



THE ASIAN ESP JOURNAL

# The Asian ESP Journal

February 2020  
Volume 16, Issue 1.2



Chief Editor - Roger Nunn



Published by ELE Publishing  
(Division of the TESOL Asia Group)

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Publisher: ELE Publishing

Managing Editor of ELE Publishing: Dr. John Adamson

Chief Editor of the Asian ESP Journal: Professor Roger Nunn

Associate Production Editor: Ramon Medriano, Jr.

Production Editor: Eva Guzman

ISSN. 2206-0979



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**Implications of academic interactions in the graduate  
thesis exam context in Indonesia university**

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**Abstract**

The students' thesis is one of their core research tasks. The content of the study and the experience gained depends heavily on supervision. The research seeks to recognize problems in the management of theses from the viewpoint of students and faculty members. Our data analyzes culminated in 162 tags, 17 sub-categories and 4 main groups, supervisory experience and abilities, atmosphere, supervision by-laws and monitoring and assessment' legislation. This study illustrated that further consideration and preparation were necessary for amending relevant rules and regulations, qualitative and quantitative enhancement in mentoring instruction, development of the research environment, and successful supervisory supervision and assessment.

**Keywords** - *academic interaction, graduate theses, Indonesian university, research, training*

**Introduction**

Creating scholarly writing is a key skill to achieve a doctorates and masters and boost the employment prospects of doctoral students who have experience in the preparing of articles and reports on research interviews (Sutanto, 2017). Throughout recent years, efforts were made to encourage primary and secondary education throughout developing countries, while

developed countries are moving towards intensifying higher education and encouraging secondary and, in particular, tertiary education (Devenci, 2019). Planning for the advancement of tertiary education can be useful in order to promote an education profile in developing countries which may contribute to promotion of their human development index (HDI). In order to promote the educational profile in Indonesia, it is especially necessary to improve higher education (Ngah, Salleh & Sarmidy, 2016).

It is also important and should not be overlooked to maintain and promote trained human resources based on world-class standards and quantitative development. The educator, student and educational system are three main aspects of the standard of higher education; it is evident that they are not autonomous of each other and of the entire community and thus a reciprocal relationship needs to be recognized (5). From the student's point of view, the research takes its shape as the main thesis and the students reflect their creativity, self-confidence and diligence throughout their study (Kurniasih et al, 2018).

Students' dissertation is one of the major academic tasks which is not only the first comprehensive move to familiarize students with science (Sulisworo, 2016), but is also used as a test for evaluating the specific competence of a subject in scientific research and for the development of related skills (Umanailo et al, 2019). Therefore, the approach to the thesis is important not only for the education and development of the student's scientific expertise, but also for the promotion of the standard of research products produced by the university that are useful in improving the science of the university. The consistency of the study knowledge of the subject depends heavily on the supervisory ability of the instructor. Pension oversight and student research control is part of the working lives of faculty members of universities; this area has remained largely recognized.

The most dynamic and fine form of education involving faculty members is possibly study and project guidance. Not only should supervisors be professional scholars, they should also know techniques that render work successful. They should also allow students of higher education to acquire the skills required for these methods (de Kleijin et al, 2016; Macfadyen et al, 2019). The consistency of the supervisor's transferred educational skills is one of the main factors in the performance of the applicant in his thesis growth (Pilcher, 2011).

Developing economies must improve higher education such that the thesis cycle is apparent as a large part of this problem. Limited studies in Indonesia have shown that the process of writing theses, including the supervisory sector, is a problem (Budiharso & Arbain, 2019; Casanave, 2019; Morton & Storch, 2019; Musharyanti, et al, 2019; Umanailo, et al, 2019). The paper

discusses the opinions of dean, staff and students on the value and problems of these supervision.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This qualitative research is part of a larger report on thesis writing difficulties. This study was carried out in one university in Indonesia, which made a significant contribution to the teaching of skilled staff in Indonesia. Within this paper only the topic of supervision was explored as part of the thesis process.

### **Research Participants, Sampling Procedure and Ethical Considerations**

Such classes included: PhD students, Masters, faculty members (with at least 5 years of experience with the thesis) and dean deputies for education and research. Purposes screening of maximal differences was used as one of the following groups. Participants from 13 schools were chosen and were willing to exchange knowledge and experiences. This study was guided by the following research ethics considerations. First, data privacy and informed consent forms were approved by the university ethics committee to be signed by the respondents of the study. Second, orientation on the purposes of the study was done by the researcher prior to the administration of the instruments. Thirdly, the anonymity of the respondents and the institution was observed by not mentioning names.

### **Procedure**

Face-to-face and in-depth interviews collected data. For data triangulation, participant interviews and focus group conversations were conducted. Personal and relaxed interviews were conducted. The questioning lasted 45-60 minutes. The data collected contained audio recording interviews, facilitator and interviewer observations and video interviews. Two of the contributors performed both interviews. In each interview, an interview guide was written and interviewees carried out the original protocol: the description, a review of the need for the project for interviewees, a documentation permit of the interview with a focus on privacy, emphasis on being able to refuse the interview at all times, and final results would be sent. The main question was "What was your research supervision problem?". Two issues of exploration were: "Tell me more about the issue" and "which portion of your study is the problem? "What did the supervision say/do?" What was the result?" There were also several issues in the interview in terms of the responses and their interpretation.

Interviews persisted until there was intellectual equilibrium. 6 PhD students, three master graduates, five general practitioners, five nursing assistants and seven professors were chosen during the in-depth face-to-face interview. Focus group sessions were also conducted for PhD students (two groups of seven and eight participants), one session for five Master's students, one session for four PhD students, one session for 12 educational administrators, one session for ten academic administrators and one session with the participation of university educational and science vice-chairmen, and the r

Upon interviews, material was extracted through content analysis as follows: documented interviews were transcribed in accordance with data collection and then read on several occasions for familiarization and a summary of the contents. Subsequently, units of importance or original codes were derived and codes categorized according to similarities. This sought to have the highest homogeneity between subcategories and the lowest heterogeneity. While each data was attempted to apply to only one subset (Newman, 2016), certain codes were put in one category according to one aspect and were placed for another aspect in another column. The definitions were eventually collected. For indexing and charting, MAXQDA program (version 10, kit series) has been used. In order to ensure trust, the writers have preserved their long-term interaction with data and the continuing interest in subjective research enables more detail.

In fact, the Member Test was used to ensure consistency between the codes received and the interactions of the participants. Consequently, the data obtained is returned for acceptance or alteration by the participants. The peer debriefing was analyzed for interviews and original coding and classification. External monitoring has also been implemented. In the end, several researchers were sent pieces of interview transcripts and related codes and subcategories to check the research method and validate its accuracy.

## **Results and Discussion**

The research involved 43 students and 33 faculty members. For candidates, 26 (60 percent) were female and 17 (40 percent) were male and 11 (33 percent) were female and 22 (67 percent) were male. The age range for students and faculty members ranged from 24-43 to 39-65. Data analysis culminated in 162 codes, 17 subcategories and 4 main categories being extracted. This study examined thesis management problems for students and faculty leaders of one University in Indonesia. Key topics covered knowledge and expertise management, research culture, research management, and monitoring and evaluation. In the first area there is a shortage of communication skills within managers, project management and information as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Categories and Subcategories**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Subcategory</b>
Knowledge and expertise management	lack of research knowledge and skills poor project management lack of communication knowledge and skills
Research Culture	lack of motivation lack of scientific and research programs lack of specific research line head of department's influence student's tendency to choose supervisor with specific position
Research Management	faculties' disagreement with cooperating with supervisor from out of the university Unclear responsibility for thesis subject selection Limit for the number of thesis Inappropriate criteria for being supervisor Undefined tasks for supervisors Lack of supervision bylaws for evaluating supervisory of supervisors Having several executive posts by supervisors
Monitoring and appraisal	Lack of monitoring on bylaws related to supervisors tasks Lack of feedback for the supervisor and advisor

**Knowledge and expertise management**

One of the main categories of thesis supervisory knowledge and skills was extracted from inadequate project management, a lack of study knowledge and expertise and the lack of communication knowledge and skills. Participants primarily discussed lack of knowledge and ability in certain faculty members for the behavior and management of the subject, and the quality of lack of adequate input. Some students did not give the instructor the opportunity to direct the student as an important problem. Students were dissatisfied with the inadequate experience of managers with analysis and paper writing methods.

Faculty leader No. 3: "Supervisors do not have sufficient monitoring ability, they may be a good teacher, they can not instruct poorly, but they are not able to conduct the work properly. Monitoring expertise is independent of teaching skills, you will learn study management and time management"

Education Deputy No. 13: "Unfortunately, some institutions neglect empirical awareness and misbehavior to address this deficiency."

Academic Deputy No. 7: "Some staff leaders not only lack intellectual capability and study capacities but have insufficient capacity to seek appropriate assistance to compensate."

### **Research Culture**

This category includes: "culture of science" and "interpersonal experiences." The work climate includes the following sub categories: "lack of inspiration," "lack of special research lines" and "lack of scientific and analysis programmes." The group interpersonal relationships are taken from the following subcategories: "head of the department's power" Another difficulty identified by most participants was the departmental impact in choosing the instructor for students.

Student No. 4, for instance: "Lobby heads of agencies, which makes it easy for some students to choose the head of the department as their boss for further study."

No.11 said: "PhD students, who wished to graduate earlier, are searching for supervisors with ready subjects and their academic success is not significant; they choose to do their research with board or easy-going supervisors." The other issue stated by most participants was the lack of cooperation between Universities in choosing a second supervisor from the department, schools, or universities.

Student #10: "I want to choose my boss from another institution, as I lost, because the university failed to accept that."

Student #2: "We cannot select supervisors from another department, because if we need resources, or other departments ' services, our research is not improving, or we must pay extra costs and the time is wasted."

Student No.5: The "scientific climatic of the department induces stagnation and disappointment;" seminars, workshops, journal clubs and services are low in number, so we ought to study testing methodology and research, even whether they are conducted, they are of a lack of consistency or not adequately desirable to students."

Member of the Faculty No.1: "Our members do not work in a single field in their specialized field, and there is therefore no continuity among subjects and thesis titles under their oversight, in their specialized area."

### **Research Management**

This term has been drawn from the following: "having uncertain research topic liability," "limitation of the amount of theses," "inappropriate qualifications for being a boss," "undefined supervisory duties" and "lack of supervisory bylaws for the supervisory appraisal of supervisors" and "several executive positions occupied by supervisors."

Faculty member No. 7: "Supervisor does not realize that the topic should be selected or that the students can. It is necessary to clean this up, especially for each education level, e.g. in the MA level, students are not very conscious of the subject and the study and subject selection have little time. Furthermore, this issue is less apparent at PhD level and it is easier for students to use their own creativity." The other one, about which there were different opinions, was limited to the amount of theses for supervisors.

Faculty member No.3: The setting of limitations on thesis numbers is both good and bad. It is good because for unscientific purposes one person is very attracted by students and bad because some of them has many ideas and can handle other students. "Faculty member No. 6:" Limitations on the amount of theses are defined and their equal distribution is induced by similar conditions among faculty members.

Faculty Member No. 6: "Advisors do not actually help. They are called visiting authors; it does not carry intellectual property and annoy students." Education Deputy No. 11: "Advisors are

generally defined as formality, and because of ties and their position is totally factitious, of course before paper publication."

Faculty Member No.6: "The professional assessment of members of the Faculty is usually carried out by university students, but in the final analysis the findings are not adequately distributed and formality is not exactly the same method for determining supervision." Several faculty members claimed that the qualifying criteria for choosing faculty members as superiors is unsuitable.

Faculty members No. 2:' The criterion for selecting faculty members as superiors should not be focused only on the amount of ISI papers; specific competencies and expertise should also be taken into account. Why are students who have to compose theses not required to be subordinated to their study, input can be given to their supervisors?

Student No. 41: "How much time a person has to do both of them works in various positions and also teaches and supervises his / her thesis.

### **Monitoring and Appraisal**

This term was generated from the "lack of supervisory controls" and "lack of input on managers and consultants." Several faculty members stated the lack of supervisory and advisory commissions. Educational Deputy No 3: "The study sector is not supervised adequately by the research deputy at the success departments and colleges

### **Discussion**

This study examined thesis management problems for students and faculty leaders of one University in Indonesia. Key topics covered knowledge and expertise management, research culture, research management, and monitoring and evaluation.

In the first area there is a shortage of communication skills within managers, project management and information. In the first group, the lack of communication skills throughout managers, the administration of a programme, the experience of research methodology and paper writing, contact with other grant centers and allowing students to use resources and the development of new skills in other centres. In a survey of factors affecting the research experience of higher education graduates, graduate students have been most satisfied with the process of writing their theses for supervisory efficiency and the growth of their skills (Ramjan

et al, 2018). Likewise, Studies found that most supervisors viewed consulting and advice as a job, although they were not fully sure of the duties of the supervisor (Rimaz et al, 2015). Another study found that writing theses was a troublesome method for students that caused supervisory issues (DYs the, 2002). The study found that, contrary to their advice on literature review, students were pleased with their supervisors ' availability (Hodgson, 2017).

The findings of this study are compatible with other studies in Indonesia and indicate that supervisory skills and knowledge need the attention of the policy makers and planners of universities. The creation, planning and management of quality and quantity of supervisory training skills such as communication skills, project management, research methodology for faculty members could therefore be seen as feasible through the arrangement for the design and implementation of the thesis in the form of instructional packages. It could contribute to the development, authenticity and elimination of thesis supervision issues.

The current study discussed the ineffective environment, including the climatic conditions of research and interpersonal interactions. The improper study environment can contribute to frustration and lack of motivation for research work among students and faculty members and lack of efforts to promote skills relevant to the supervision of theses (Beerkens, 2010; Rakhmawati et al, 2016). Inappropriate research environment leading to a lack of enthusiasm for research activities among the faculty will contribute to deterioration of thesis supervision and the absence of skills development efforts in this region. On the other side, mentors may play an effective role in inspiring students to conduct research. Planning to enhance the environment can therefore contribute to the enhancement of the quality and quantity of the scientific education and research activities and the development of related skills can affect the prevailing atmosphere.

With respect to the absence of cooperation in appointing a second university supervisor, although the cooperation with other universities may make up for technological and science deficiencies in the university, other issues that occur such as administrative bureaucracy, financial transfers and ambiguities in intellectual property surrounding study results while cooperation takes place (Ping & Guo, 2019). The student may have a propensity to receive theses from facilities or those who are board members or have different administrative positions, because the students will believe that it would be beneficial to increase their chances to get their board or job after finishing their studies. The selection of a supervisor among faculties can trigger inequality. Lobbying with the department head in selection of the boss was listed as one of the problems that could lead above. On the positive side, the department head

should lead students to choose suitable mentors, taking into account their skill and their working environment.

Another issue was the unavailability of the boss because of executive positions or involvement in multiple activities. According to current regulations, the appointment of faculty members with executive positions is equivalent to other faculties; despite not having sufficient time, they allow oversight of theses from students. Supervisors in addition to their teaching duties operate in public and in private clinics, such that student oversight and instruction is restricted (Logli, 2015).

The explanations for the lack of cooperation between consultants in advising students may be the allocation of the primary responsibility for the monitoring of these theses and the lack of transparency in the roles of advisors in the academic regulations (Yu, 2019). This question can be overcome by describing similar regulations. Setting a thesis number cap was a struggle for faculty and there was no agreement between faculty and students. Others acknowledged that restricting the opportunity to focus further on a thesis. On the other hand, those who disagreed, said that higher skill faculties are omitted and that students would operate with lower faculties. To that end, the creation of a supervisory committee can be considered a remedy to control oversight, quality and quantity of education programs relevant to supervisory capacity, efficiency, the consideration of concerns and input, the evaluation of execution of the decided guidelines and thesis development. Overall, the review, modification and creation of the rules and legislation for the advancement of the thesis method appears to influence many main categories, including supervisory skills, the environment and monitoring.

To improve the assurance of compliance and encourage consistency of performance, however, it seems important to codify the evaluation and inspection processes for legislation and bylaws. Improving the university's science and academic environment can also help improve policies, encourage and foster services for tracking.

Such results can be used in terms of their weaknesses and strengths. The involvement of donors, faculty and students in the thesis process is a driver for our research. Including the opinions of students from different stages of schooling is another strength. This research is constrained by the study of the experiences of students and faculty only in one University in Indonesia. Our shortcomings in this analysis were challenging for graduates to reach. Another restraint was because certain students had trouble saying their issues because of other concerns about their supervisors.

## Conclusion

Current study found that, while supporting work in one University in Indonesia, the area of thesis supervision still poses some problems. Strategies for problem solving and increasing the quality of the study are outlined as follows: analysis, reform and creation of by-laws Designing appraisal processes for tracking and implementing applications of regulations.

## Limitations and Future Research Direction

This study is subject to limitations which will provide future research directions. First, to further ascertain and close the gap of this study, a national survey may be initiated with larger samples, which will offer a more in-depth analysis and understanding of the influence of developed university systems. Questions and gaps are presented in this study, which can help future researchers chart their research problems. Second, the use of a mixed-method research design is encouraged since this study is only limited to the descriptive correlational survey. Thirdly, a longitudinal study must be initiated, focusing on the direct effect of social and cultural capital on learners' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development. Finally, a follow-up study should be conducted aligned with the attainment of Indonesia's education modernization.

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