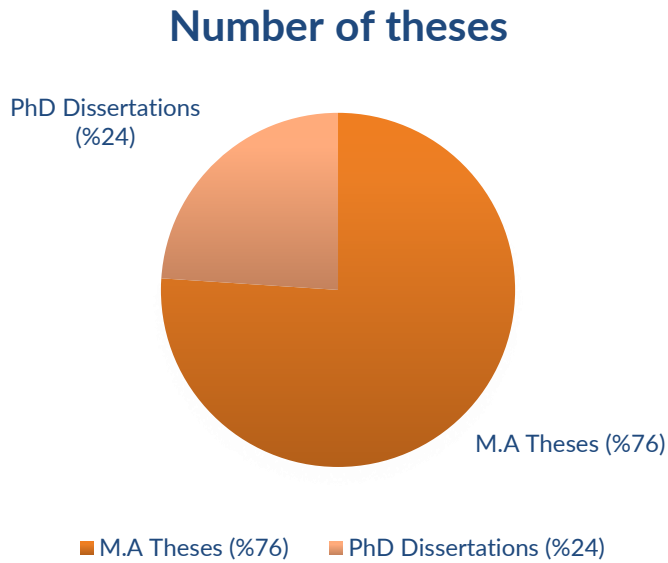
Throughout the initial search process, “assessment AND language” were used as the primary keywords for the search process. Considering the potential interchangeability of studies, “assessing OR assess” instead of assessment, “evaluation OR evaluate OR evaluating” instead of assessment, “EFL OR English” instead of “language” were included for the latter search. The systematic search process is consisted of three search rounds according to the criteria (Table 1) and 48.676 theses on assessment were found prior to the criteria application. In the following steps the criteria were applied, after removing irrelevant studies, duplications, non-empirical studies, and the ones that do not encompass assessment adequately, 96 studies were considered to be appropriate for the review. The titles of the selected theses, their type of programs (MA or PhD), sub-topics, research designs, sampling methods, participants and the results were individually documented and organized into a table. The statements found within the studies were included in the research without any additional interpretation.

The systematic search process was visualized using the PRISMA diagram (2021), chosen because of its transparency and clarity. Figure 1 represents the search/selection process:

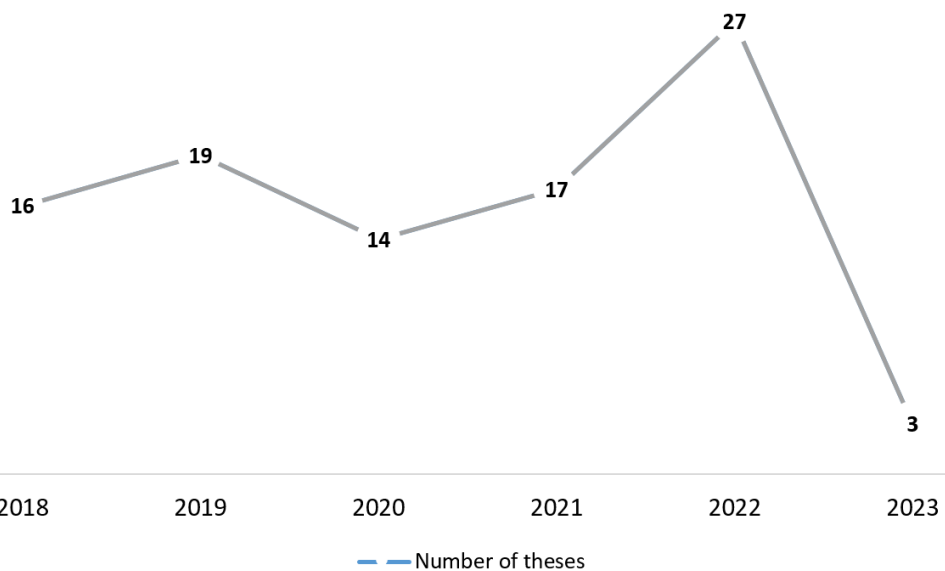
Figure 1. The process of search, selection and identification (Page et al., 2021).

RESULTS

In general, this systematic search has included a total number of 96 M.A and PhD research written specifically on EFL assessment. In consideration of providing appropriate responses to the previously stated research inquiries RQ1 and RQ2, for the first research question "How has the subject of assessment been distributed in theses within Turkish postgraduate research over a period of the last five years?" a visual distribution of the reviewed theses is shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3.

Figure 2. Allocation of the reviewed theses and dissertations.

The aforementioned analysis reveals that the total number of theses subject to review amounts to a grand total of 96, comprising 73 theses at the Master of Arts (M.A) level (76%) and 23 dissertations at the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) level (24%). This finding has been visually represented through the pie chart in Figure 2.

Figure 3. Number of theses and dissertations conducted over a five-year period.

As illustrated in Figure 3, it is evident that the numbers of MA theses and Doctoral dissertations focusing on assessment during the past five-year period exhibit a significant level of proximity to one another. The reason for the relatively low number observed in the last year primarily stems from the fact that the research was primarily conducted within the confines of the same year, during its early stages. Presumably, one of the fundamental reasons for the peak observed in the year 2022 ($n = 27$) can be attributed to the mandatory implementation of remote education and assessment models in universities due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021, which consequently led to research examining remote assessment methodologies during the pandemic (Gezder, 2022; Yılmaz, 2022; Piri, 2022; Budanır, 2022).

Sub-topics of the studies

The topics of the theses written on EFL assessment exhibit a significant variation, and all these diverse contents have been categorized under seven main sub-topic headings. The entirety of sub-topics is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Sub-topics of the reviewed theses and dissertations between 2018-2023.

Sub-topics	n
Attitude, practices or perceptions	51
Alternative assessment techniques	21
Evaluation of a specific method/technique/tool	10
Evaluation of a program/course	5
Model/tool development	4
Use of a specific method/technique/tool	3
Formative assessment	2

Being clearly observed in Table 2, the subject of attitude, practices, or perceptions ($n = 51$) stands out as the most extensively researched topic. Following that, alternative assessment techniques ($n = 21$) and evaluation of a specific method/technique/tool ($n = 10$) constitute the main focal points of the theses published in the last five years. Several subjects that are studied in the theses and dissertations were grouped altogether (self-assessment, peer-assessment, dynamic assessment, task-based assessment, learning-oriented assessment, automated assessment were grouped under alternative assessment techniques) since a great deal of subject was examined, thus listing each subject would be a massive disarray. Consequently, each subheading serves as an umbrella term encompassing a range of related topics within the field. Additionally, due to formative assessment ($n = 2$) being recognized as one of the two commonly identified assessment views within the field (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010), it has not been included under the title of alternative assessments and has been treated as a separate category.

Research designs of the studies

To answer one of the sub-questions posed as part of the second research question, "What research designs have been employed?", Table 3 displays the utilized research designs in the studies.

Table 3. Research designs of the reviewed theses and dissertations between 2018-2023.

Research designs	N
Mixed method	50
Case study	21
Quantitative	13
Qualitative	4

Conversation analysis	3
Action research	2
Descriptive analysis	1
Non-equivalent group design	1

As evident from the table, by a significant margin, the most frequently employed research design has been mixed methods (n = 50). Following it are case study (n = 21), quantitative design (n = 13), qualitative design (n = 4), conversation analysis (n = 3), action research (n = 2), descriptive analysis (n = 1), and non-equivalent group design (n = 1), which have been utilized in the conduct of theses and dissertations.

Sampling methods of the studies

In order to resolve the third sub-question of the second research question "What sampling methods have been utilized?" the findings were displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. Sampling methods of the reviewed theses and dissertations between 2018-2023.

Sampling methods	N
Convenience sampling	44
Sampling method is not mentioned	32
Purposive sampling	15
Snowball sampling	2
Random sampling	2
Criterion sampling	2
Availability sampling	2
Maximum variation sampling	1
Stratified sampling	1
Voluntary-response sampling	1
No specific sampling method	1

In theses, convenience sampling (n = 44) has been the most frequently applied sampling method, while 32 studies have not specified the sampling method. Also, another commonly employed method is purposive sampling (n = 15) followed by snowball sampling (n = 2), random sampling (n = 2), criterion sampling (n = 2), availability sampling (n = 2), maximum variation sampling (n = 1), stratified sampling (n = 1), and voluntary-response sampling (n = 1). In some studies (Günel, 2023; Gezder, 2022; Yılmaz, 2022; Bayram, 2021; Savaş, 2021; Aybirdi, 2020; Yeşilçınar, 2018; Özdemir Yılmaz, 2018) researchers have used multiple sampling methods, thus, the numbers have been displayed without altering the numbers. To ensure clarity and avoid any confusion in the table, in her study, Ölmezer-Türk (2018), explicitly stated that she intentionally refrained from using any specific sampling method. Therefore, a different subheading has been employed instead of including the study into "sampling method is not mentioned".

Participants of the studies

Table 5 depicts the explanation of the last sub-question of the second research question "Who are the participants involved?".

Table 5. Participants of the reviewed theses and dissertations between 2018-2023.

Participants	n
EFL instructors/teachers	49

Pre-service EFL teachers	29
Preparatory class students	24
High school students	2
Secondary school students	1
Primary school students	1
Testing unit members	1
English language literature students	1
English language literature graduates	1

Table 5 clearly demonstrates that among the examined theses and dissertations, the most frequently studied participants were EFL instructors/teachers ($n = 49$). They were followed by pre-service EFL teachers ($n = 29$), preparatory class students ($n = 24$), high school students ($n = 2$), secondary school students ($n = 1$), primary school students ($n = 1$), testing unit members ($n = 1$), English language literature students ($n = 1$), and English language literature graduates ($n = 1$). The participant teachers, regardless of their working institutions, were grouped under a single category, referred to as an umbrella term, which encompassed novice teachers, university instructors, and professional teacher educators.

DISCUSSION

In this research, a systematic review was conducted on doctoral dissertations and master's theses published between 2018 and 2023, focusing on the topic of assessment in EFL contexts. The study encompasses a thorough analysis of the selected theses, specifically including their numerical results, which were presented using tables, graph and pie chart. By synthesizing this information, valuable insights were gained regarding the advancements and trends in assessment research in Turkish postgraduate context during the specific period of time. Therefore, this study was based on a total number of 96 doctoral dissertations and master's theses, and through the examination of the theses, it was revealed that many of the included theses and dissertations were comprised of master's theses.

As outlined in the sub-topics section, the studies included in this review have addressed various topics, which have been categorized into seven subheadings. Among these subheadings, "Attitudes, practices, or perceptions" emerged as the most frequently explored theme, with a total of 51 studies focusing on this area.

When examining the annual distribution, the studies depicted an irregular graph (as shown in Figure 3), exhibiting a fluctuating pattern with alternating increments and decrements since 2018. Nevertheless, in the year 2022, research conducted about assessment reached its peak, indicating a notable surge in scholarly interest and investigations during that period. One of the main reasons for this can be the COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted educational processes between the years 2020 and 2021, affecting all aspects of teaching and learning, therefore assessment practices. Thus, it is worth noting that in 2022, in addition to the studies on remote assessment methodologies mentioned in Figure 3, several studies on the perceptions of EFL teachers regarding assessment were also conducted. The year 2022 emerges as a significant period, as it represents the attitudes and approaches of teachers and students towards assessment during the COVID-19.

All included studies utilized empirical methods and certain sampling methods, among the research designs, mixed methods ($n = 50$) predominate, while convenience sampling ($n = 44$) stands out as the most frequently utilized sampling method. Moreover, about an equal number of studies did not explicitly state their sampling method. Researchers argue

that mixed methods research design provides a broader perspective compared to singular methods, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the whole and its parts from different perspectives. Consequently, it enhances the reliability and accuracy of the findings (Cohen et al., 2017; Creswell & Clark, 2011; Denscombe, 2017). The least used sampling methods were snowball sampling (n = 2), random sampling (n = 2), criterion sampling (n = 2), availability sampling (n = 2), maximum variation sampling (n = 1), stratified sampling (n = 1), voluntary-response sampling (n = 1), and the study that has aimed to use no specific sampling method. The study that Ölmezer-Türk (2018) conducted aimed to reach the sampling without using any sampling strategy.

The final key finding in the study's results was that most participants were both EFL teachers and EFL teacher candidates. The reason for the frequent inclusion of EFL teachers and candidates is mainly due to the focus of many studies on perceptions or practices on assessment. Therefore, learner groups that are not related to the EFL setting (prep. students, high school students, etc.) need to be studied so that a vast amount of diversity can be achieved in terms of learner perceptions on assessment.

Moreover, when the numerical data of the studies are presented, it is also emerged that in most of the studies, there is a focus on teacher/teacher candidate attitude, practice, or perceptions. However, it is noticeable that there is a significant gap when it comes to developing new models or tools. Some studies have been conducted to fill this research gap, Tunçer (2022) presented an In-Service Training (INSET) design for high school teachers; Ölmezer-Öztürk (2018) developed Language Assessment Knowledge Scale (LAKS), an instrument for assessment measurement of EFL teachers; in the same year, Yeşilçınar (2018) aimed to create an EFL teacher evaluation model that can differentiate between effective and ineffective (in terms of perception and practices) teachers; lastly, Yörüdü (2021) provides a multi-trait writing rubric for measuring writing proficiency. Still, there is a need for studies that develop new models or tools for second language assessment for advancement of knowledge in the field.

While examining the data of the studied subtopics, another significant observation becomes apparent: Alternative assessment methods occupy a prominent place among all the investigated subtopics. Nevertheless, as previously mentioned, there are numerous studies addressing different aspects within the realm of alternative assessment methods, and in order to prevent the excessive titles for subtopics, they are collectively categorized under the umbrella term "alternative assessment". Among these consolidated subtopics, a category stands out particularly: dynamic assessment. Dynamic assessment, rooted in Vygotsky's theories, is a distinctive approach within formative assessment, aiming not only to facilitate cognitive development but also to promote maturity. It encompasses the integration of teaching and assessment as a unified activity (Shrestha, 2020). The studies (n = 11) that employ dynamic assessment as a medium involves: Orhon, 2022; Özturan, 2022; Keten, 2021; Bayram, 2021; Kırtız, 2021; Yılmaz, 2021; Ünal, 2021; Kır, 2020; Şentürk, 2019; Adamhasan, 2019; Çalış, 2018; which has a major impact on the umbrella term: alternative assessment (n = 21). Other subtopics studied under the term include self/peer assessment (n = 6), task-based assessment (n = 1), learning oriented assessment (n = 1), and automated assessment (n = 2). Even though the detailed explanations of the subtopics have been previously provided, their numerical counterparts are now presented for the purpose of comparison with dynamic assessment.

Another presumption regarding dynamic assessment is that four theses published in 2021 (Keten, 2021; Bayram, 2021; Kırtız, 2021; Ünal, 2021) include computerized dynamic assessment. Computer-based dynamic assessment (C-BDA) is a relatively contemporary approach (Guthke & Beckmann, 2000; Tzuriel & Shamir, 2002) and recently Poehner et al. (2015) examined the mediation of C-BDA in a foreign language setting, following that, Bakhoda & Shabani (2019)



reported some supplementary evidence on reading comprehension by using C-BDA. Shrestha (2020) inferred that C-BDA might be useful in future research. Hence, it can be observed that the influence of current data and approaches has been emphasized in Turkish research, and Turkish researchers closely follow global methods and approaches.

Despite the accuracy of the inference made above, a further notable deficiency identified in the review is the limited inclusion of studies reflecting international perspectives. Although the studies incorporate with the international methods, tools and approaches in their content, most of the studies conducted within the scope of this review predominantly involve Turkish participants and are situated within Turkish contexts, thereby presenting a further research gap. Moreover, the lack of international representation in the selected studies implies a dearth of research incorporating contemporary international methodologies. However, it is not entirely absent to find studies that combine local contexts with international perspectives, Bural (2021) presented a comparison of English instructors' perspectives on dynamic assessment in Türkiye and Spain, thereby examining their viewpoints within two distinct contexts. Also, Çakır (2020) investigated the beliefs and practices of language teachers regarding the assessment of primary school students, aiming to uncover any potential discrepancies between the expected assessment quality and the actual implementation in Türkiye, Finland, and Italy. Lastly, Kurtulmuş (2018) undertook a study to explore and compare the perceptions of Turkish and international (the researcher did not specify the nationalities but instead used the term "international students") EFL students regarding formative assessment. Consequently, this observation underscores the need for future investigations to encompass a broader range of global perspectives.

Another deficiency observed in the reviewed studies is the almost complete absence of research specifically focusing on the examination of assessment processes of the school programs. Researchers rarely address the functioning of ongoing assessment processes in their surroundings, whether these processes are successful or not, the reasons behind their success or lack thereof, and their consequences. To provide a concrete example, Şengül's (2022) study, which is a recent one, included 208 administrators and testing unit members from 50 different universities, has drawn attention into the point. The study highlights that in assessment processes, numerous problems arise due to the inexperience or lack of knowledge of decision-makers. Also, Üçok Atasoy (2019) demonstrated that when working with young learners, teachers prefer traditional assessment methods involving paper and pencil tests over alternative assessment methods. When examining other studies conducted under the title "Evaluation of a program/course", it is evident that Şahin (2019) examined the content of assessment courses for English teacher candidates; while Özuslu (2018) drew conclusions about the evaluation processes of a university preparatory class. Lastly, Özdemir (2018) investigated the speaking tests utilized in high schools (9th grades) and examined the attitudes of students towards these tests, as well as explored the contributions of the evaluation process. The number of these studies clearly indicates a research gap in this study area.

Another significant limitation observed after implementing this review was that the most of the conducted studies were nearly exclusively focused on university-level settings, involving preparatory class students, EFL teacher candidates (or as alternatively termed pre-service teachers), and EFL instructors. Nonetheless, although in smaller numbers, the following studies were conducted with students outside the university-level: A study conducted by Kaplan (2018) examined the current assessment knowledge of oral language skills of 50 EFL teachers who work at the high school level, the study also investigated how these teachers applied their knowledge into practice and identified the factors that influenced their application process; in the same year, Doğar and Kayadelen (2018) investigated the effects of peer-editing, an alternative assessment method, on third and fourth grade students and examined how this

method influenced students and whether it enhanced their autonomy and self-confidence. Similarly, Şentürk (2019) analyzed the impact of dynamic assessment, another alternative assessment method, on the linguistic accomplishment and insights of secondary school students. Furthermore, Bidav (2021) investigated the student perceptions of performance-based assessment in high school context. Despite the inclusion of studies conducted outside the higher education context (n = 4), when considering all the studies included in the review (n = 96), the proportion appears to be considerably low. This indicates a gap in the research in Turkish context, since it is essential to consider a broader range of student populations to ensure the generalizability of findings beyond the higher education context and understanding of second language assessment in varied learning contexts.

CONCLUSION

This review encompasses a detailed analysis of 96 doctoral dissertations and master's theses published on the National Dissertation and Thesis Database of the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) between the years 2018 and 2023, focusing on the field of foreign language assessment. Most of the studies consist of master's theses, with doctoral dissertations being less prevalent. However, it is worth noting that a significant number of studies involving the application of new methods or tools originate from doctoral theses. Over the years, research on foreign language assessment has displayed fluctuations; nonetheless, the peak year for such studies was 2022, indicating a resurgence of interest in the foreign language assessment domain and justifying the necessity of conducting this review. Although mixed method design was emerged as the most commonly used approach in the studies, the inclusion of diverse research methodologies is essential. The main objective of the study is to provide a general analysis of the prominence and contexts in which foreign language assessment has been predominantly studied in Türkiye throughout the last five years. Another key aim of the study is to identify areas and topics that require further exploration, thereby serving as a guiding reference for future research endeavors. The findings of the study reveals that the assessment subject primarily revolves around teacher and student attitudes, practices, or perceptions, or the examination of existing assessment processes and elements integrated within them. As highlighted in the discussion and suggestions sections, other most notable shortcomings of the field include the limited representation of international participants and programs in the studies and insufficient coverage of programs and participants beyond higher education institutions (e.g., primary, secondary schools). Furthermore, significant gaps exist in terms of the limited emphasis on alternative assessment methods, as the focus predominantly revolves around dynamic and automated assessment. By increasing the quantity and promoting the expansion of research efforts in the areas highlighted, as well as emphasizing and encouraging endeavors aimed at addressing the identified deficiencies, it is possible to effectively rectify them.

The study emphasizes the significance of this research for both researchers interested in conducting assessment studies in Türkiye and global researchers exploring similar topics. It provides a comprehensive overview of the field as investigated in postgraduate research, benefiting language educators, in-service and pre-service teachers, as well as decision-makers involved in assessment processes, by offering insights into the current state of assessment in the Turkish context. Additionally, this feature highlights another significant aspect of the study. The conducted review aims to carve out a special place within the second language education literature as it is the first of its kind, with no previous similar studies conducted recently. While this review identifies various deficiencies and presents recommendations at both local and global levels, it acknowledges its own limitations. Therefore, conducting a more extensive and successful overview through broader databases and incorporating studies from both local and global perspectives would be beneficial for further studies.



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