STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WRITING THESIS

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Education
In Partial Fulfillment for the Master of Education in English

Submitted by
Deepak Sitaula

Faculty of Education
Tribhuvan University,
Kirtipur, Kathmandu
Nepal
2015

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION ON WRITING THESIS

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Education
In Partial Fulfillment for the Master of Education in English

Submitted by
Deepak Sitaula

Faculty of Education
Tribhuvan University,
Kirtipur, Kathmandu
Nepal
2015

T.U. Regd. 9-2-375-73-2007
Second Year Examination
Roll NO. 280455/ 069

Date of Approval of the
Thesis Proposal 12/07/2014
Date of Submission: 03/02/2015

RECOMMENDATION FOR ACCEPTANCE

This is to certify that **Mr. Deepak Sitaula** has prepared this thesis entitled **'Students' Perception on Writing Thesis'** under my guidance and supervision.

I recommend this thesis for acceptance.

Date: ……

Dr. Anjana Bhattarai (Supervisor)
Reader and Head
Department of English Education
Faculty of Education
T.U., Kirtipur, Kathmandu

RECOMMENDATION FOR EVALUATION

This thesis has been recommended for the evaluation from the following

Research Guidance Committee:

Signature

Dr. Anjana Bhattarai (Supervisor) ……..
Reader and Head — Chairperson
Department of English Education
T.U., Kirtipur, Kathmandu

Mr. Bhesh Raj Pokhrel ……..
Lecturer — Member
Department of English Education
T.U., Kirtipur, Kathmandu

Mr. Guru Prasad Paudel ……..
Teaching Assistance — Member
Department of English Education
T.U., Kirtipur, Kathmandu

Date:

EVALUATION AND APPROVAL

This thesis has been evaluated and approved by the following **Thesis Evaluation and Approval Committee:**

Signature

Dr. Anjana Bhattarai (Supervisor) ……..
Reader and Head Chairperson
Department of English Education
T.U., Kirtipur, Kathmandu

Dr. Anju Giri ……..
Professor Member
Department of English Education
Chairperson
English and other Foreign Languages,
Education Subject Committee
T.U., Kirtipur, Kathmandu

Mr. Bhesh Raj Pokhrel ……
Lecturer Member
Department of English Education
T.U., Kirtipur, Kathmandu

Date: .....

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge this thesis is original; no part of it was earlier submitted to the candidature of research degree to any university.

Date: ……

Deepak Sitaula

DEDICATION

Dedicated

to

My parents who have been a source of inspiration in my life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am indebted to several people without whom the completion of this thesis would have been impossible.

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincere and deep gratitude to my supervisor **Dr. Anjana Bhattarai**, for her patience, constant support and encouragement. Her professionalism, invaluable guidance and constructive feedback assisted me greatly during the process of my research.

I am thankful to **Prof. Dr. Anju Giri, Mr. Bhesh Raj Pokhrel** and **Mr. Guru Prasad Paudel** for their invaluable guidance, constructive feedback, kind cooperation and advice in course of completing this thesis.

I am equally thankful to **Prof. Dr. Jai Raj Awasthi, Prof. Dr. Tirth Raj Khaniya, Prof. Dr. Govinda Raj Bhattarai, Prof. Dr. Chandreswor Mishra, , Prof. Dr. Anju Giri, Prof. Dr. Vishnu Singh Rai, Prof. Dr. Tara Datta Bhatta , Dr. Tapasi Bhattacharya, Mr. Prem Bdr. Phyak, Mr. Bhesh Raj Pokhrel, Mrs. Hima Rawal, Mrs. Madhu Neupane, Mrs. Saraswoti Dawadi, Mr. Khem Raj Joshi, Mr. Ashok Sapkota, Mr. Resham Acharya, Mr. Laxmi Prasad Ojha, Mr. Ramesh Ghimire** and **Mr. Guru Prasad Paudel** for providing me with academic support during the academic years.

I would like to remember **Mr. Bal Krishna Sharma** and **Mr. Bal Ram Adhikari** for their kind cooperation and advice in course of completing this thesis.

I also would like to remember my inspiring and encouraging **Parents** for providing me with every support to come to this position. My special thanks go to my lovely brother **Mr. Ramesh Sitaula** for creating a cooperative and favorable home environment during my study. I thank my friends **Mr. Prakash Bhattarai, Mr. Hari Gautam, Mr. Ganesh Bastola, Mr. Bibek Ghimire, and Mr. Sanjay Acharya** for their direct or indirect help in completing this research.

I will not miss the opportunity to thank all the participants from Tribhuvan University for providing me with their valuable information to complete this research work.

Finally, I would like to thank **K.M Computer Service, Panga, Kirtipur** for helping me to finalize this thesis. All of yours unflagging support will never be forgotten.

Deepak Sitaula

ABSTRACT

The research work entitled **"Students' Perception on Writing Thesis"** aimed at exploring the perception on research report writing of university students of the Department of English Education at Tribhuvan University, investigating their academic writing problems and to provide solutions to these problems. For this purpose, three research questions were posed and the answers to these questions were discussed. The data for the study were collected through questionnaire. The informants were postgraduate students from Tribhuvan University (i.e. thesis writing students and thesis completed students). Out of thirty participants, fifteen participants from thesis writing group were selected using quota sampling and other fifteen were selected using purposive sampling procedure. The data obtained from the informants have been analyzed and interpreted through using simple statistical tools. The participants, in total, have provided various opinions towards research report writing. Most of the participants have experienced problems with the various aspects of academic writing. The findings revealed that most of the University students faced problems in relation to the selection of the problem, structuring or organizing the requirements of thesis, referencing, reviewing and citing the relevant information, supervisory relationships etc. Although they have problems with the various aspects of academic writing, they negotiated with the supervisors, read extensively in their discipline areas, accessed internet and visited student learning centers to overcome the challenges they faced in the process.

This thesis comprises five chapters. Chapter one deals with general introduction, background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study and operational definitions of the key terms. Chapter two deals with the review of the related theoretical literature, review of empirical literature, implications of the review for the study and theoretical/ conceptual framework. Chapter three includes methods and procedures adopted to carry out the research. It contains information on design and method of the study, population sample and sampling strategies, study areas/ field, data collection tools and techniques, data collection procedures and data analysis and interpretation procedure. Similarly, chapter four deals with the analysis and interpretation of results and summary of the findings. Chapter five contains the conclusions and recommendations of the study. Finally, chapter five is followed by the references and appendices.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page *i*

Declaration *ii*

Recommendation for Acceptance *iii*

Recommendation for Approval *iv*

Evaluation and Approval *v*

Dedication *vi*

Acknowledgements *vii*

Abstract *ix*

Table of Contents *xi*

List of Tables *xv*

List of Figures *xvi*

Symbols and Abbreviations *xvii*

CHAPTER -I: INTRODUCTION **1-10**

1.1 Background of the Study 1

1.2 Statement of the Problem 7

1.3 Objectives of the Study 8

1.4 Research Questions 9

1.5 Significance of the Study 9

1.6 Delimitations of the Study 9

1.7 Operational Definition of the Key Terms 9

CHAPTER -II: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK **11-30**

2.1 Review of Theoretical Literature 11

2.1.1. A Brief Introduction to Thesis Writing 11

2.1.2. Issues of Thesis Writing in English as a Second Language 14

2.1.2.1 Psycho- affective issues 14

2.1.2.2 Behavioral issues 15
2.1.2.3 Rhetorical issues 16
2.1.2.4 Social issues 17
2.1.3 Ethics in Research 17
2.1.4 Criteria for a Good Research 18
2.1.5 Plagiarism as a Challenge for Writing Thesis 19
2.1.5.1 Techniques for Avoiding Plagiarism 21
2.1.6 Common Challenges of Thesis Writing 23
2.1.6.1 Common Mistakes of the Student in Writing a Thesis 24
2.1.7 Perception: A Brief Introduction 26
2.2 Review of Related Empirical Research 26
2.3 Implication of Review for the Study 28
2.4 Conceptual Framework 29

CHAPTER -III: METHODS AND PROCEDURES OF THE STUDY 31-34
3.1 Design and Method 31
3.2 Population, Sample and sampling Strategy 32
3.3 Study Areas/ Fields 33
3.4 Data collection Tools and Techniques 33
3.5 Data collection Procedures 33
3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedure 34

CHAPTER -IV: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS 35-85
4.1 Students' Perception on Thesis Writing 35
4.1.1 Students' Interest in Writing Thesis 36
4.1.2 Selection of the Problem 36
4.1.3 Area of Research 38
4.1.4 Change in Topic 38
4.1.5 Research Plan 40
4.1.6 Publication of Academic Writing 40

4.1.7 Articles based on thesis 42
4.1.8 Workshops on Thesis Writing 43
4.1.9 Thesis writing 44
4.1.10 Managing a text as a challenge 44
4.1.11 Writing as an integral part of research 45
4.1.12 Explicit Instruction on Structuring a Thesis 46
4.1.13 Fear of the supervisor’s feedback in writing 47
4.1.14 Colleagues and Supervisors Role in Research Writing 48
4.1.15 Ethics in Research 49
4.1.16 Following Ethical Guidelines for a Systematic Research 50
4.1.17 Adequacy of Research or Professional Training Opportunity 51
4.1.18 Confidence as an Independent Researcher 52
4.1.19 Level of Satisfaction with the Academic Supervision Received 53
4.1.20 Plagiarism 54
4.2 Students' Perception on Challenges of Thesis Writing 57
4.2.1 Understanding the Requirements of a Thesis 58
4.2.2 Challenging Part(s) in Writing a Thesis 60
4.2.3 Getting Proper Resources or Reference Materials 61
4.2.4 Choosing the Right Topic 63
4.2.5 Choosing the Right Methodology 65
4.2.6 Difficulty in Dealing with the Data 67
4.2.7 Structuring of Thesis 69
4.2.8 Reviewing the Related Literature and Citing the Relevant Information 71
4.2.9 The Understanding of the Supervisor 73
4.2.10 Supervision Time 74
4.2.11 Self Directedness and Efficacy 76
4.2.12 Autonomy in the Supervisory Relationship 78
4.2.13 Getting Institutions to Discuss the Topic 80
4.3 Summary of Findings 82

CHAPTER -V: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION 86-90

5.1 Conclusions 86

5.2 Recommendations 87

5.2.1 Policy Level 87

5.2.2 Practice Level 88

5.2.3 Further Research Level 89

REFERENCES

APPENDICES

LIST OF TABLES

S.N	Title	Page No.
Table No. 1:	Selection of the Problem	37
Table No. 2:	Area of Research	38
Table No. 3:	Research Plan	40
Table No: 4:	Managing a Text as a Challenge	45
Table No. 5:	Writing as an Integral Part of Research	46
Table No. 6:	Explicit Instruction on Structuring a Thesis	47
Table No. 7:	Fear of the Supervisor's Feedback in Writing	48
Table No. 8:	Role of Colleagues and Supervisors in Research Writing	49
Table No. 9:	Ethnics in Research	50
Table No.10:	Following Ethnical Guidelines for a Systematic Research	51
Table No. 11:	Adequacy of Research or Professional Training Opportunity	52
Table No. 12:	Confidence as an Independent Researcher	53
Table No. 13:	Level of Satisfaction with the Academic Supervision Received	54
Table No. 14:	Plagiarism	55
Table No. 15:	Understanding the Requirements of a Thesis	59
Table No. 16:	Challenging Part in Writing a Thesis	60
Table No. 17:	Getting Proper Resource or Reference Materials	63
Table No. 18:	Choosing the Right Topic	65
Table No. 19:	Choosing the Right Methodology	67
Table No. 20:	Difficulty in Dealing with the Data	69
Table No. 21:	Structuring of Thesis	70
Table No. 22:	Reviewing and Citing the Related Literature/Information	72
Table No. 23:	The Understanding of the Supervisor	74
Table No. 24:	Supervision Time	76
Table No. 25:	Self Directedness and Efficacy	78
Table No. 26:	Autonomy in the Supervisory Relationship	80
Table No. 27:	Getting Institutions to Discuss the Topic	82

LIST OF FIGURES

S.N.	Title	Page No.
Figure No. 1:	Change in Topic	39
Figure No. 2:	Publication of Academic Writing	42
Figure No. 3:	Articles Based on Thesis	42
Figure No. 4:	Workshops on Thesis Writing	43
Figure No. 5:	Understanding the Requirements of a Thesis	58
Figure No. 6:	Getting Proper Resource or Reference Materials	62
Figure No. 7:	Choosing the Right Topic	64
Figure No. 8:	Choosing the Right Methodology	66
Figure No. 9:	Difficulty in Dealing with the Data	68
Figure No. 10:	Structuring of Thesis	69
Figure No. 11:	Reviewing and Citing the Related Literature/Information	71
Figure No. 12:	The Understanding of the Supervisor	73
Figure No. 13:	Supervision Time	75
Figure No. 14:	Self Directedness and Efficacy	77
Figure No. 15:	Autonomy in the Supervisory Relationship	79
Figure No. 16:	Getting Institutions to Discuss the Topic	81

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

%	-	Percentage
&	-	Ampersand
B.Ed	-	Bachelor in Education
CDEE	-	Central Department of English Education
CEDA	-	Centre for Economic Development and Administration
CNAS	-	Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies
CUP	-	Cambridge University Press
Dr.	-	Doctor
EFL	-	English as Foreign Language
ELT	-	English Language Teaching
etc.	-	Etcetera
FoE	-	Faculty of Education
FoHSS	-	Faculty of Humanities and Social Science
FoL	-	Faculty of Law
FoM	-	Faculty of Management
IAAS	-	Institute of Agriculture and Animal science
i.e	-	that is
IoE	-	Institute of Engineering
IoF	-	Institute of Forestry
IoM	-	Institute of Medicine
IoST	-	Institute of Science and Technology
M.Ed.	-	Master in Education
No.	-	Number
OUP	-	Oxford University Press
p.	-	Page Number
RECAST	-	Research Centre for Applied Science and Technology
SLA	-	Second Language Acquisition
S.N	-	Serial Number
TEFL	-	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TCG	-	Thesis Completed Group
TWG	-	Thesis Writing Group
TU	-	Tribhuvan University