GRADUATE-LEVEL THESIS WRITING IN A SECOND LANGUAGE: PERSPECTIVES OF STUDENTS AND ADVISORS

SELİN YILDIRIM

BOĞAZİÇİ UNIVERSITY

2020

GRADUATE-LEVEL THESIS WRITING IN A SECOND LANGUAGE: PERSPECTIVES OF STUDENTS AND ADVISORS

Thesis submitted to the

Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences

in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

Master of Arts

in

English Language Education

by

Selin Yıldırım

Boğaziçi University

2020

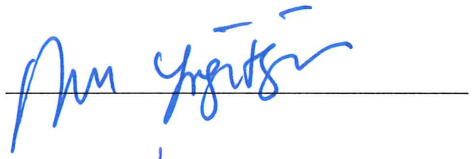
Graduate-Level Thesis Writing in a Second Language:

Perspectives of Students and Advisors

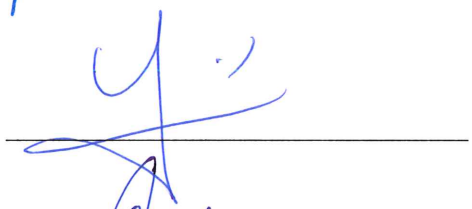
The thesis of Selin Yıldırım

has been approved by:

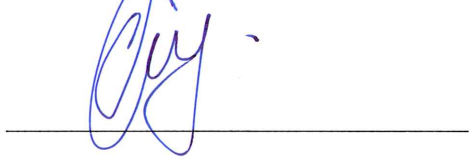
Assist. Prof. Nur Yiğitoğlu Aptoula
(Thesis Advisor)



Prof. Yasemin Bayyurt



Assoc. Prof. Enisa Mede
(External Member)



April 2020

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Selin Yıldırım, certify that

- I am the sole author of this thesis and that I have fully acknowledged and documented in my thesis all sources of ideas and words, including digital resources, which have been produced or published by another person or institution;
- this thesis contains no material that has been submitted or accepted for a degree or diploma in any other educational institution;
- this is a true copy of the thesis approved by my advisor and thesis committee at Boğaziçi University, including final revisions required by them.

Signature.....

Date .....13.04.2020.....

ABSTRACT

Graduate-Level Thesis Writing in a Second Language:

Perspectives of Students and Advisors

This study explores (1) the difficulties experienced by graduate students in writing their thesis, (2) perceptions of students and advisors regarding responsibilities in thesis supervision and (3) the expectations of graduate students and thesis advisors from each other and from the university in this writing process. The participants were master's students and thesis advisors in social sciences disciplines at an English-medium state university in Turkey. Data of the study was obtained from surveys and semi-structured interviews. Sixty-three students and 35 advisors completed the surveys and a subset from each group (n=16 and n=9, respectively) were interviewed subsequently. The findings indicate that students experience major writing problems related to English language, rhetorical organization and functions of thesis genre and its chapters. Perceptions of students and advisors with respect to their responsibilities converge largely on various aspects such as finding a research subject or adopting a systematic study approach, but for a better time management, students expect more meeting initiation, frequent feedback and guidance from their advisors. Furthermore, advisors do not consider dealing with language-related problems of students as a part of advisor responsibilities. The findings of the study reveal that second language graduate student writers need urgent support in their thesis writing processes and that both students and advisors agree on the need for opportunities such as an academic writing center or an academic writing course for graduate students.

ÖZET

İkinci Dilde Lisansüstü Tez Yazımı:
Öğrencilerin ve Tez Danışmanlarının Görüşleri

Bu çalışma (1) lisansüstü öğrencilerinin tezlerini yazmada yaşadıkları zorlukları, (2) yüksek lisans öğrencilerinin ve danışmanların tez denetimindeki sorumluluklarına ilişkin algılarını ve (3) birbirlerinden ve üniversiteden tez yazma sürecindeki beklentilerini araştırmaktadır. Katılımcılar Türkiye'de İngilizce eğitim veren bir devlet üniversitesinin sosyal bilimler bölümlerinde yüksek lisans yapan öğrenciler ve aynı üniversitenin sosyal bilimler bölümlerinde yüksek lisans tez danışmanlığı yapan akademisyenlerden oluşmaktadır. Çalışmanın verileri anketlerden ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerden elde edilmiştir. Çalışma kapsamında 63 öğrenci ve 35 danışman ankete katılmış ve anket katılımcılarından 16 öğrenci ve 9 tez danışmanı ile röportaj yapılmıştır. Bulgular, yüksek lisans tez yazımında öğrencilerin İngilizce dili, tez türünün ve bölümlerinin retorik organizasyonu ve işlevleriyle ilgili önemli yazma problemleri yaşadıklarını göstermektedir. Öğrencilerin ve danışmanların tez sürecindeki sorumluluklara ilişkin algıları, araştırma konusu bulma ve sistematik bir çalışma yaklaşımı benimseme gibi konularda birleşmekte; fakat öğrenciler daha iyi bir zaman yönetimi için danışmanlardan daha fazla toplantı başlatma, daha sık geri bildirim ve daha fazla rehberlik beklemektedir. Ayrıca, danışmanlar öğrencilerin dilsel problemleriyle ilgilenmeyi danışman sorumlulukları arasında görmemektedir. Çalışmanın sonuçları ikinci dil lisansüstü öğrenci yazarlarının tez yazma süreçlerinde acil desteğe ihtiyaç duyduklarını ortaya koymuş, hem öğrencilerin hem de danışmanların lisansüstü öğrenciler için akademik yazma merkezi veya akademik yazma dersi gibi seçeneklerin gerekliliğinde hemfikir olduklarını göstermiştir.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, I would like to express my profound gratitude to my dear thesis advisor Assist. Prof. Nur Yiğitoğlu Aptoula, for her constant support, feedback, guidance and encouragement. Throughout this journey, she never stopped believing in me and motivating me. She was a friend, a mentor and an advisor from the beginning till the end. Without her, it would have been impossible to complete this thesis. I also owe special thanks to Prof. Yasemin Bayyurt for her invaluable support and encouragement during the hardest times. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Assoc. Prof. Enisa Mede for her invaluable comments and feedback.

I would like to extend my thanks to The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey (TÜBİTAK) for the financial support within the scope of the 2210-A National Scholarship Programme for Master's Students.

I am very grateful to all graduate students and advisors who participated in my study. My heartfelt thanks go to Özge Bakay and Çiğdem Karademir for their amazing friendship, advice, support and love. I also owe my deepest thanks to Yusuf Cengiz for putting up with all my questions and Talip Gülle for providing advice and support. My biggest thanks go to Özge Deniz, Pınar Topal and Didem Kurt for their encouragement and support. Thank you for being such great classmates and friends. For their constant support and love, I owe biggest thanks to my father, mother and sisters.

I owe my deepest and most sincere thanks to Kutay Yapar for his encouragement, support and love. Thank you for giving great advice for my every little question and finding solutions for every problem I had while writing this thesis and for being by my side with your unconditional love.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Statement of the problem 1

1.2 Purpose of the study 3

1.3 Significance of the study 3

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW 5

2.1 English for academic purposes 5

2.2 Graduate-level writing 7

2.3 Graduate-level thesis writing 12

2.4 Research on academic writing in English in Turkey 25

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY 28

3.1 Research context 28

3.2 Participants 30

3.3 Data collection instruments 32

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS 37

4.1 Student perspectives 37

4.2 Student surveys 58

4.3 Advisor perspectives 64

4.4 Advisor surveys 77

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION 83

5.1 Conclusion 92

5.2 Pedagogical implications 94

5.3 Limitations 96

5.4 Suggestions for further research 96

APPENDIX A: ACADEMIC PROGRAMS OF STUDENT SURVEY PARTICIPANTS 98

APPENDIX B: ACADEMIC PROGRAMS OF ADVISOR SURVEY PARTICIPANTS 99

APPENDIX C: SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS 100

APPENDIX D: SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR ADVISORS 104

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENTS 108

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ADVISORS 110

APPENDIX G: STUDENT CONSENT FORM 112

APPENDIX H: ADVISOR CONSENT FORM 114

APPENDIX I: ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL 116

REFERENCES 117

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Number of Theses Completed in the Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences 29
Table 2. Students' Academic Programs 31
Table 3. Advisors' Academic Programs 32
Table 4. Semester Information of Respondents 59
Table 5. Student Perceptions of Their Academic Writing Skills 59
Table 6. Amount of Academic Writing Done before Thesis Stage 60
Table 7. Difficult Elements of Thesis Writing 61
Table 8. Section Difficulty 62
Table 9. Frequency of Meetings with Advisors 63
Table 10. Advisee Number of Advisor Respondents 78
Table 11. Students' Level of Academic Writing Skills 78
Table 12. Frequency of Language-Related Difficulties Faced by Students 79
Table 13. Frequency of Perceived Student Awareness of Thesis Writing Expectations 79
Table 14. Frequency of Perceived Student Awareness of Thesis Chapter Contents 80
Table 15. The Most Challenging Section 80
Table 16. Perceived Responsibility for Language and Content-Related Difficulties 81
Table 17. Perceived Difficulty of Supervision 82

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter presents a background to the present study. It includes the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, the research questions it aims to address along with the significance of the study.

1.1 Statement of the problem

Academic writing in English is the main practice in both undergraduate and graduate levels of English-medium higher education institutions. With the globalization of English, more universities have adopted English-medium instruction (EMI). English has become the language of academy and EMI has become a widespread practice in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, such as Turkey. Many students choose to study in those universities and writing skill is crucial for their academic survival. In their undergraduate studies, student engage in their academic disciplines through a variety of academic literacy activities and writing practices.

At the graduate level, academic writing even becomes a more essential part of students' lives as they are expected to produce a variety of texts. A thesis[1] is one of the genres that is required for completion of graduate degrees. Writing a thesis poses many difficulties for the students. First, it is the first time for the students to deal with a text of such length. Second, given its scope, a graduate thesis is not similar to any writing assignment the students completed before. Students need to review, synthesize and write critically a large amount of literature, design a feasible study,

[1] The terms thesis and dissertation are used to refer to the work done at either master's or doctoral level. In this study, the term thesis is used to refer to both of them.

collect data, report and interpret results. Third, the scale of writing is much greater in graduate studies compared to undergraduate writing tasks (Allison, Cooley, Lewkowicz & Nunan, 1998). A master's thesis is often about between 10,000 and 20,000 words long and a doctoral thesis can be around 80,000 words (Thompson, 2013). Thus, the time and the effort required to produce such a writing task makes it a significantly challenging process for the students. Thompson (2013) notes that:

> A thesis or a dissertation is for many students the longest and most challenging piece of assessed writing that they will have to do in their degree program. The sheer size of the text and the complex task of planning one's research, of synthesizing one's reading, and of sustaining a coherent and extended argument, is an immense challenge for any student writer (p.284)

The challenges faced while writing a graduate thesis increase when the students are second language (L2) writers of English (Paltridge and Starfield, 2007). Although they are admitted to graduate programs after fulfilling the language requirements of the universities, it is often the case for those students to experience difficulty in L2 English writing (Paltridge, 2018).

Along with the language and writing issues, the supervisory relationship between the students and advisors has also been reported to be highly influential in successful completion of the thesis. Graduate students write their theses under the supervision of a faculty member who is an expert in a discipline. Effective supervision seems to be essential for graduate students to complete their degrees successfully (Pearson & Kayrooz, 2004). Therefore, understanding the expectations of student and advisors and their perceptions regarding their roles is critical in maintaining an effective communication throughout the writing process.

1.2 Purpose of the study

This study seeks to identify writing difficulties experienced by thesis-writing students at an EMI university in Turkey from both student and advisor perspectives. The exploratory study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What are the writing-related difficulties that thesis-writing students encounter?
2. What are the perceptions of students and advisors regarding responsibilities in thesis supervision?
3. What are the expectations of students and thesis advisors from each other and the university during thesis writing process?

1.3 Significance of the study

The successful completion of graduate degrees is critical for students' further academic studies and work. Attrition cases may occur once the difficulties encountered in thesis writing are coupled with other challenges. In order to inform the support and the teaching of thesis-writing students, understanding the difficulties and complexities of the process.

The majority of the studies focusing on thesis writing issues of L2 writers and the relationship with the advisors were conducted at Anglophone countries (e.g. Casanave, 2002; Shaw, 1991; Wang & Li, 2008). The number of studies exploring thesis-writing issues from student and advisor perspectives in EFL contexts remained limited. In Turkey, writing studies have remained limited compared to other language skills (Yaylı, 2012). Most of those studies focused on a variety of writing issues related to undergraduate writing (e.g. Atay & Kurt, 2006; Çandarlı, Bayyurt & Martı, 2015; Kurt & Atay, 2007; Yaylı, 2011). Research on graduate thesis writing

has been mostly confined to textual exploration of complied corpus of theses (Doğan, Yağız & Kaçar, 2018; Akbas, 2012a, 2012b, 2014). To my knowledge, no study has explored graduate thesis genre writing issues both from student and advisor perspectives in Turkish context. There is also a need to focus on academic writing in L2 English of graduate students from various disciplines in social sciences as a great majority of the writing studies in Turkey employed participants from English-based disciplines (e.g. Yağız & Yiğiter, 2016). Therefore, the present study is significant in filling this gap in the literature by exploring thesis writing issues from perspectives graduate students and advisors in social sciences disciplines at an EMI university in Turkey.

The findings of this study and the pedagogical implications could inform advisors, administrative officials at institutes of graduate studies and writing professionals about the kind of writing and language related issues are experienced by graduate students. It also provides insights for both students and thesis advisors regarding the perceived responsibilities and expectations in thesis writing process.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The present study explores thesis writing issues, perceived responsibilities and expectations from student and advisor perspective. Thus, this literature review chapter aims to set the background of academic and graduate student writing, followed by a review of published studies which are divided into two sections: student perspectives and supervisor perspectives.

2.1 English for academic purposes

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) framework entails "language research and instruction that focuses on the communicative needs and practices of individuals working in academic contexts" (Hyland & Shaw, 2016, p.1). EAP is categorized under English for Specific Purposes (ESP) along with English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). According to Swales (2001), emergence of EAP dates back to 1960s, when the language was seen as abstract system. In those years, there was a need among applied linguists to view language differently so that speakers could use language as a communicative resource in various contexts. This need was satisfied by Hyland, McIntosh and Strevens' book (1964) titled *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching* (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001). According to Flowerdew and Peacock (2001), this book was particularly significant "in encouraging theoretical work in language description and its application to the production of EAP teaching materials" (2001, p.11). Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) identify four types of EAP in higher education contexts. English-speaking countries such as USA and Australia are considered in the first situation. Many international students come to

these countries in order to pursue undergraduate, graduate degrees. In the second situation of EAP, such as Zimbabwe, English is the main language of education while other local languages are spoken in everyday life. An example country for the third context of EAP is Jordan, where only some of the subjects are taught in English and the others in the native language of the country. In the last situation of EAP, all higher education courses are given in country's national language as in Brazil and English is learned for additional reasons. The importance of understanding the needs of these learner groups with various language competencies in their contexts before preparing materials and establishing objectives is highlighted by EAP (Carkin, 2005).

Hyland and Shaw (2016) presents four main principles of EAP, namely authenticity, groundedness, interdisciplinarity and relevance. The first principle, authenticity, refers to use of texts in classroom that are very similar to the ones students encounter in real academic life. Groundedness is attributed to the bidirectional relationship between research and practice, in which research informs practice and EAP practitioners also conduct research studies by drawing on knowledge gained from the students and the genres. Interdisciplinarity of EAP means it is not "a theory or a method but an area of study" (Hyland & Shaw, 2016, p.3). In fact, EAP utilizes a number of theories and knowledge areas such as systemic linguistics, pragmatics, communicative language teaching and critical theory. The fourth principle, relevance, refers to ensuring pedagogical practices are informed by needs analysis and research for the context in particular.

In 1990, Swales introduced the concept of "genre" in his seminal book, which since then informed and influenced substantial amount of research in EAP (Swales, 1990). Genre is defined as "particular type of communicative event which has a

particular communicative purpose recognized by its users, or discourse community" (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001, p.15). Genre approach in writing views texts with particular features and linguistic forms carrying purposes and functions for a particular communicative context (Hyland, 2013). Since students in higher education contexts need to be familiar with particular academic genres, many studies explored academic genres such as textbooks (e.g. Hyland 1999b; Love, 1991,1993), research articles (e.g. Hyland, 2000; Nwogu,1997; Salager-Meyer, 1992), undergraduate essays (Allison, 1995; Bruce, 2010; Li & Wharton, 2012;) and graduate theses/dissertations (Belcher, 1994; Cooley & Lewkowicz 1997; Paltridge & Woodrow, 2012; Strauss, 2012). As opposed academic textbooks, research articles have received more attention as an academic genre, which could inform pedagogy and in turn contributes graduate students' recognition of research article as a genre created by certain people in particular disciplines (Carkin, 2001). Studies on graduate writing and thesis, as one of the genres encountered in graduate studies, are explained in more detail in the rest of the literature review section.

2.2 Graduate-level writing

The number of graduate students studying in English medium universities has been increasing substantially (Lewkowicz, 2012). All these students are expected to produce different types of texts such as book reviews, research proposals, conference posters, which are required during graduate studies. Given the increasing graduate student number and the variety of texts they need to compose, research on graduate student writing has attracted a lot of attention since 1990s. Another reason for this increasing attention, besides large number of students undertaking graduate degrees in English, is growing research focus on genre (Leki, Cumming & Silva, 2008).

A number of studies investigated the theses written by master's and doctoral students (e.g. Hyland, 2004; Kawase, 2018; Lewkowicz 2012; Ozdemir & Longo, 2014). Some of these studies focused on the whole texts of theses (Hyland, 2004; Kawase 2015; Paltridge, 2002). For instance, Hyland (2004) analyzed metadiscoursal features of 240 theses (or dissertations) written by L2 postgraduate students at several Hong Kong universities. His analysis shows "an intimate relationship between discourse practices and the social organization of disciplinary communities" (Hyland, 2004, p.148). Paltridge (2002) examined the organization of master and doctoral theses written in various areas of study at an Australian university, and then compared the structure of those theses to publications on how to write a thesis. He identified four thesis types, namely traditional: simple, traditional: complex, topic-based and compilation of research articles. It is argued that the published books giving advice on the organization of theses do not really match the variety of thesis structures happening in actual practice.

Other studies still focused on the text but attempted to explore sections of the thesis. A number of research studies aimed to explore abstract (e.g. Ozdemir and Longo, 2014), the introduction (e.g. Bunton, 2002; Kawase, 2018), the discussion (e.g. Flowerdew 2015; Rasmeenin, 2006) and also conclusion (e.g. Bunton, 2005; Lewkowicz, 2009, 2012). For example, Lewkowicz (2012) analyzed conclusion sections of 12 theses written in English studies disciplines at Polish universities. The length, organization, the aims of parts of the texts and which steps were taken to meet those aims were taken into consideration in the analysis of conclusion chapters. The results indicated that students used various ways to conclude their theses and Polish practices of writing conclusion affected their decisions.

It is evident that non-native graduate students experience more difficulties in academic English writing than native graduate students (Casanave & Hubbard, 1992). Several studies indicate the graduate students' writing difficulties in the L2. For instance, Wang (2011) reports Chinese graduate students' perceptions of academic writing in English. Interviews with two master's and two doctoral students reveal that their lack of appropriate academic vocabulary intervened with their transformation of ideas into written form besides decreasing the quality of writing. Similarly, Ho (2013) interviewed four first-year master's students at a Taiwanese university. Findings show that students encountered research and language related problems. For the research-related problems, participants reported experiencing considerable difficulty in finding the research that was relevant their research and mentioned lack of library support to help them locate first and secondary sources for their disciplinary literature search. Pertaining to linguistic issues, the main hindrance for both Taiwanese and international students was to search for articles in the target language (e.g. Chinese) and understand and translate terms into English.

However, possessing the necessary language skills may not suffice to achieve academic purposes in graduate level. In order to be able to meet the requirements of graduate-level studies, students with English as an additional language should be familiar with these academic genres in addition to having high level of English (Paltridge, 2018). According to Paltridge (2018), "While a good level of language proficiency is clearly necessary then, it is not sufficient for students to succeed in their academic studies (p.2)". The circumstances surrounding the text writing affect the whole writing process, which makes it equally essential to comprehend social aspects of academic writing (Paltridge & Woodrow, 2012). On the other hand, students' lack of required linguistic competence may endanger the supervision

process and the relationship between the student and the supervisor (Strauss, Walton & Madsen, 2003). It appears that both the language and successful negotiation of social roles play equally critical roles in accomplishment of graduate studies.

In a case study, Casanave (2002) explored literacy practices of five TESOL master's students from different backgrounds studying at a small institute in USA by conducting individual interviews with the participants over a year. One of the challenges that those master's students experienced was meeting the diverse expectations of faculty members and maintaining their own academic interest concurrently. All of the participants noted that although the expectations differed greatly among courses, writing was the main form of assessment in the program and to be able to succeed, they had to be highly skilled writers. Regarding the various types of writing assignments, some of the instructors provided students with detailed guidelines, while most of them remained unclear and unspecified. Regarding the feedback practices, students accounted that each instructor has his/her own style of giving feedback to writing assignments, which was consistent across different courses and students (Casanave, 2002). Students attributed the differences in feedback styles to personality and the culture of the instructors. Student comments regarding what they expected from feedbacks were also mentioned in the study. For instance, one student stated that what she expected from feedback was to learn the instructor's ideas on her comments and to understand whether her writing had been really read by the instructor. Casanave (2002) points out that various types of feedback practices are perceived as incompatible for students, but these demonstrate "a social and political reality of the academic playing field" (p.114).

Badenhorst, Moloney, Rosales, Dyer and Ru (2015) reported on a study where they introduced a writing pedagogy to help graduate students overcome their

writing problems. In their case study, Badenhorst et al. (2015) examines writing of one international graduate student at philosophy master program who participated in a writing course concentrating on academic and research discourses, adapted for that particular university context by the researchers. This course involved workshops on a number of different writing topics taking the perspective of academic literacies focusing on 'writing as a social practice' rather than 'writing skills'. The student faced the difficulty of positioning her arguments according to expectations of various disciplines by maintaining objectivity. It is noted that after the writing course, she was able to analyze discourses, build up an authorial voice and critical competence. The course, basically, enabled participants to "make choices with understanding of discursive practices led to empowered writers" (p.10).

Casanave and Hubbard (1992) conducted a survey research at Standford University to examine first-year doctoral students' writing problems, the type of writing assignments they receive and how those assignments are evaluated. 85 faculty members from 26 departments responded to survey questions. Humanities-social sciences (HSS) and science-technology graduate programs were equally represented. HSS academic staff regarded writing skills as more important than science-technology instructors did. The most important writing skills HSS were reported to be text-based skills such as analyzing and synthesizing using various sources. Regarding the evaluation criteria of writing assignments, it was found that "discourse-level" features were considered to be more critical than the "sentence-level" writing features for both faculties (Casanave & Hubbard,1992, p.38). The faculty members were also asked to rate the areas that native and non-native graduate students were experiencing problems while writing. Responses revealed that nonnative speaker students were experiencing more difficulties in writing compared

to native speaker students, notably “in the areas of correctness of punctuation/spelling, accuracy of grammar, appropriateness of grammar, and appropriateness of vocabulary” (p.38).

Overall, the research on graduate student writing suggests that non-native English speakers experience more language-related difficulties than native speakers. Nevertheless, language skills are not the sole determinant of success in graduate programs. Genre awareness, feedback received from instructors and courses offered to support graduate student writing also seem to be influential on academic writing.

2.3 Graduate-level thesis writing

Many students undertaking a master’s or doctoral degree are required to write a thesis for the successful completion of their degrees. As Hyland (2004) puts it “The dissertation is a high stakes genre at the summit of a student’s academic accomplishment”. Given the importance of writing a thesis, it can be also considered as “the most significant piece of writing that any student will ever do” in his/her academic life (p.134). It is the first time for many graduate students to write a text of this length and what adds more challenge is to be able to use the disciplinary knowledge to present the research in a coherent, systematic and organized way (Dong, 1998; Cooley and Lewkowicz, 1997). While the length of a thesis may change depending on the area of study and some other factors, Thompson (2013) notes that a master’s thesis could be made up of approximately 10,000-20,000 words and a doctoral thesis’s length can be around 80,000-100,000 words if it is written in humanities or a discipline in social sciences. Furthermore, writing a thesis becomes an arduous task especially for students with English as a second language. Graduate students who need to write a thesis to complete their master or doctoral degrees face

language problems when writing in a second or foreign language. For example, at a university in Hong Kong, almost 80 percent of the students reported to having problems related to language (Cooley and Lewkowicz,1995).Thus, non-native speakers of English expect more guidance and involvement from their advisors than their native speaker counterparts during thesis writing (Dong, 1998). Besides perceived writing difficulties of L2 students, effective negotiation of social roles with graduate advisors seems to be one of the determinants of success in L2 graduate thesis writing (Leki, Cumming & Silva, 2008).

2.3.1 Student perspectives

Identifying students' needs, expectations and understanding their experiences play a crucial role in successful completion of their thesis writing processes. Student perceptions of difficulties and roles regarding the supervisory relationship were reported in several studies (e.g. Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006; Dong, 1998; East, Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2012; Odena & Burgess, 2017; Paltridge & Woodrow, 2012; Rogers, Zawacki & Baker, 2016; Strauss, 2012; Shaw, 1991; Wang & Li, 2008). Strauss (2012) reported the experiences of two international master's students' and their supervisor's in master thesis writing process at a university in New Zealand. The interviews both with the L2 English students and the supervisor illustrated language and supervisory relationship issues, which turned the thesis writing process into a confronting one for both parties. Since the researcher was also an EAP practitioner helping them with their language problems such as construction of grammatical sentences, incorrect use of articles, prepositions, tenses and punctuation. Lack of organization in the texts and evidence of plagiarism were also evident in the drafts. Another case study aimed to investigate the feedback practices

of a supervisor and the effectiveness of these on thesis writing of an Arabic international student. Although the student stated that the feedback he received enhanced his writing, he highlighted that in order to understand the written feedback, face to face meetings were highly crucial (Azman, Nor & Aghwela, 2014).

Students' expectations regarding feedback and guidance do not always match the real situations of their thesis writing process. It is fairly common to find there a discrepancy between the expectations of the students and the supervisor. In some cases, students expect more guidance and support than what the supervisor believes that she needs to provide (Dong, 1998; Strauss, 2012). In others, explicit direction matters substantially for the students. In the absence of explicit feedback, it seems to become more troublesome for students to figure out what to change in the text (Azman et al., 2014). Understanding how to proceed with the text when they receive "mere question marks or squiggles across the pages" as feedback is particularly challenging for L2 writers (Azman et al., 2014, p.155). Seeing question marks instead of comprehensive explanations on their drafts may lead to frustration for some students (Wang & Li, 2008). Similarly, Rogers et al. (2016) reveals that students' expectations regarding the nature of guidance differed from what they received. For instance, students needed more explicit direction from their advisors especially in the research questions and literature review stages. This desire for explicit guidance is proposed to be somewhat an effect of the difference between their viewpoints. The contrast in the perspectives is revealed by advisors' "broad explanations" and the students' "specific descriptions" of problematic aspects of thesis writing, although both groups mentioned similar areas of difficulty. From advisors' perspective, the major complication of the students was answering the

"why" question for their research, whereas students related their frustration mainly to resolving "how" issues while writing their thesis.

East et al. (2012) conducted a study to explore graduate students' perspectives regarding written feedback they receive and what type of feedback they consider to be effective on thesis drafts. Fifty-three students from humanities, sciences/mathematics and commerce areas completed questionnaires and 22 participants were interviewed subsequently. Their findings revealed that majority of the students reported receiving written feedback accompanied by face-to-face meeting. Moreover, it was found that L2 English students valued direct feedback on language and organization along with inexplicit feedback and they were more worried about understanding the feedback and applying it compared to students with English as a first language (L1). Finding also showed that providing both written and oral feedback and giving positive feedback in addition to negative comments were the most suggested feedback for new supervisors by the students.

In another study focusing on student perspectives, Bitchener and Basturkmen (2006) explored the perceived functions of discussion section and the difficulties faced in writing of this section of thesis by comparing the perceptions of the students and their supervisors. In-depth interviews were conducted with four supervisors and four master level students at two universities in New Zealand. Students participated in the study were from China, Korea and Eastern Europe. Considering the student perspectives of discussion section of the thesis, students' knowledge of the functions of this section was a lot narrower compared to their supervisors. For instance, although supervisors recommend the inclusion of interpretation of the results in the discussion section, none of the students pointed out this function in the interviews. Similar to their supervisors' opinions, students did not have a clear idea of what the

discussion should contain. While writing their thesis, students also experience difficulty in determining the content and the length of the literature review (Rogers et al, 2016). They are unclear about what to include without diverging from their central argument. Experiencing uncertainty about what was relevant or important for their literature review caused considerable frustration on the part of the students.

Many studies revealed the challenges L2 graduate students face while writing a thesis in English (e.g. Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006; Shaw 1991; Wang & Li, 2008). For instance, Shaw (1991) conducted interviews with 21 doctoral students and 1 master's student to explore their thesis composing processes. Participants were nonnative science and engineering students at a UK university. Findings indicate the difficulty with finding the most suitable vocabulary items to convey the intended meaning. The action taken by most of these students to overcome the difficulty they encountered was "conscious examination of their source texts" (Shaw, 1991, p.195). Specifically, students took notes the phrases they thought they could use in their own writing. Further, they made use of dictionaries, thesauruses and structure of other dissertations. Wang and Li (2008) interviewed eleven graduate students (ten doctoral and one master's) at an Australian university. Students expressed their uncertainty of using English appropriately and insufficiency regarding their English proficiency even though they were admitted to the programs with a certain English level. Despite this uncertainty, "they did not expect their supervisors to spend a lot of time on correcting mistakes or editing what they had written" (Wang & Li, 2008, p. 94).

Bitchener and Basturkmen (2006) reported language difficulties experienced while writing the discussion section. All of the students interviewed mentioned English language proficiency problem to be an obstacle preventing them from writing nicely. These language problems differed among students from using correct

tenses to not having a wide range of words. Three of four students reported facing challenges in communicating the connections between ideas using cohesive devices (Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006). Regarding the language difficulties, the study indicates differences between perspectives of supervisors and students. In supervisors' view, the problem was related to constructing meaning 'at the paragraph level', while the students perceived this as a difficulty 'at the sentence level' (Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006, p.13). It is proposed that assisting students to recognize the reasons of challenges they experience is one of the responsibilities of the supervisors since it is observed that "the supervisors had a higher level of awareness of the fundamental causes of their students' difficulties than their students had" (Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006, p.13).

In another qualitative inquiry, Odena and Burgess (2017) explored ESL doctoral students' and graduates' thesis writing facilitating experiences and strategies as they pointed out that suggestions should be put forward from students' point of view as opposed to what had been done in many previous studies. Equal number of students from social and science areas were interviewed to gain an understanding of what worked for them in their own perspectives. A generative model of academic writing development involving three components that are supervisors' feedback, personal organization and resilience and a support network arose out of thematic analysis of the transcriptions. Supervisors' feedback varied depending on students' needs and the development of their project, hence the researchers did not identify any particular feedback type preferred by students. Effectiveness of the support given at the beginning of the doctorate program tended to be higher and decreasing towards the end. Effectiveness of the supervisor's feedback was also related to students' personal organizations. Respondents reported that they had to deal with job and

family responsibilities alongside their doctoral studies, which required advanced organization to find time in order to write. They also needed to show substantial resilience continuously. ESL students participated in the study employed certain types of learning strategies, since they felt the urge to advance their language skills alongside writing skills. Those students needed to collect and learn new academic words, expressions and rules to use them in their own writing. Furthermore, ESL students commented that although they had taken academic writing courses designed for their writing needs, those courses lacked the "role of empathy with second-language speakers, motivation and understanding of the learner perspective" while focusing on mistakes (Odena & Burgess, 2017, p.584). The researcher maintained that not being totally aware of supervisors' expectations, feeling less skilled in writing in foreign language, a need to produce a clearer grammar and slow writing were among the other issues that ESL students noted.

A number of studies employed surveys in order to explore issues students have with the writing the thesis. Dong (1998) was interested in finding out nonnative English-speaking students' thesis writing difficulties. 137 science graduate students (106 non-native speakers) were surveyed at two U.S. universities. The findings of the study reveal that the native language of the students affected their English writing because of "linguistic and rhetorical differences" between the languages (Dong, 1998, p.385). In addition, nonnative students reported having more vocabulary problems than native speakers did. In another study, Rogers, Zawacki and Baker (2016) surveyed 342 doctoral students at a North American research institution. Survey results indicated that finding time to write, planning and writing down the ideas were the most difficult elements in thesis writing of students with English as a first language. For L2 writers, the order changes as writing down the ideas, finding

the most suitable vocabulary and meeting expectations of the audience respectively. Apparently, transforming ideas into written form using the most appropriate words to meet expectations of the readers were more challenging for the L2 writers. Furthermore, among all other items related to language, writing, use of sources L2 writers' difficulty scores were higher for the great majority of the items suggesting a more challenging writing experience for L2 students. Researchers point out that the most noticeable gap between L1 and L2 students are in the items related to sentence-level difficulties. Regarding the thesis sections, proposal, discussion, results and literature review were ranked as the most challenging to write. Although, students considered one-to-one meetings with their advisors as the most beneficial support during thesis writing, most of the students also indicated that they did not have regular meetings. In another survey study, Lewkowicz and Cooley (1997) reported that only 17% of the graduate students did not experience difficulty with writing in English while the rest considered themselves having difficulties at various levels, as 26% percent having serious difficulties. Major areas of difficulty noted by the student were organization of arguments, style and expressing ideas in English.

In a graduate course on thesis and dissertation writing, master and doctoral students' experiences are explored through online journals where students were expected to write on several issues such as "expectations of a dissertation, supervisor relationships, academic writing and writing about the research literature" (Paltridge & Woodrow, 2012, p. 92). Several issues were identified from the data as a result of theme analysis. Firstly, most of the students had their own individual reasons to decide on their research topics. Although there were cases where the supervisor decided on the topic and the theoretical framework, generally, choosing the appropriate topic was considered to be student's duty. In relation to supervision, it

was found that the students' expectations from the supervisor and the supervisor' perception of to what extent and how his/her guidance should be performed were quite dissimilar. Some international students elaborated on their earlier supervision experiences and explained that they expected more support from their supervisors. One other issue articulated in the study pertains to the conflict between the students and the supervisors on how the research study is to be orientated. Furthermore, retaining motivation throughout the research study and handling insecurities were among the concerns that the graduate students reflected on. In their reflection, during the course time, students constantly reported their self-doubt and languid interest for their research. Another theme emerged in the study is the difficulty of managing time successfully for thesis writing among many other responsibilities. When these non-research elements interfere, Paltridge and Woodrow (2012) indicate that it is possible for a great number of students to finish their theses in a much longer time than they anticipated.

2.3.2 Supervisor perspectives

Several studies attempted to uncover advisor perceptions of students' language difficulties in thesis writing (e.g. Azman et al., 2014; Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006, 2010; Cooley and Lewkowicz, 1995, 1997; Dong, 1998; Rogers et al., 2016). In an early project investigating supervisor views of the problems that their postgraduate students face while writing their thesis, Cooley and Lewkowicz (1995) interviewed 105 supervisors from 9 faculties at the University of Hong Kong. Nearly half of the interviewed supervisors spoke English as their first language and for the other half, English was a second or foreign language. Nearly 90% of the supervisors thought that at least one of their thesis students experienced language problems. Additionally,

it is reported that lack of organization and logical development of ideas were the major causes of writing problems (Cooley & Lewkowicz, 1997). Interviews with the supervisors indicated that half of them agreed that it was not supervisors' responsibility to address language issues but of university. According to approximately ninety percent of the supervisors, language support could contribute to students' writing in English. Although advisors do not consider dealing with language problems of the students a part of their work, they edit language mistakes in various degrees as long as they are able to deal with the problems. Otherwise, students are referred to get support from a peer, writing center or a paid editor (Rogers et al., 2016). Likewise, Dong (1998) surveyed 32 professors about thesis writing issues of both native and nonnative English speaker students. Several advisors mentioned that writing grammatically accurate sentences posed problems for nonnative students. Some of them identified plagiarism in writings of nonnative students. The plagiarized sections were easy to spot for the advisors since those students had low writing quality overall. It was pointed out that the writing difficulties may result not only from language problems, but also from limited "rhetorical and genre knowledge of the disciplines" for both groups of students (Dong,1998, p.381). Similarly, in another study, faculty members expressed a greater demand for help and editing from L2 students than they did from L1 students (Rogers et al., 2016). In addition, advisors maintained that they had difficulty in understanding whether incomprehensible writing was resulting from not fully comprehending the material or just not being able to write it accurately. In some cases, incorrect word usage led to confusion among advisors regarding which concept was being referred by the student.

Strauss et al. (2003) studied the experiences of 18 faculty members' supervision experiences of second language writers of English at a university in New Zealand. Interviews indicated the complexity and the burden of the process on the part of the supervisors. Although supervisors showed understanding for the language problems students encountered, it was not the case for all supervisors to be eager to correct the language errors or to consider themselves capable enough to carry out language editing on the thesis, especially supervisors who were second language speakers themselves. The amount of time allocated for language correction of the thesis instead of focusing on the content to improve the quality was perceived as a burden by the supervisors. Notably, several stated that the time they spent with L2 students was twice as much as they did on L1 students due to language issues. In particular, some of them did not even regard correcting language errors as a part of their role in supervision.

Another problematic area noted by advisors is conceptualization of the major arguments and explaining the significance of the thesis by reviewing the literature critically (Rogers et al, 2016). It is pointed out that the struggle students experience intensifies if the student is in a cross-disciplinary programs. Since critical analysis of concepts and explaining the relevance of their work in theoretical framework poses challenge for the students, it is proposed that this could be the reason why proposal, the research questions and the literature review are reported to be the hardest sections to write for their students. Furthermore, according to advisors, students do not evaluate their findings with regard to previous studies appropriately, which may result from incorrect use of vocabulary (Thompson,1999).

The focus of advisor feedback is another issue playing a critical role in thesis writing. Bitchener and Basturkmen (2010) conducted a study with 35 supervisors

from Humanities, Sciences/Mathematics and Commerce disciplines to investigate the types of feedback provided to thesis drafts of L1 and L2 students. The study employed written questionnaires, interviews and samples of feedback as data collection tools. The findings revealed that supervisor feedback focused on a range of aspects of theses such as content, argument construction, organization of parts of the thesis and linguistic accuracy. The study also showed that the focus of supervisor feedback did not differ greatly for L1 and L2 students. However, regarding the language, it was reported that more feedback was needed for L2 students and the amount of feedback provided on linguistic accuracy was higher than other types of feedback.

Bitchener and Basturkmen's study (2006) explored supervisor perspectives on discussion section of the thesis through interviews. Four supervisors from two universities in New Zealand participated in the study. Findings revealed that supervisors shared similar ideas regarding the functions of discussion of results section. For instance, four of the supervisors agreed that the results should be associated with the literature. In addition to this, summary and discussion of the results are expected to be included in the discussion of the results section. Regarding the student difficulties, all supervisors articulated that students did not possess the adequate understanding of discussion genre requirements. Another difficulty that four of the supervisors perceived was the language problems such as grammar and vocabulary.

Supervisors may need to adopt different roles in process of leading student to be more independent. In a study interested in revealing the type of supervisor feedback, the advisor explains the roles she mediated different roles according to the student's characteristics and needs (Azman et al., 2014). For example, with the

"guidance role", supervisor aims to encourage the student contemplate on what needs to be done in relation with the content by indicating the problematic area via writing questions or highlighting the related parts. Another role the advisor takes is "quality control role" mostly deals with organizational, grammatical and mechanical aspects of the writing. Another study exploring the nature of supervisory relationship between graduate students and the supervisors. Lee (2008) points out the tensions involved in doctoral supervision based on interviews conducted with supervisors working in a variety of areas at a UK university. One of the identified tensions is between "professional role and personal self" (p.276). While there is a responsibility of supporting students to complete their studies that is assigned by the institution, supervisors also have their own aspiration for the quality of the work and the student's success. Another tension lies within "dependence-independence" dichotomy. The relationship is characterized in dependence category when the student demands confirmation and affirmation in supervisory relationship and also needs demonstration and clarification of next phases along with guidance of the supervisor. On the other hand, students are regarded as independent when they can arrange their own work, study autonomously according to the discipline's expectations and establish his/her own studying agenda without relying on the supervisor's constant direction.

Most of the research on thesis writing exploring challenges have focused on doctoral students (e.g. Hsu, 2009; Kuo, 1998; Lee, 2008; Lin and Joe, 2011; Odena & Burgess, 2017; Rogers et al., 2016). Only limited number of studies focused on only master students who write a long piece of writing- a thesis- for the first time, assuming that most of the doctoral students are required to have a master's degree to apply for a doctoral program. Casanave (2002) notes that master studies represent

"how the transition from novice to expert begins to take place, in the sense that master students are positioned precariously between the status of novice and specialist" (p.84). Thus, it is significant to conduct a study to explore master students' and supervisors' experiences in thesis writing process.

It should also be noted that most of the studies (reported here) exploring thesis writing experiences of L2 speakers of English have been conducted in English dominant countries (Bitchener & Basturkmen 2006; Dong,1998; Paltridge & Woodrow, 2012; Shaw, 1991; Strauss, 2012). As Lewkowicz (2012) points out "To date, our understanding of thesis writing experiences and practices in non-core countries seems very limited" (p.110). Using the term "core countries", he refers to countries counting Australia, Great Britain, the USA and Hong Kong. Relatively, limited research has focused on graduate-level writing in non-core or EFL contexts. This study, therefore, aims to explore challenges of writing a master's thesis in L2 both from perspective of students and supervisors in Turkey.

2.4 Research on academic writing in English in Turkey

As the number of EMI higher education institutions increased in Turkey, many research studies started to focus on issues related to L2 writing. Most of this research have largely investigated undergraduate writing. In fact, participants of those studies have been mostly Turkish pre-service English teachers (Alagözlü & Süzer, 2010; Atay & Kurt, 2006; Can, 2006; Çandarlı, Bayyurt & Martı, 2015; Kurt & Atay, 2007; Tıkaç, 2013; Yaylı, 2011) or preparatory class students (e.g. Öztürk & Çeçen, 2007; Yastıbaş & Yastıbaş, 2015). In a recent study Altınmakas and Bayyurt (2019) explored educational and contextual factors affecting undergraduate students' academic writing practices in English by employing background questionnaires,

semi-structured and focus group interviews and document analyses. Their findings revealed that students' writing practices are influenced by their previous L1 and L2 writing education, their attitudes towards academic writing and faculty expectations. Altınmakas and Bayyurt (2019) suggest that writing tasks in secondary school should be more meaningful, explicit writing instruction and evaluation of student texts in many aspects should be applied in primary and secondary education and subject instructors should come to on an agreement on their writing expectations from students.

To date, few studies have focused on graduate student writing and specifically on thesis genre in Turkey. Some of these studies examined theses or particular section of theses written by Turkish graduate writers by employing text analysis. Those studies focused on metadiscourse in thesis abstracts (Akbaş, 2012a), in introduction and conclusion (Akbas, 2012b) in discussion sections (Akbas, 2014; Akbas & Hardman, 2018) by comparing Turkish native speakers, Turkish speakers of English and English native speakers. In another study, Doğan, Yağız and Kaçar (2018) investigated citation practices of Turkish and English writers in a corpus of 20 master's and 14 doctoral theses written in English language teaching field. Their results showed that Turkish writers used integral citation more than L1 English writers and they experience more difficulty in incorporating citations into their viewpoints. Doğan, Yağız and Kaçar (2018) suggest that explicit instruction regarding citation practices could be effective for not only graduate but also for undergraduate students if it is included into academic writing or research related courses.

Yağız and Yiğiter (2016) examined writing approaches, processes and beliefs of 70 Turkish graduate students enrolled in English-based departments (English

Teaching, English Literature, Linguistics and Translation) by using questionnaire, interview and text analysis. The study found out that graduate students experienced linguistic difficulties such as lexical and organizational and affective challenges including anxiety, lack of motivation and procrastination. Yağız and Yiğiter (2016) suggests that compulsory and explicit writing instruction is needed for graduate students. Further, he adds that writing programs including writing centers, discipline specific writing courses, workshops can assist students in improving their writing skills and enhance their low self-confidence and motivation.

However, few of the studies mentioned above focused on thesis writing difficulties, students' perception of responsibilities and expectations in supervisory relationship in Turkey. Academic writing studies in L2 English employing participants from various disciplines apart from English major students are also very limited. Moreover, to date, there is not any study investigating thesis writing issues both from student and advisor perspectives, who are two essential participants and contributors of thesis writing process. To this end, this exploratory study aims to explore thesis writing issues by focusing on student and advisor perspectives at an EMI university in Turkey and provide preliminary findings for this context.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methodological approach and research design utilized to explore research questions presented in Chapter 1.2. In order to answer the questions, the present study employed a mixed-method research approach by means of surveys and interviews. This exploratory study was conducted with master level students and thesis advisors. A detailed information regarding the participants and the research context where the study was carried out along with data collections tools and analysis in provided in this chapter.

3.1 Research context

The study was conducted at a prestigious state university in Istanbul, Turkey. The medium of instruction is English. There are six institutes offering graduate programs in the university body. One of them is The Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences. This institute constitutes of 18 different academic departments in 4 different faculties/schools offering 15 Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) and 34 Master of Arts (M.A.) degrees. Nine M.A. programs do not require a thesis in completion of the program. For the remaining all programs, completion of a thesis is obligatory. The number of thesis completed in the last 6 years is shown in Table 1. As it can be seen in Table 1, the number of graduate students who completed their theses reached a peak in 2019. This seems to be a result of a new regulation announced by Council of Higher Education (CoHE). In 2016, CoHE announced that the maximum duration of master programs (with thesis) is six semesters. In addition, master students have to complete all courses and the graduate seminar within 4 semesters (YÖK, 2016). With

this regulation, students who were enrolled in the master programs before 2016 had to finish their theses in 2019.

Table 1. Number of Theses Completed in the Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences

Year	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
M.A.	287	114	85	105	96	86
Ph.D.	25	28	19	18	15	22
Total	312	142	104	123	111	108

Although it differs depending on the program, applicants to master programs are required to have a minimum GPA (Grade Point Average) of 2.5/4 and an ALES (academic personnel and postgraduate education entrance exam) score. In addition, Ph.D. programs are applicable for candidates holding a master's degree. Applicants for graduate studies are also required to document their English language proficiency level using one of the followings:

- BUEPT
- TOEFL 550, TWE 4.5
- TOEFL (IBT) 79, TWE 22
- IELTS Academic 6.5, Academic Writing Score 6.5

After being admitted to the programs, students receive English-medium instruction in all graduate courses. Students failing to provide the required level of English may receive instruction in English Preparatory Program of the university. After completing the coursework, all students are required to write a graduate thesis (M.A. or Ph.D.) in English. The Institute offers editorial support for graduate students in two ways. While format checking is required for all theses, language editing is only

provided upon request of the student once the thesis is completed and defended. Thesis format and language editing is offered by one editor hired by the Institute.

3.2 Participants

Participants of the study were master students and advisors in various social sciences disciplines. Students and advisors were not matched and compared in pairs, as examining advisor-student pairs was not the aim of this study.

3.2.1 Students

Student participants of the study were required to be master level students, as the present study aims to explore the experiences of students who is writing a thesis for the first time. The students participated in the study were all at the stage of thesis writing. They were enrolled in their thesis advisor's section for master's thesis course. Students were in different stages of their thesis writing process. 63 students completed the surveys. Appendix A presents information about survey respondents. Respondents who were in early stages of thesis writing were removed from the analysis as those students had done little or no thesis writing. In addition, master students enrolled in English language related programs (e.g. Linguistics, English Language Education and English Language and Literature) were not included in the study, since these students' prior language learning background and academic writing experience is highly likely to differ from students in other disciplines. Students who agreed to participate in a follow-up interview were contacted (n=16). While some of them were writing their thesis at time of the interview, some of them had completed writing their thesis and defended it. Most of the interviewees had finished most of their chapters by the time of the interview. Two of the students had

their M.A. degrees. All of the participants were native speakers of Turkish and second language speakers of English. Table 2 illustrates student profiles who participated in the interview.

Table 2. Students' Academic Programs

Student Participant No	Program	Interview Date	Status
1	Psychology	May 2, 2019	Student
2	Critical and Cultural Studies	May 2, 2019	Student
3	Psychology	May 6, 2019	Student
4	Educational Sciences	May 11, 2019	Graduate (recently finished)
5	Social Policy	May 13, 2019	Student
6	Guidance and Psychological Counselling	May 15, 2019	Student
7	Political Science and International Relations	May 16, 2019	Student
8	Sustainable Tourism Management	May 16, 2019	Student
9	Management	May 16, 2019	Graduate (recently finished)
10	Political Science and International Relations	May 23, 2019	Student
11	Management	June 13, 2019	Student
12	Sociology	June 24, 2019	Student
13	Critical and Cultural Studies	June 26, 2019	Student
14	Critical and Cultural Studies	June 26, 2019	Student
15	Guidance and Psychological Counselling	June 27, 2019	Student
16	Psychology	June 28, 2019	Student

3.2.2 Advisors

Advisor participants were drawn from a range of social sciences disciplines. The only requirement for advisor participants was supervising a master's thesis within the last 3 years (see Appendix B for academic programs of advisor survey respondents). Survey respondents were asked to write their e-mail address at the end of the survey if they agreed to participate in a follow-up interview. Academic programs of advisors who participated in the interview is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Advisors' Academic Programs

Advisor Participant No	Program
1	Philosophy
2	Philosophy
3	Guidance and Psychological Counselling
4	International Trade Management
5	Sustainable Tourism Management
6	Economy
7	Political Science and International Relations
8	Sociology
9	Educational Sciences

3.3 Data collection instruments

This study employed a mixed-method design, including interviews and surveys. Students (n= 63) and advisors (n=35) completed online surveys and then a subset from each group (n=16 and n=9 respectively) were interviewed. A mixed-method design refers to combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. Hyland

(2010) points out that “much writing research combines several methods, often both quantitative and qualitative, to gain a more complete picture of a complex reality” (p.195). Greene (2001) proposes that integration of methods from different paradigms contribute to a better understanding of issues. Combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods also serves for the data triangulation by including multiple data sources.

3.3.1 Surveys

Survey is used to collect quantitative data from student and advisors. Studies taking mixed-method approach to explore thesis writing issues from both student and advisor perspectives is limited. This is another reason of including survey as a data collection instrument in this study. Initially, survey is employed to gather responses regarding thesis writing difficulties and supervisory relationship perceptions of students and faculty members who advise theses. The initial questions in the student survey set out to identify respondents’ programs, their stage in the program and their first language. Questions later attempted to find out difficulties experienced regarding writing sections use of various writing elements. The survey also included questions related to advisor relationship and the type of support expected (see Appendix C). The options of most questions provided on a 5-point Likert scale (Vagias, 2006). Likewise, advisor surveys included similar questions to explore issues from their perspective (see Appendix D). Some of the survey questions were adapted from Rogers et al. (2016) study. Student and advisor surveys were sent via e-mail to all students after being piloted with 3 participants from each group. The surveys were analyzed by using Microsoft Excel program and percentages and mean scores are reported for all questions.

3.3.2 Interviews

Interview is one of the data collection tools used the present study "to gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some piece of the world" (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007, p. 103). Interviews are preferred as a data collection method in this study, as "they allow participants' own 'voices' to be 'heard' rather than obscured, for example, in summaries, tables, or statistics" (Talmy, 2010, p.138). Semi-structured interviews were employed to elicit comparable responses from all participants (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). In addition, use of semi-structured interviews provided the researcher with a structure which can also be flexible allowing follow-up questions when necessary. Interviewing made it possible to explore perspectives of participants regarding thesis-related issues, as the interviewing aims to "allow us to enter into the other person's perspective" (Patton, 2015, p.628). The interview questions set out to elicit various issues related thesis writing (see Appendix E for student and Appendix F for advisor interview questions). The questions asked in the interviews also corroborated with the survey questions. Two separate consent forms were provided for the participants (see Appendix G and H for consent forms for students and faculty members respectively). The ethical approval for the data collection procedures was received from the Ethics Committee for Master and PhD Theses in Social Sciences and Humanities (SOBETİK) at Boğaziçi University (see Appendix I).

After interview questions were piloted with two participants from each group, I decided to conduct the interviews in Turkish so that all the participants could express themselves more easily in their first language. Next, students and advisors were contacted via e-mail. The Institute of Social Sciences also sent an e-mail requesting students to participate in the online survey. At the end of the survey, all

participants were asked to write their e-mail address if they wanted to participate in an interview. Participants who volunteered to take part in the interview were contacted through e-mail to arrange a time and place. Almost all of the interviews were carried out in campuses of the university. All student interviews and almost all advisor interviews were conducted in Turkish in order to prevent English speaking skill from being an obstacle for the participants. All interviews were audio-recorded with the permission of the participants. The interviews lasted between 30 minutes to 70 minutes. The total duration of all interviews makes up approximately 15 hours. Interview recordings were transcribed verbatim. Once the transcription was completed, the analysis of interviews began. The data analysis process, as explained by Bogdan and Biklen (2007), "involves working with the data, organizing them, breaking them into manageable units, coding them, synthesizing them, and searching for patterns" (p.159). Therefore, the following steps were taken in the analysis process. First, the researcher read all the transcripts to get familiar with the data and pursued a general coding. Saldaña (2013) defines a code as "a researcher-generated construct that symbolizes and thus attributes interpreted meaning to each individual datum for later purposes of pattern detection, categorization, theory building, and other analytic processes" (p.4). There are various coding methods identified with different names in the literature. In the analysis of interview data in this study, *descriptive coding*, *In Vivo coding* and *process coding* methods were mainly employed (Saldaña, 2013). In the second coding cycle, more codes, sub-codes and categories were created. Next, similar categories were grouped together, and themes emerged. When the coding was finalized after third cycle reading and merging categories, final themes were organized according to research questions. In order to reduce researcher bias, a researcher from my master program reviewed the themes

and sub-themes I created and provided constructive feedback. NVivo 12- qualitative data analysis software- was used in the coding of the interview transcripts. After the analysis, selected quotations were translated into English to be presented in the findings chapter.

The results of data collected through surveys and interviews are presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter presents findings obtained from the study. It attempts to provide a detailed, comprehensive analysis of the data acquired from both interviews and the surveys conducted with master students and thesis advisors. 4.1 provides student perspectives on thesis writing under three main themes and associated categories. 4.2 presents student survey results. 4.3 describes advisor perspectives on writing difficulties, responsibilities and expectations. Lastly, 4.4 reports the advisor survey results. Student and advisor participants' excerpts are presented in each related section.

4.1 Student perspectives

In this section, student interview findings are reported under themes and sub-themes as shown in the list below. Selected excerpts from interview data are also presented in order to support findings.

1. Writing Difficulties
    - English language related difficulties
    - Writing- related difficulties
    - The most difficult section to write
    - Writing strategies
2. Student Responsibilities
3. Student Expectations

    a) Expectations from advisors

    - Feedback

- Guidance

b) Support expectations

- Peer support
- Writing center
- Writing course

4.1.1 Writing difficulties

Writing difficulties is the first theme emerged from the interviews conducted with students. Their responses are categorized under four sub-headings, namely English-related difficulties, writing-related difficulties, the most difficult section of the thesis and the strategies employed to deal with difficulties.

4.1.1.1 English language-related difficulties

Writing their theses in English brought many challenges for the students such as vocabulary, use of tenses. Many of them experienced difficulties in expressing their ideas in English using the correct words. Most of the participants expressed the frustration they felt while translating their ideas into English. Some participants commented on this issue as follows:

> During this 6-month period, the language was the biggest challenge for me. (S15)

> But I get this feeling of, like, even though there is this thing, a word, there is also a keyword that will allow me to express myself more easily. And sometimes, I cannot find that word. (S16)

> Umm, you know, for instance, it was very difficult for me to utter some things, like, things that I wanted to express so bad. Like, I think I couldn't convey that emotion properly while I was speaking in English. (S6)

Having limited vocabulary in English seems to be the main reason of writing difficulty in English for the students. They felt, many times, the language they used was repetitive in terms of vocabulary and the structure. One student thought that using the same sentence structure repeatedly could also be boring for the reader. This reflects how this student empathizes with the advisor, being the main reader of the thesis, and considers how this would not be a pleasant reading experience on the part of the reader. Other comments on the problem of using similar language items and structures are as following:

> You know, my vocabulary is somewhat inadequate since I am a native speaker of Turkish and I have learned English mostly in college. So, I can say that I have tried very hard to avoid saying "very" before every single word. (S3)

> I used conjunctions too often, I couldn't find their equivalents. When I said it didn't suit well, I meant that the English text, thesis, had a slightly repetitive language. (S6)

Students also reported "thinking in Turkish" as a serious obstacle preventing them from writing "normal English". Due to the hindrance of expressing ideas in L2, some students wrote their ideas in Turkish and sent it to the advisor. One student stated that her advisor translated the Turkish written part into English because she could not communicate her ideas in English (S6). In addition, several students spoke at length of their problem of constructing "too long sentences". While some of them realized this problem on their own, others were told by their advisors or received warnings from the online grammar editing tools such as *Grammarly*. They referred to being L2 speaker of English as a possible reason of this difficulty in addition to thesis writing itself.

Another major difficulty encountered by students seems to be paraphrasing. In addition to not being sure about how much they should change the sentence

structure while paraphrasing, they also experienced the fear of unintentional plagiarism. For example, two students explained this issue in the following way:

> When I am reading, there is no problem. I read the articles and am able to paraphrase them, but I was concerned, like, "I am paraphrasing these articles but is my style… My proficiency in this language is not very good. Should I change the structures of the sentences a bit?" Because, am I plagiarizing? (S15)

> Also, this paraphrasing part made me think, "Okay, I am paraphrasing the sentence but what if I copy more than five words from the source?" Also, you take, like, the text mentions a specific concept, so I am in a position where I have to say the exact same expression as the source while I am paraphrasing. And this makes the whole process more difficult. (S4)

Several students commented that uncertainty regarding how to paraphrase and the struggle to find to most appropriate words to convey the intended meaning turned into a time-related problem for them. Translating ideas from Turkish to English, looking for various vocabulary items, searching through online sources to make sure that the words are used correctly.

> For instance, I am dealing with the task for hours and I have written a paragraph. Sometimes it can be very tiring to deliberate upon it. Expressing it in the right way, paraphrasing it correctly… (S2)

> Also, you need to take side notes very often. Because you may not remember the thing, the synonyms, then you want to convey your message to the other party but the words in your Turkish vocabulary is from… Many Turkish words are loan words from various other languages. When you start thinking in Turkish while writing, then you know, it happens, you cannot translate your ideas, sentences into English because there is not an English equivalent of that word or expression you want to use. Then you start looking for it, the equivalent. It takes time. When I need to start thinking in English instead of translating my sentences from Turkish, it takes me some time to switch. (S12)

In sum, writing a thesis in a second language, English, posed substantial difficulty for the students. Problems with translating ideas into English, lexical weaknesses and paraphrasing are the major issues that became a hindrance for students while writing their theses.

4.1.1.2 Writing-related difficulties

Students' comments about their writing difficulties also revealed their lack of knowledge regarding how to write a thesis. Almost all of the interviewees expressed concerns about not being aware of how to organize their thesis and what to include in it. They reported that although master courses taught them how to conduct research, they did not focus on any aspect of thesis writing. Additionally, some of the students associated this issue with not knowing the expectations of their advisors. The following excerpts reflects students' unfamiliarity with the thesis genre.

> You know, I learned how to do the research. But um, to be honest, I knew nothing about how to write a thesis. (S5)

> I felt completely lost, I knew nothing, I had to discover everything on my own. (S4)

> You know, when I sat down and started writing my thesis, I had, like, nothing in mind. Because, you know, they never told us or never made it explicit about that… They never said it explicitly, like, "This is what we expect a thesis to be like." They never gave us a guide, you know, so I learned it by doing it. (S7)

As for the length of the thesis or its chapters, students mentioned different aspects of the issue. For instance, one student complained about her "succinct writing" referring to limited elaboration of the ideas. She perceived this to be an advantage in exams, but it turned out to be a problem in thesis writing, which, she thought, resulted from not knowing the expectations. On the other side, other students said that they were starting off with too general statements which then made the chapters unnecessarily long. One student commented on that issue in the following way:

> …When I started writing my thesis, I was like "How will I start?" For real. In fact, um, when I first talked to my thesis advisor, they said, "Don't start with the story of Big Bang" Because I somehow manage to go back that far. (S3)

Another problem mentioned regarding the difficulties faced while writing concerned the use of "passive voice". Several students reported that they did not know how to decide whether a sentence should have an active or passive structure. Most of the time, they felt they had to form sentences in passive structure although they wanted to emphasize that they were the researcher and the author. They were uncertain about the use of pronoun "I" and were notified either by their advisors or online grammar editing tools not to use it. The following excerpt illustrates this situation:

> I feel like everything in the thesis is in passive voice. Because, like, I said "We think social anxiety as…" in only once in my thesis, in the discussion part, then my advisor gave me some feedback and said: "Use passive voice here." The entirety of the thesis was in passive voice, there is also that. Yes, it is a source of bitter regret for me. I am the one who is doing the study but if I say "I think that…" it wouldn't be okay; I cannot say that. Also, this prevents me from owning something that is already mine. (S3)

Apart from sentence-level difficulties, students also commented on organizational problems they faced while writing their thesis. Failing to ensure the flow between paragraphs and chapters was perceived as a problem by the students. On the contrary, this skill of writing flawlessly was considered to be "quite an advantage" (S1). Given the length of a thesis, ensuring the integrity was a lot more challenging than writing a paper for a graduate course, which is mentioned in the following excerpt:

> Um, for example, how do you do the transition between sections? You know, how will I tie the sections together? Because it is a 120-page-long text. It is not 4 or 5 pages like an assignment. And when you read it, it needs to feel coherent. I mean how will I make sure that it is coherent? It was one of the biggest challenges for me. (S10)

Overall, main writing-related difficulties emerged included issues such as unfamiliarity with thesis genre, rhetorical organization of the sections and uncertainty regarding linguistic appropriateness.

4.1.1.3 The most difficult section to write

Students were asked to reflect on the difficulties they encountered while writing sections of thesis. Student responses showed that introduction, literature review and discussion chapters were perceived to be most challenging parts to write. Firstly, writing the introduction chapter seems to be demanding on the part of the students since the purpose, significance and thesis of the research are provided. This part of the thesis forms the basis of their research and they have to give explain the aims of the research, justify its significance, present thesis statements and hypotheses logically and systematically. So, formulating all of these in written form in a coherent way is overwhelming for the students. Students commented on their uncertainty regarding how much information they need to provide in this section and how they need to connect this information to the present study. One of the students reported that they had written introduction as a part of their papers in undergraduate writing courses, but these were "easy texts". A concern about whether what they wrote was comprehensible enough emerged while writing this "extensive" text (S16). The following quotation illustrates students' concerns about introduction part:

> In fact, the most difficult thing for me was… The question of how much information I should provide in the last part called thesis statement and how we will link it to the present study. (S1)

Literature review was another chapter that students found extremely challenging. One of the reasons reported by the students is the difficulty of citing other studies without committing plagiarism. This concern is related to their difficulty with paraphrasing, which has been reported under the first sub-heading. The fear of plagiarizing seems to be reflected greatly in the writing of literature review. The length of the literature review section also posed difficulty for the students. This "endless" section of thesis made them read and do a lot more research when

compared to other sections (S11). Another reason underlying the challenge in writing literature review is that students were unsure of which studies they need to include review and which ones they need to leave out of it. S 4 expresses her concern about reviewing all the existing literature in the following excerpt:

> Because there is too much information, too many resources. I feel stressed. You know, I feel like I will not be able to create something good if I don't read or draw something from one of them. And there is no end to this, I don't have the chance to review every source material on the earth. (S4)

Students emphasized the particular importance of the discussion section, since it forms the "skeleton" of the thesis (S14). They stated that, in this chapter, they need to present all arguments, connect them to the other studies and reach a conclusion. Putting forward "weak arguments" may "waste" what has been written and presented until the discussion part (S6). It seems that they are aware of the fact that they require critical and analytical thinking in order to write an effective discussion. In some cases, advisors considered the discussion section as "too descriptive" and they had to rewrite it several times (S7). Those who experienced considerable difficulty while writing the discussion chapter of their thesis research related this to lack of analytical thinking skill or not having a "strong relation with the data" (S3). S3 used the metaphor of "lover" to express this relation:

> A friend of mine…once told me that "you need to establish a love relationship with your thesis. It should be on your mind as if it was your lover". When I first heard this, I thought it was very meaningful, I still do. If there is not such a relation, a state of constant thinking, then it is not easy to develop those arguments. (S3)

It is also worth mentioning that writing a discussion part for a research study was the first time for some of the master students. Although they had written introduction, literature review and methodology in their graduate courses, they wrote the discussion for the first time in their master thesis. That could be the reason of experiencing difficulty in writing the discussion section.

4.1.1.4 Writing strategies

Having encountered various writing issues, students adopted strategies to help them produce a better text. These strategies are employed while reading other articles or theses, during the actual writing of the thesis and in the editing stage. Reading other theses appears to be main strategy of students that guided them in understanding what to write and how to write the thesis. Students stated that they primarily examined other theses for structural issues. In addition, they paid attention to selection of titles, degree of elaboration and length of the parts. As for the chapters, students mostly analyzed methodology and results chapters to identify what kind of information is included in these parts. Literature review sections of theses on similar topics to students' research subjects also received considerable attention, because they directed students to read other studies, which was found to be helpful for the students.

Some of the students reported that they used a master's or doctoral thesis a model during their thesis writing process, which may suggest their need to have a sample text because of their insufficient information regarding how to write one. The following quotation illustrates this issue:

> I thought to myself, "Now how do we write this thesis?" So, I glanced over some other theses. I was like, I didn't know what I was supposed to provide in the result section. There is an adaptation study done before, so I check it. I would go "A-ha, they provided these, they wrote about that. So, this is what I should do," and write what I am supposed to write. (S8)

As reflected in the excerpt above, it was the case for most students not possessing the adequate information about the functions of each chapter. Furthermore, most of the students did not read or analyze a thesis as a part of their graduate coursework. One student who did examine other theses as an assignment within the context of a course reflected on it in the following way:

> I read previously written theses from our department and other departments. I wrote reports on these, in fact I was taking research class too during that time. As a result, I studied a thesis in detail from the unique perspective I had gained in the research class. From the title to signatures, references, methodology, sections, argumentation style, author's point of view, scientific components -everything you can imagine. Indeed, doing all this work provided me a unique perspective, a critical approach. While writing my own thesis, that assignment shaped my way of thinking. I reflected upon my work like, "I criticized this thing in that guy's thesis, now look what I am doing." (S4)

Another strategy that students used while reading was to note down collocations, phrases and sentences they considered as effective in order to use them in their writing later on. They took notice of the way words are used in the articles to utilize them appropriately in their own text. In fact, by employing this strategy, students aim to compensate for their limited vocabulary and unvaried sentence structures.

As a way to improve their writing, students made extensive use of online sources. Students' responses revealed their dependence on English-Turkish, English-English dictionaries and thesaurus during all stages of writing. Additionally, some of the students resorted to online blogs and websites to check the meaning of particular vocabulary items, such as connectors. They did this repeatedly to make sure that they were using the language accurately and appropriately. Notably, S7 mentioned checking online writing center guidelines of prominent universities in the world and trying to improve her writing along with those guidelines.

Obviously, all of the students participated in the interview endeavored to achieve an error-free, compelling and articulate writing. With the intention of attaining this, they utilized online tools such as *Grammarly*, which provides corrections and feedback on grammar, spelling, punctuation, tone and style. Although some of the students proofread their text, using *Grammarly* was the main method of editing their thesis.

To sum up, when writing their thesis, students encountered a range of writing difficulties. Most of these were related to academic writing in English. Paraphrasing and using a variety of vocabulary and structure were the main areas of difficulty for the students. Using other theses as guides, online sources for language related issues were the main strategies employed by the students in order to facilitate their thesis writing.

4.1.2 Student responsibilities

Interview data revealed that students identify a range of writing and research related responsibilities. Writing related responsibilities include avoiding plagiarism and proofreading. Deciding on the research subject and reading the literature are the research-related duties students mentioned. Effective management of time is another responsibility reported by the students.

As a writing-related responsibility, students commented on paying close attention not to commit plagiarism. They emphasized that it was their duty to avoid plagiarism. It appears that students are aware of how it is easy to commit unintentional plagiarism and thus inclined to feel anxiety of doing it. In the following quote, S2 expresses her concern:

> …I think my responsibility is paying utmost attention to avoiding plagiarism. You see, I was making fun of it but turns out it is very important. Eh, you can internalize someone's ideas very easily and reflect them in your writings. (S2)

Proofreading each piece of text before sending it to the advisor is another writing-related responsibility that students take on. Whether they proofread in advance affects "the content of advisor's feedback" and also "eases the advisor's job" (S5). S5 highlights the importance of proofreading the thesis or its parts before the advisor reads it and gives feedback:

> Reading a poorly written text in English and giving feedback and reading a well written text in English, understanding what you read and giving feedback affect the quality of the feedback. (S5)

Another area of responsibility that students attributed to themselves was related to research. Deciding on the research subject, they believed, was a part of their responsibility, because thesis is "product" of the student, so students should be working on a topic that they are "interested in" and they "like" (S7). According to participants, there is a misunderstanding among some students about whose responsibility it is to select the research subject. SP 8 used "child" metaphor to highlight students' role in choosing the thesis subject:

> …No, it is yours, it is your child, you will raise this child. And you have to name this child. You have to raise this child on your own, you have to tell the child how to behave. (S8)

Similarly, students regarded reading the relevant literature as a major student responsibility. They reflected their certainty regarding their responsibility for reading and "internalizing" (S2) the relevant articles and books before embarking on writing. In contrast to finding a research subject and reading the literature, none of the students made comments on identifying the relevant literature as a student responsibility. However, they reported that advisor could "suggest" sources to read (S12) or "show the ways" of writing the literature review by sending "up to date articles" (S3). Students believe that "help of the advisor" is needed on finding sources related to their research subject, because the students do not "have a good command of the subject" and thus should not be "alone" in this regard (S7).

Students also felt that keeping the track of the time and leading the process by adhering to deadlines was mainly their responsibility. They reported that they had to manage the time effectively with "planned" and "systematic study" (S6). Otherwise, "squeezing" this long process into a short period of time "reduces" their

"productivity" (S16). Students also mentioned possible ways of achieving effective time management, such as "creating a road map" (S14) and "following a time-table" (S13). All students seem to be aware of the fact that they principally have to produce something before they expect guidance from advisors. S14 commented on "continuation" as a main responsibility of thesis students:

> …it will be very underspecified, but I can say 'keeping on.' I mean I have to read something, write something, produce, create so that the professor can edit something. I was aware of that. (S14)

However, sometimes, students' opinion that advisor should be consulted after undertaking some work appears to have prevented them from asking for guidance in the case of not knowing how to write a part of the thesis:

> On the other hand, I feel like, I wonder why I didn't start with asking "How will I do this?" regarding the writing process. Because I think it is more of my responsibility. That is why it is more fitting if [advisor] comments on something I create. (S3)

Some students also reported that they overestimated their area of responsibility as a thesis student. At the beginning of the process, they considered everything as their responsibility, and they perceived thesis advisor as an authority who would only grade the thesis and decide whether it was "okay". One student reasoned that her writing process may have taken longer because of her expectation that everything related to thesis is carried out only by the student without any guidance from the advisor during the process (S15). However, S15, then realized that it was not such a process. She reported that, on the contrary, advisor "gives feedback" and "transforms" the text, which was surprising for her (S15). It can be suggested that communicating the roles of the student and the advisor and their responsibilities clearly could prevent both misunderstandings and unrealistic expectations. Therefore, a more effective and healthy supervisory relationship can be maintained.

4.1.3 Student expectations

Students' expectations from advisors included feedback and guidance. Their support expectations are categorized under three main headings: peer support, a writing center and a writing course.

4.1.3.1 Expectations from advisors

Student expectations from their advisors during thesis writing process consist of feedback and guidance.

4.1.3.1.1 Feedback

Students talked about feedback they received from their advisors more than other issues. Overall, they were satisfied with the amount, type and the quality of the feedback they obtained on their thesis. The feedback received from advisors focused on both content and language related issues. Additionally, some students reported their feedback expectations. Most of the corrections and comments were made on the word document after setting the track changes on.

One area of feedback that students commented on was content-related. They stated that advisors provided them with feedback on every chapter of thesis and made comments about adding or removing parts, sufficiency and quality of content. Advisors also interfered when the students got into "wrong direction" in the literature review (S4) or "spoiled the flow of the story" (S9). One student even stated that they sat and contemplated together with the advisor on "what could be written in the discussion part" and in this way "there were inputs of advisor" apart from interpretation of the student (S3).

Advisor feedback focused on various aspects of academic writing. In some cases, advisors gave feedback on the organization of the writing. For instance, S13 reported that his advisor not only suggested a new order of titles and sub-titles, but also explained the reasons of making such a change, which then sounded "reasonable" for the student. This approach in fact indicates the advisor's respect to work and the autonomy of the student. S5 also commented on the organizational changes the advisor made on draft of his writing in the following way:

> …when we send them the sections in the thesis, [advisor] sends some paragraphs back rearranged. But this rearrangement thing, it doesn't interfere with the meaning. It turns the text into something more readable. (S5)

Students responses showed that they also received extensive language-related feedback from their advisors. Several students commented on the feedback related word choices they made. For instance, advisors suggested more academic counterparts of many words or corrected vocabulary items which were misused in that context. In addition to feedback on vocabulary, advisors also gave feedback on clarity of the sentences. Comments from advisors such as "this sentence is too long" (S11) or "this sentence is not clear" (S3) were reported by the students. Although in some cases advisors only pointed out the ungrammatical sentences or incorrectly used words, most of the time they suggested alternative sentences, words and titles. Some students reported that it could have been useful if the advisor indicated their common mistakes after reading a couple of pages so that they could revise their writing and refrain from repeating the same mistakes. Moreover, some students expect "explicit" feedback regarding areas that need to be improved (S2). Otherwise, they believe, it is hard for them to realize those areas.

Student comments on feedback they received throughout the thesis writing process revealed their overall contentment. However, they also indicated the

importance of receiving a positive feedback or comment from their advisors. For instance, when the feedback began with a negative statement or only focused on incorrect, insufficient aspects of the writing, students found it difficult to comprehend the feedback. It seems that students do not only focus on what the feedback includes, but also how it is given. Some students believe that when the feedback is "hurtful" (S4) or "destructive" (S1), it is very likely that some students give up writing their thesis, because they are already in a quite difficult process. Noticeably, students expect to receive positive feedback on what they do well and constructive feedback on poor aspects of their research. S1 and S5 commented on the importance of positive feedback in the following excerpts:

> For instance, [advisor] wrote something like this in the mail: "This is a wonderful introduction. I liked it so much. I wrote down some comments for you, take a look at them." … When I open the file, it is full of comments, many things are corrected. That positive thing [advisor] said, the thing in the introduction, even that was very good and positive things [advisor] wrote in the text were too. Regarding some parts they really liked, [advisor] wrote "wow," "well done," and such, and you find yourself happy over what you had written, like a prep student. (S1)

> I mean always in a positive manner, like "Oh yes, we had a very lovely start. Very good, there are some shortcomings, but you can fix them," such a positive approach. For a person like me who has, um, concerns, they give very positive feedbacks. Here I personally saw that, you know, a positive approach can resonate, work very well. (S5)

In addition to positive feedback, thesis students expect timely and frequent feedback in order to be able to remain motivated and continue writing. Some of them commented on not getting continuous feedback during thesis writing period and receiving all the feedback on the thesis defense day both from the advisor and other jury members. In relation to that, it appears that students highly value written feedback on every chapter of their thesis, although they receive verbal guidance on how to design their research study or how to analyze the data. In this regard, one of

main expectations of students is to have every part of their thesis read and commented on by their advisors. When this expectation was not met, students often related it to advisors' busy schedule because of their heavy workload and also to advising many thesis students at the same time.

4.1.3.1.2 Guidance

The comments made by the student participants revealed that they held a variety of expectations with respect to guidance from their advisors during thesis writing process. For instance, they expect guidance regarding "how to conduct a research study and how it would not fail" (S11), because some students think that it is unlikely that they have developed a thesis writing mindset although they have taken a research-oriented education. Therefore, master students consider the advisor guidance as critical in research-design. Additionally, it seems that students desire to have their advisors' collaboration and voluntary guidance. S14 commented on this in the following way:

> Well, I think that advisor is not someone you ask for advice whenever you want to. It should be more like a person who volunteers for guiding you… I think the most beneficial part of it is their ability to make you feel that you show progress and are doing something; their ability to walk with you, guide you. (S14)

Similarly, students expect guidance related to overall timetable on how the whole thesis writing process will occur. For example, some students reported that "drawing up a check-list from the beginning" with the advisor and following it together could be useful (S4). Similarly, S7 stated that it could have been effective if her advisor had asked her plan on completing the thesis and then they had established an ideal timetable.

Another commonly shared expectation of students is time-related pressure from the advisors. It appears that having deadlines set by the advisor plays an important role for the students in progressing more rapidly. Interestingly, most of the students demand pressure from advisors through e-mails or phone-calls asking for when the student could submit a chapter or informing the student that they are waiting to receive a specific part of the thesis. The reason for such an expectation is that they believe it could affect their writing process positively. Students reported on this issue in the following excerpts:

> I think something like "You do the writing, I will not set any deadlines, you can send it to me when it is finished," such an approach estranges the student during this already painful process. (S14)

> In terms of that, I would like to feel more pressured in order to progress faster. They were, like, going on as you present your work. In terms of that, I would like to hear something like "The deadline for this and that is approaching, do it faster!" (S4)

> I believe that thesis advisors must demand meeting you periodically. They must say "What are you up to? How is it going? Send me this, send me that." They must keep the student under their thumb. Maybe not all students would want that but otherwise the work is not done when the student does it on their own pace. (S6)

Last area of student expectations from advisors is related to material sharing. Students comments show that they expect guidance regarding which theses or articles to read. Students said that they wanted their advisors to send them a thesis written previously to provide them with a sample work. Seemingly, students are curious about what kind of thesis work their advisors might consider as "good" (S2). Having a sample that their advisor suggests, as students mentioned, could contribute significantly to their thesis writing endeavor. Additionally, suggestions from the advisors regarding which sources on thesis writing they can make use of was another expectation mentioned by students:

> It would also be nice if they would tell the student what needs to be done, how things should be done; or if they would share books, articles, or um, similar studies with the student. (S7)
>
> They can point to some resources and say, "You can refer to this and that," if they will not offer one-on-one support in regard to writing. These can be done. I mean I wrote here, in the library, and looked around for few days, like "What can I read?" (S12)

The data presented in this section revealed the most salient aspects of guidance that students expect from advisors in overall thesis process. Students expect guidance on time-management issues such as creating a timetable for thesis progression and following deadlines related to thesis process. In addition, students mentioned a demand for material sharing. These included sample theses, articles and also sources on thesis writing or writing in general.

4.1.3.2 Support

Student participants were asked to identify additional support they needed in the course of thesis writing. Sub-categories emerged from the data included: peer support, writing center and a writing course.

4.1.3.2.1 Peer support

Analysis of interview data revealed that students consider peer support as considerably valuable on their writing process. One aspect of this support is peer review. Students reported that they experienced difficulty in finding peers to read their thesis before they send it to their advisor. S12 stated that "when your peers review your text, it improves incredibly", but "we cannot get reviews from other people, it is very difficult". Some students reported a need to come together with other thesis students who study on similar research subjects to assist each other. S3 expressed the difficulty he experienced alone in the quotation below:

> …I mean essentially the problem is that I don't know how to write a thesis and I need to write one. Managing this thing that I don't know anything about is a massive challenge and I can hardly manage it on my own, sitting in front of the computer. Like, if we come together as a group and do this task, I will eventually find support there and manage this task somehow. But I am on my own. There is no one around me who knows the topic better than I do. And it is very difficult to manage this alone. (S3)

Students also mentioned that even if they do not study similar subjects, collaborating with other thesis writing students could still be an effective practice. Students proposed that they could benefit from sharing ideas and possible solutions to problems with students who "go through similar difficulties in the stressful thesis writing process" (S6). Some students suggested that one way to come together with other thesis writing students could be through their advisor's guide or help to form a network among students.

4.1.3.2.2 Writing center

When students were asked about what kind of support they needed in thesis writing process, most of them proposed a writing center for graduate students. Students agreed on a critical need of writing center which could provide assistance with English-related and specifically thesis writing issues. According to students, it could be absolutely useful to receive help from writing professionals in a writing center especially during busy times of advisors. They also indicated that dealing with writing issues takes a lot of time for both students and advisors. Therefore, getting help from a writing center could alleviate the workload placed on advisors.

> I mean while I was looking at the scale, I saw something like "There can be a writing center." And I was like, thinking to myself, "Do universities have such things? Are they helping people writing their theses? Wow!" (S3)

> It is an open sore of mine. Not having a writing center… I mean this is… unacceptable for our university, it must have a writing center. Because I know other universities have it. (S7)

> For instance, I know that there is such a body for people in their prep year, people who are to take proficiency exam. They can get help with the writing part of the exam. But there is no such body for the graduate students. The grad students are actually doing more advanced stuff and it is more difficult. Support is definitely needed. Or, for example, Graduate School of Social Sciences has an editor. And that editor cannot catch up, apparently. (S4)

> Having someone that we can ask our questions regarding the writing would smooth the path for us. And in fact, I think we have academics who can do that. Or lecturers who can work in such places. I mean we are not short on people; we need an initiative to do such a thing. Having qualified people is beneficial as long as they are there to help us. (S2)

As reflected in the excerpts, while some students reported their astonishment when they first became aware of the existence of writing center support for graduate students in general, other students were knowledgeable about writing centers in other universities in Turkey.

4.1.3.2.3 Writing course

As additional support for thesis writing, students placed strong emphasis on a need for academic writing course. Some students mentioned that a writing course offered to graduate students could also be program specific. Moreover, students proposed ideas about how such a writing course can be conducted. For instance, S12 suggested that each week a different instructor from the program can attend the course to familiarize students with writing style of his/her research area so that students can form an initial understanding. Furthermore, students pointed out that such a course should also cover academic article writing, because students "need to write articles" if they "entered the academic world" (S4). The following quote reflects general opinion of students about graduate writing course:

> You know what, I think there should be a thesis class. Maybe not an extended course, but there must be something regarding what a thesis is, how it is written. We did such a thing back then, something like a proposal. And this

> process showed me that I was not good at it at all. Our university doesn't have a satisfactory education in regard to that. They just leave it up to you, you need to do a research and learn. (S6)
>
> I think a course on academic writing must be added to the graduate programs' curriculum. Especially to the curriculums of master's programs that require students to write a thesis. This course must focus on how to write a thesis, how to write an article and such. I would expect such a course to be specific to each program. Within the framework of that program, this course should teach academic writing through actual articles, reviewing such articles from a technical standpoint. Maybe students can also write some samples. I would expect such a course. Actually, I expect a proper academic writing class. (S9)

To sum up, data collected through interviews with students revealed student difficulties, their perceived responsibilities and expectations regarding thesis writing process. The analysis indicated considerable difficulty in writing in English, rhetorical organization, paraphrasing, functions of part-genres of thesis. Most difficulty is experienced in writing of introduction, literature review and discussion sections. Regarding the responsibilities, main points reported by students included: research topic selection, reading the literature and avoiding plagiarism and following the timing of the process. As for the expectations, students focused on timely and constructive feedback form their advisors. In addition, they think it could be useful if advisors share materials to provide them with effective writing samples. Lastly, they reported that time-related pressure from advisors could assist in speeding up the writing process. With respect to additional support, student mentioned peer support groups, writing courses and writing center as desired structures to support and assist them in various aspect of thesis writing.

4.2 Student surveys

Master level students' perceptions of their thesis writing skills and difficulties were explored through online surveys. Students participated in surveys were in various stages of thesis writing. Table 4 shows student participant number and the semester

they were in when they participated in the study. It can be seen that most of the students were in their final academic semester although it differed among students. The survey questions included a number of writing related questions: student perceptions of difficult elements in thesis writing, difficulty of sections, writing experience prior to thesis writing stage.

Table 4. Semester Information of Respondents

Semester	n
2nd	1
3rd	1
4th	12
5th	2
6th	19
7th	2
8th	12
9th	2
10+	9
Completed	3

Students were asked to assess their academic writing skills on a 5-point scale. Sixty-two per cent of the participants reported their level of academic writing skills as good or above. 18 % perceived them neither good nor poor and almost 5 % thought they had poor writing skills (see Table 5).

Table 5. Student Perceptions of Their Academic Writing Skills

Answer categories	%
very poor (1)	0
poor (2)	4.76
neutral (3)	33.33
good (4)	39.68
very good (5)	22.22

Students were also asked to determine how much writing they had done until thesis writing stage. As it can be seen in Table 6, 65 % of the students reported a good amount of writing experience, while 35 % reported having average or below average writing done before writing their thesis. Approximately 8 per cent of them thought they had done very little academic writing before embarking on thesis work.

Table 6. Amount of Academic Writing Done before Thesis Stage

Answer categories	%
1 (very little)	7.94
2	9.52
3	17.46
4	34.92
5 (very much)	30.16

When asked to assess difficult aspects of writing a thesis, students reported that transforming ideas into written form (3.52/5) is the most difficult element of thesis writing, followed by developing arguments and editing and proofreading with equal average score (3.33/%). Choosing the most appropriate words and organizing the chapters were two other elements receiving above average score difficulty (see Table 7). Vocabulary and organizations issues are also among the most articulated issues by the students in the interviews. However, punctuation, citation and knowing when to quote are the elements perceived to be the easiest ones by the students (2.42, 2.39, 2.28 respectively). Although more mechanical aspects of writing were reported to be easier than elements requiring higher order thinking skills, editing and proofreading was also considered as one of the most difficult writing elements.

Table 7. Difficult Elements of Thesis Writing

Writing elements	Mean score
Transforming ideas into written form	3.52
Developing arguments	3.33
Editing and proofreading	3.33
Choosing the most appropriate words	3.25
Organizing and structuring chapters and sections	3.14
Connecting sentences and paragraphs with effective transitions	3.04
Planning before writing	3.01
Integrating source materials	2.93
Using the right tone	2.86
Summarizing and paraphrasing	2.69
Writing grammatically correct sentences	2.68
Using appropriate punctuation	2.42
Citation/Giving references	2.39
Knowing when to quote	2.28

For the question "How would you rate the difficulty of writing the following sections of thesis?", students scored the items on a scale of 1-5: 1 being 'very easy' and 5 being 'very difficult'. Responses show that discussion, literature review and results sections received the highest scores (see Table 8). This suggests that the skills of synthesizing and interpreting information and organizing it into a written text poses the most difficulty for the students. On the contrary, writing conclusion, methodology and abstract of thesis appeared to be easier than other chapters. Yet, the average score for both conclusion and methodology are above 3 (neutral), indicating relative difficulty experienced in all sections except abstract.

Table 8. Section Difficulty

Section	Mean score
Discussion	3.98
Literature review	3.69
Results/Findings	3.52
Introduction	3.40
Conclusion	3.26
Methodology	3.13
Abstract	2.81

Another question touched on the preferred support by master students. As shown in Figure 1, the most rated support type by the students is a writing center (34.9%). It is followed by tutoring (22.2%) and workshops on writing (20.6%). The least favored options are writing courses. This may suggest that students do not want writing support as in a form of a course. Rather, they prefer a writing center, which they could ask for help related to various aspects of thesis writing at various times along the process.

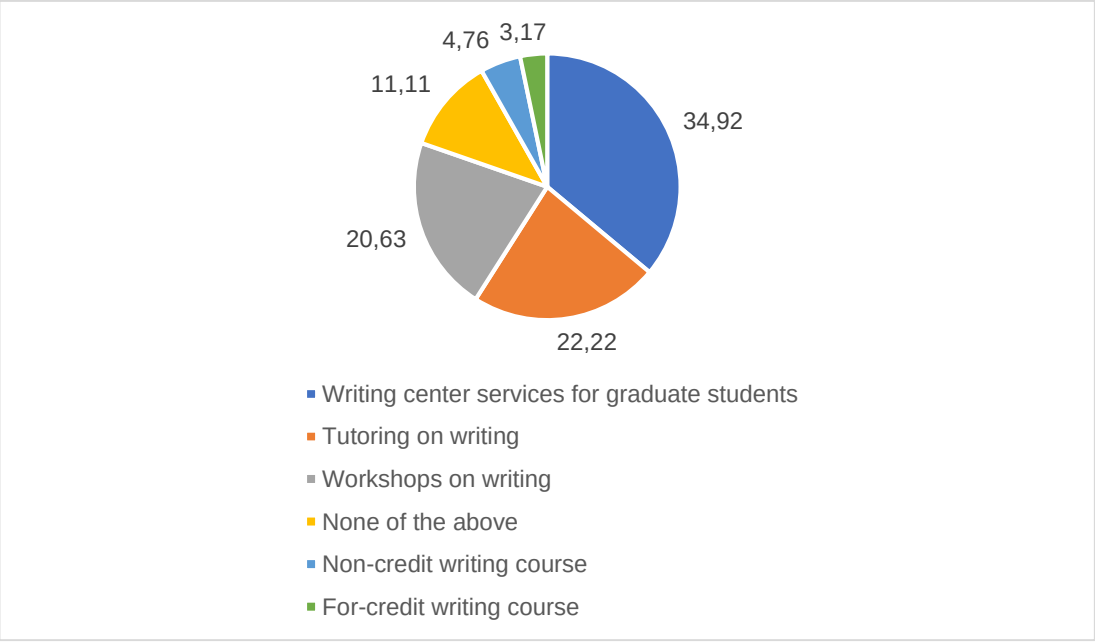


Fig. 1 Preferred support types by students

The student survey also included questions related to supervisory relationship between students and advisors. One of the questions was related to satisfaction with the support received from the advisors. The majority of the students found advisor support satisfying (satisfied 38%, very satisfied 30%). While 11% felt neutral, 8% were unsatisfied and 12 % were very unsatisfied in terms of advisor support when writing thesis.

Two questions were based on the frequency of meetings held with advisors and desired meeting periodicity by the students. Twenty-five of the students reported seeing their advisors a few times in a semester (25%), followed by once a month (22%) and a few times a month (19%). However, when students were asked how often they think they should meet with their thesis advisor, the most preferred option was once a week (28 %). Next, students expected to meet their advisors a few times a month (27%), followed by once a month (25%). When each student's responses to these two questions were analyzed, results showed that only 26% of the students' meeting regularity with their advisors matched their expectation (see Table 9).

Table 9. Frequency of Meetings with Advisors

Answer categories	Meeting frequency (%)	Expected meeting frequency (%)
A few times a semester	25.40	7,94
Once a month	22.22	25,40
A few times a month	19.05	26,98
Once a week	7.94	28,57
Once in a semester	6.35	-
A few times in an academic year	4.76	1,59
A few times a week	4.76	4,76
Once in an academic year	3.17	-

4.3 Advisor perspectives

In this section, based on interview data, advisor perspectives regarding the writing difficulties of students, their perceptions of advisor responsibilities and expectations from their students are described. Additionally, in the last part, advisors' opinions of additional support for thesis students are presented. The themes and sub-themes are as follows:

1.Difficulties

a) Writing difficulties

b) Time management

2. Responsibilities

a) Feedback

b) Guidance

3. Faculty Expectations

a) Faculty expectations from students

- Finding a research subject
- Sense of ownership

b) Support for thesis writing

4.3.1 Difficulties

4.3.1.1 Writing difficulties

The advisors had similar perspectives regarding the writing difficulties experienced by the students in the process of thesis writing. Almost all advisor participants reported that their thesis students encountered serious English language related problems. They pointed out that the level of English is closely related to the quality

of the master's thesis. In other words, students who have higher level of English could write good thesis.

> …the language can degrade a thesis so much. It is a huge problem. (A9)

> As a result, high proficiency in English brings high quality theses along with it … I mean one can write a fine thesis if they can speak English well, because they can express themselves better. We see that. (A4)

According to advisors, students' writing is unclear most of the time because of seemingly translated sentences from Turkish to English. The students' inability to transform ideas into written form becomes obvious when advisors talk to students about their writing. Although advisors are able to understand what students want to convey when talk about it, they think the written text does not reflect the same meaning.

> Of course, writing skills in English is very important, otherwise they cannot convey their message, ideas. I mean poorly structured sentences, ambiguities, grammar errors make it impossible for a person to express their ideas … Then the sentences are incoherent, there are tense errors. You just don't understand what they want to do first, what they want to do later. (A5)

Similar to A5, A4 also focused on the incomprehensibility of student writing and highlighted that even for a Turkish speaker, it is almost impossible to comprehend the ideas stated by the students:

> Sometimes they think in Turkish and write texts in English as if it was Turkish. As a result, the reader doesn't understand what they read. I mean maybe I can understand what the author tries to say because I speak Turkish but sometimes even I fail to understand. I mean, even though I am fluent in Turkish and the student is Turkish as well, I sometimes have really hard time trying to understand what the student tries to say in English. As their advisor, I know what they are doing, where they are trying to get to, but sometimes I can hardly understand what they mean when they write in English. (A4)

Advisors provided that students attempt to copy and paste sentences from other texts they read. Advisors agree that students tend to retain sentence structures of other sources and report them without synthesizing information relevant to their research. Advisors proposed different factors as the reasons of this practice. While some of

them related it to students' lack of confidence in using English, others suggested absence of paraphrasing skill as a possible reason:

> When they are not confident in their English level, they keep their original expressions more often. (A3)

> It is very important that they can express in their own words, as they understand. I don't know if it is because of laziness, incompetence or lack of knowledge but students really struggle with that. (A4)

> Such things [taking texts from other sources], and also because of not knowing how to paraphrase. (A6)

Advisors also reported that in some cases students do not know the concept of plagiarism. Because of the above stated reasons, they heavily depend on the language they read and refrain from expressing ideas using their own words, which may result in plagiarism. Thus, advisors emphasize that teaching students how to paraphrase in order not to commit plagiarism should be a part of academic writing.

> For example, there are students who don't know what plagiarism is. And there shouldn't be such students in our university, but I come across them. (A9)

> They immediately incorporate those theoretical expressions they have read into [their work] because they are not confident. They add something to them as well. I mean it is not plagiarism, you know. I mean I am against defining that as plagiarism. (A8)

> Mostly they don't know the notion [of plagiarism] either. We also need a writing ethics thing. I mean academic writing must cover writing ethics as well. (A6)

As mentioned by advisors, another common difficulty of students in writing occurs at organizational level. Lack of understandable phrasing to show how the ideas are connected, ineffective organization of parts of the text and are among the problems identified by the advisors.

> Sometimes the stream of ideas can be problematic. I mean it is necessary to provide the logic, offer a rational flow. An analysis, a synthesis, linking ideas

> to one another, transitions -they all can be important. When writing, you have them all in your mind, but you must also have them on the paper. (A9)

> They also have issues with logical flow. Like, they mention something, and they need to discuss that thing before proceeding with the next paragraph, but they don't. Later on, that thing pops up again somewhere else. There can be such structural issues. (A6)

> I think they sometimes have trouble with creating a consistent flow. Introducing the topic, ordering the paragraphs and sections, what needs to come first and what needs to follow -sometimes they have problems regarding these. (A4)

According to advisors, the reasons of students' difficulty in writing their thesis include lack of enough academic writing experience and limited academic reading. They pointed out that the amount of academic writing a student has done until thesis writing stage directly affects the degree of writing difficulties he or she experiences.

> They don't have a habit of writing in English. It is evident that they haven't practiced enough and when you don't practice enough, you don't develop the necessary skills for writing. (A3)

Some advisors pointed out that the lack of academic writing experience is not only related to the graduate program, but also to little writing done in the undergraduate programs. A6 commented on this issue in the following way:

> I mean writing is the most essential one. Nowadays most students come here not having written a thing. It makes a huge difference even if they have written a paper, an article while they were in the undergrad. They get feedback when they are writing such texts, or they review their own work. But there is a serious insufficiency. I don't think that this issue is related to graduate school alone. Students don't write in undergraduate as well. (A6)

While some advisors articulated that students with less experience in writing have hard time during the thesis process, for others the problem was also related to limited academic reading.

> I think the reason [of making too many mistakes] is that they don't read academic texts. I keep saying that. This is important for me. If they read, they will write easier, it is important to me. (A8)

Generally, advisors felt that students encounter writing difficulties in almost every section of thesis. However, they mentioned that considerable difficulty is experienced in the initial stages of thesis research. As said by advisors, students experienced the most difficulty while constructing research questions, explaining the rationale behind their research and situate their research in relevant theoretical framework. In addition, difficulty in reporting results effectively and writing the literature review were other issues mentioned by advisors.

> I mean sometimes they take too long to decide on the theoretical framework of their empirical case. Sometimes they get confused regarding the theoretical framework. It can be challenging in regard to that. (A7)

Overall, advisor responses indicated students' writing difficulties in various aspects. The main problem reported by advisors is difficulties in English writing, which also seem to cause problems related to paraphrasing and plagiarism. Organizational difficulties are also mentioned by advisors.

4.3.1.3 Time management

Another difficulty that advisors particularly focused on was related to time management. In particular, advisors complained about students' leaving most of the work to the last period of master program. In that case, advisors experience considerable difficulty when trying to allocate time to give feedback to all students in a limited time. For some advisors, pushing students to write their thesis was one of the main struggles. Some advisors mentioned that because students work while studying, it takes a longer time for them to complete the course load of the program. Unfortunately, advisors pointed out that some students quit their master's degree mainly because they experience difficulty in managing both work and study in limited time:

> Students take too many classes in too little time, and they are required to show remarkable success. Most of our students also work while doing their master's. As a result, they don't have enough energy, they cannot focus. (A3)

> I think they couldn't continue their studies because of the professional job they have. (A4)

> Well, there were theses that couldn't be written. But it is because the students were either working full time or, yes, they didn't have the time. (A7)

However, some advisors believe that the obligation to complete master's degree in maximum six semesters (implemented by CoHE in 2016) have induced students to finish their thesis, which used to many more take years to complete.

> I mean when there wasn't a time constriction, people didn't write. I think that was the biggest problem. Now the time constriction is back, and people are much more diligent… I have many students that have been dragging on for years. This term, for instance, some of them will be completing their studies. (A7)

4.3.2 Responsibilities

Advisor perceptions of responsibilities are revealed in two categories: feedback and guidance.

4.3.2.1 Feedback

Similar to student perspectives on feedback, advisors also consider providing students with timely feedback on written parts of their thesis as a part of their supervisory responsibilities. However, most of the advisors do not regard feedback on language as their responsibility.

> I wonder if the professor is responsible with correcting the English of their student. I think it is not the professor's job to do that. The thesis advisor doesn't have to correct their student's English. The advisor has to help the student with the editing, logic, shortcomings, strengths of the thesis. (A3)

In addition, advisors complained about the excessive amount of time they had to spend to deal with language issues in the writing. Due to many mistakes and unclarity in student writing, diligent work is needed on the part of the advisors,

which takes substantial amount of time. One of the advisors commented on the issue as follows:

> It is terribly time consuming. I mean if there were more students, it would be impossible to do so. I mean, you need to read so closely. Writing culture is almost non-existent, I mean. (A4)

It appears that the time and effort they put in to improve the language of thesis also prevented them from focusing on the content of the thesis, which they consider as their main responsibility.

> I find it counter-productive to spend all my time to correct the English while reading the thesis. Because I must be focusing on the content. (A8)

> All at once, I mean I try to focus on the content while giving feedback because when I focus on the style, I miss the content. When I miss the content… I can miss the style when I focus on the content. Or I cannot progress at all. That is why I start paying attention to the language as well after the text reaches to a certain level of maturity. (A9)

Some advisors reported that they felt like "editor" at times due to nature and amount of feedback they gave on the language of student writing (A4). They mostly provide feedback on the word document using the track changes tool. After advisors' corrections on word document, students only need to accept the changes made on the document. This workload in terms of language of the thesis is considered as "burden" by most of the advisors (A4).

> But the introduction part and conclusion part, I mean discussion concluding parts need the most attention. I edit them very much. Sometimes I even feel like I rewrite these parts. (A6)

> In some steps we give extremely detailed feedbacks. The student sends me their thesis as a word file, and I edit that file with Track Changes. I write comments like "Should you add this here?", "You should do that," "Here is a typo," "There is a grammar mistake," "You can cite that like this." And sometimes I had to write so many comments that when the student clicks "Accept All," on the Track Changes menu, their thesis just becomes complete. I think we shouldn't give such detailed feedbacks. The burden of

> the thesis advisor shouldn't be this heavy. Sometimes I think that the thesis advisor shouldn't work like an editor. (A4)

Advisors comments indicate that they not only take the role of advisor, but also the editor. Although they do not consider language issues as their job, they do spend a lot of time to improve the language quality of student writing.

4.3.2.2 Guidance

Advisors view themselves as a mentor who is supposed to broaden students' horizons and guide them through the stages of thesis research. One aspect of this guidance is to inform students whether their research questions are significant and feasible. They reported that students can expect guidance regarding how to transform the questions into researchable ones. They also mentioned that their role is to present students with options as possibly as they can and let the students determine which path they take to conduct their research.

> The student should expect me to widen their horizons. The thesis advisor must guide, widen their horizons. Or maybe without breaking their heart, the advisor must tell the student that their research question is meaningless. Or maybe help the student understand on their own. (A6)

> I mean when determining the research question, the student can expect guidance from their thesis advisor regarding their question. Like, is it doable, can the student find data or do research to answer that question, what should be the method? (A7)

In sum, advisor responses suggest that that they mostly perceive content-related issues as their responsibility. On the contrary, they stressed that dealing with language issues should not be a part of their advisor work, which appears to take most of their time and effort.

4.3.3 Faculty expectations

Faculty expectations consist of elements they expect from the students in addition to their support expectations from the university for student thesis writing.

4.3.3.1 Faculty expectations from students

Expectations of faculty members from students in thesis supervision process can be categorized under two sub-themes based on the interview data: finding a research subject and sense of ownership.

4.3.3.1.1 Finding a research subject

One of the issues revealed in the interviews is related to research subject selection. According to thesis advisors, it is the student who should find a research subject to conduct a study. They reported that students are responsible to discover a topic of their interest. Advisors refrain from proposing a research subject to students in initial stages to provide them with opportunities to find their own research subject and form research questions. Advisors reported that they prefer their students to study a subject that they desire to specialize on.

> Though it is not our responsibility to designate the research topic or tell the student what to do. Because the student should find the topic that interests them, that they want because they will create a work, a piece regarding that topic. (A5)

> But I think the topic is of their responsibility and choice. (A7)

However, advisors complain that they at times have to discover what the students wanted to study along with students, which becomes both challenging and time-consuming for the advisors. Students either come to master's program without previous consideration of research subject.

> I find myself in a position where I have to discover what the student is interested in working together with the student. Because they don't know it

> either. Because they were never asked such a question. Like, "What do I want to study? Why? What would I do? Is this important?" They jump from this topic to another, then another. (A3)

In cases as exemplified in the excerpt above, advisors may prefer to assign a topic to the student so that the progress of thesis writing accelerates. Although the process differs depending on the student, a choice on research subject made by the student at the beginning of the process seems preferable for thesis advisors.

> Well, because sometimes the student can progress better when you exclusively give them a specific topic. Because it is designated. On the other hand, the process becomes longer when you let them choose their own topic and try to guide them along the way. Yet they produce an academic work that they feel more content with, moreover this work can shape their academic identity as well. (A9)

Advisors also mentioned that when the students turn a project that they start in their courses into master's thesis, they are already one step ahead of other students and their thesis writing process gains speed.

> I mean, they have term projects. Most of the time, the students want to turn these term projects from their previous classes to their thesis. Then, those students start one step ahead. When they bring up a reading or a work they did previously as a proposal, this accelerates the thesis process a little bit. (A4)

As reflected in the excerpt, when students read the relevant literature and develop their research questions on a particular topic as part of graduate course, their research process begins early, which may ease the whole thesis process.

4.3.3.1.2 Sense of ownership

Another category emerged within the interview data is related to advisors' perspectives on sense of thesis ownership that students are supposed to have. According to advisors, students should be aware of the fact that the thesis belongs to them and they need to take full responsibility of all aspects of thesis writing. They expect students to consider their thesis as their "production" (A5). It seems that

advisors believe that their guidance could be effective when the student embraces their own work.

> During the thesis process, I think the student must know that they are writing their own thesis. I mean they are going to write this thesis themselves, it will be their own knowledge, expertise, experience. And they need to plan their time carefully regarding their thesis. (A4)

> I will guide them to some extent, but the individual must own their thesis. Otherwise, my affect is very limited. (A9)

In relation to the sense of ownership, advisors commented that students need to plan the timing of writing process. Advisors expect students to follow the timeline and particular deadlines set by the university. Although advisors remind students of deadlines and warn them against delays in submission of chapters, they do not necessarily consider this as a part of their responsibility.

> I say this a few times: "Look, you are falling behind. You need to write." But I cannot keep doing this forever, you know. The student must follow their schedule on their own. (A8)

> Well, I sometimes tell them what and when they need to submit, especially if they are going to be a bit pushed for the time. But [the timing] must be one of the student's responsibilities under normal circumstances. And I already expect them to follow their deadlines and schedules. (A7)

Similarly, some advisors mentioned that they often find themselves in a position that they have to write e-mails to students in order to check the progress of their work, when students do not initiate any communication or inform their advisors about their thesis process. Apparently, this turns into a bothersome issue for advisors because they do not view this as advisor duty. This issue is illustrated in the following comment of A5:

> Well, I mean, I think sending follow up letters like "You have been gone for three weeks, why don't you stop by?" and such is not my job. The student must keep up. Do I have to stay in touch by asking questions like "Where are you? What have you been doing? Why didn't you send anything?" I think we shouldn't be spoon-feeding like that. (A5)

It seems that advisors expect their students to embrace and owning their work wholeheartedly. From advisors' perspective, this also requires students to turn in their work in time and follow any deadline related to their thesis work without waiting instructions from advisors.

4.3.3.2 Support for thesis writing

All advisors agree that students need additional support during thesis writing. Their suggestions included: a writing center, a writing course and editorial support provided by the university.

The most proposed support option to help students is a writing center. Some advisors mentioned their own experience of receiving help from a writing center when they were doctoral students. They consider a writing center as an essential unit of the university, which can assist students in a number of aspects when conducting their thesis research.

> We said that they should add elective classes to the program, but nothing compares to writing centers. There must be a writing center for sure. (A3)

> Firstly, I think there must be a writing center open to the whole university. Within that center, there must be another graduate academic writing unit. Like, you will write one chapter at a time and they will help you there edit it. Now once you do this for one chapter, it will be helpful for the remainder of the text, it will provide a significant input. It is much more beneficial than editing the whole text. (A6)

In addition to writing center, advisors also commented on a need for an academic writing course. Some advisors noted that a writing course at master level could be offered as an elective course rather than a required one. However, they maintained that a required course at undergraduate level can help students build their academic writing skills. One advisor suggested that in addition to a required writing course at undergraduate level, two elective writing courses should be offered at graduate level.

While the first course establishes the essence of academic writing through samples, in the second one, students can produce their own texts.

> In fact, it would be very nice to have a writing course in master's level. Because otherwise people are very… As I said before, they find writing the most difficult. If there was a place where students can get help with their writing and a structured class as well, they would feel much more comfortable. (A7)

> I think it means that there should be a two-term class to be taken before the thesis process. (A3)

Another support point mentioned by the advisors pertained to application of research methodologies. According to some advisors, it could be quite helpful if a unit offers assistance with methodological and data analysis issues. While some advisors highlighted a need for additional support with statistical analysis, some others focused on necessity for guidance related to qualitative research methods and analysis. They reported that very limited portion of research methodology courses is devoted to qualitative research methods, so workshops or seminars on these methods are proposed to be effective by the advisors:

> If there were not only a writing center but also a body which will provide support in statistics, quantitative and qualitative methods, students can go there and get help with their thesis in such areas as well. It would be a very important contribution if there were workshops on qualitative research methods regularly, just like there are courses and training sessions on SPSS. I mean, I believe that a thesis advisor cannot provide their student with everything. There must be some support. (A9)

> My students don't use software most of the time. But there is various software like NVivo and such. For example, they can organize quick seminars and workshops for students where they can learn how to use such software. (A8)

Regarding the research methods, some advisors stated that not every professor could be knowledgeable about every research method. Moreover, expecting a faculty member who is more interested in research methodologies to support all students may not be realistic. According to some advisors, when this is the case, students are

left alone to find their own ways to deal with the issue, which is exemplified by A5 as follows:

> …what do students do [when they need help]? They open YouTube and try to find something about, let's say, regression. It is not a sound method. I think knowing about methodology must be taken seriously…There must be someplace like a research methodology support center for the graduate students. (A5)

Interviews conducted with advisors revealed that thesis writing students face a range of writing related difficulties. Unclear sentences, translated sentences, plagiarism because of ineffective expression of ideas and lack of confidence in using English are among the major writing issues reported by advisors. While most of the advisors consider content-related feedback as their responsibility, it seems to be the opposite for language-related issues. In addition, advisors expect thesis students to find a research topic of their interest, embrace their work and manage the time effectively throughout the process. Regarding the additional support, all advisors appears to agree on the urgent need of support in terms of writing of graduate students. A writing center and graduate writing course were mentioned as possible support options. Lastly, some advisors also pointed out that help related to application of various research methods is also needed.

4.4 Advisor surveys

Advisor survey attempted to reveal advisor perceptions regarding writing difficulties experienced by students and supervisory issues. Thirty-five advisors from various academic programs took part in the survey. The number of advisees being supervised at the time of data collection is shown in Table 10. The majority of the advisors had 3 or more advisees by the time they participated in the survey. The survey included questions related to advisor perception of students' academic writing levels,

challenging aspects of thesis writing for students and difficult aspects of thesis writing supervision.

Table 10. Advisee Number of Advisor Respondents

Advisor (n)	Master students being supervised (n)
5	1
8	2
11	3
5	4
2	5
2	6
1	8

Advisors were asked to report their thesis students' level academic writing skills on a 5-point scale. The results show that the majority of the advisors consider academic writing level of students neither good nor poor (see Table 11). In addition, almost 30% perceived those skills as poor. Surprisingly, none of the advisor participants chose 'very good' option for the level of academic writing skills of students who were writing a thesis under their supervision.

Table 11. Students' Level of Academic Writing Skills

Answer categories	%
1 (very poor)	8.57
2	28.57
3	54.29
4	8.57
5 (very good)	0

When advisors were asked to report how often their students faced language-related problems when writing their thesis, almost 78 percent thought that these difficulties

happened ‘very often’ (4) or ‘always’ (see Table 12). These figures suggest that for the majority of the advisors, experience of the language-related difficulties by the students occurred on numerous occasions.

Table 12. Frequency of Language-Related Difficulties Faced by Students

Answer categories	%
1 (never)	2.86
2	2.86
3	17.14
4	34.29
5 (always)	42.86

Responses on a 5-point scale to the question related to perceived student awareness of the thesis writing expectations, most of the advisors reported that thesis writing students are very often knowledgeable about what is expected of them. The percentages are shown in Table 13.

Table 13. Frequency of Perceived Student Awareness of Thesis Writing Expectations

Answer categories	%
1 (never)	2.86
2	8.57
3	17.14
4	62.86
5 (always)	8.57

Another question attempted to reveal advisors’ perception on how often students know what to include in each chapter of thesis. Results show an equal rating for ‘very often’ and ‘sometimes’ options (34.2%). While 11 percent of the advisors

thought students were ‘always’ knowledgeable about chapter contents, none of the advisors opted for ‘never’ (see Table 14).

Table 14. Frequency of Perceived Student Awareness of Thesis Chapter Contents

Answer categories	%
1 (never)	0
2	20.00
3	34.29
4	34.29
5 (always)	11.43

For the questions asking the most challenging and the least challenging chapters for students to write, advisors ranked discussion as the most challenging (31.4%), followed by introduction (27.14%) and literature review (17.1%) (see Table 15). This suggests that the most difficulty experienced in discussion where higher order thinking skills such as analysis is applied. In addition, advisors perceived that considerable difficulty is experienced by the students in the initial chapters where the problem and overall purpose of the study is introduced. Both students and advisors perceived discussion sections as the most challenging to write for students.

Table 15. The Most Challenging Section

Section	%
Discussion	31.43
Introduction	27.14
Literature Review	24.29
Methodology	8.57
Conclusion	5.72
Results/Findings	2.86

Another question aimed to identify how much responsible advisors felt in dealing with students' language-related and content-related problems. The responses indicate that only around six percent of the respondents considered themselves 'completely responsible' to deal with language issues that advisees experience (see Table 16). However, 42 percent of the advisors perceived slight responsibility and 31 percent felt somewhat responsible to address language issues during thesis supervision. While perceived responsibility was low regarding language issues, advisors reported considerably higher level of responsibility for content-related difficulties. Sixty percent felt responsible and 22 percent considered themselves 'completely responsible' for providing assistance with the content of the thesis.

Table 16. Perceived Responsibility for Language and Content-Related Difficulties

Answer categories	Language-related	Content-related
1 (not at all responsible)	2.86	0
2	42.86	5.71
3	31.43	11.43
4	17.14	60.00
5 (completely responsible)	5.71	22.86

Advisors were also asked to score the difficulty of supervising some areas (see Table 17). The results show that all the areas received an average score above 3 (neutral). Advisors perceived supervising the writing of discussion as the most difficult aspect among the options, followed by finding research questions. The highest ranked two aspects were also identified as the most difficult for the students to write. This suggests that as the difficulty experienced by the students increases, it becomes more challenging for advisors to supervise the related aspect. Moreover, advisors found it relatively easier to supervise writing the results and appropriate use of research

methods by the students. It could also be suggested that students' forming of research questions poses more difficulty than topic selection for the advisors.

Table 17. Perceived Difficulty of Supervision

Supervision elements	Mean score
Writing the discussion	3.82
Finding research questions	3.6
Critical literature review	3.48
Writing the conclusion	3.28
Topic selection	3.22
Appropriate use of research methods	3.08
Writing the results	3.08

Advisors were also asked to report what kind of support they want their students to receive from the university. More than half of the respondents preferred a writing center to help thesis writing students (see Fig. 2). The second most chosen support is workshops on writing (24%). Relatively a smaller number of advisors selected a writing course as the suggested support to assist students in thesis writing. (21.6).

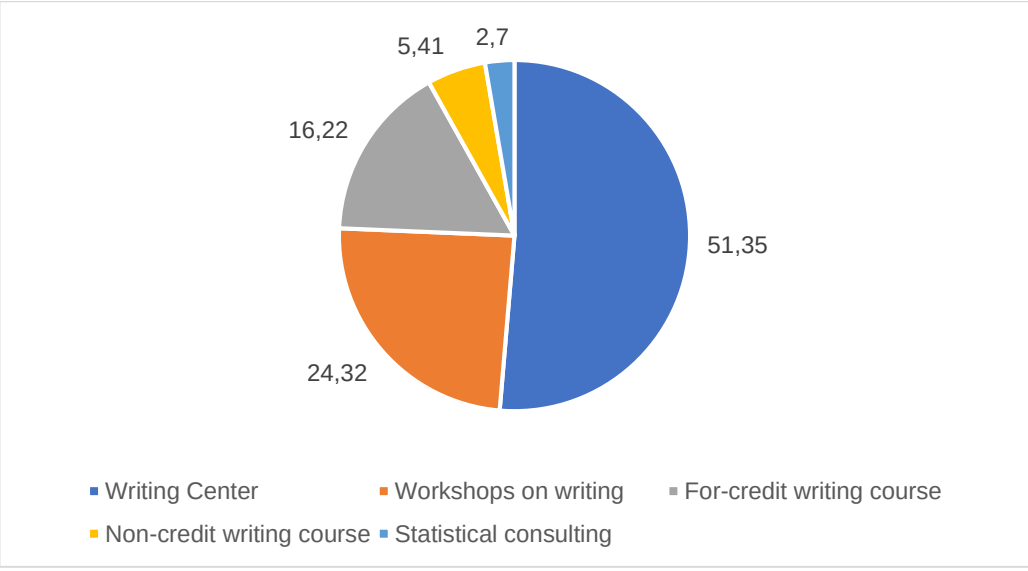


Fig. 2 Preferred support types by advisors

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore (1) difficulties experienced by master students in writing their theses both from students' and advisors' perspective, (2) perceptions of students and advisors regarding responsibilities in thesis supervision and (3) the expectations of master students and thesis advisors in the supervision and thesis writing process. The previous chapter reported the findings of interviews and surveys conducted with student and advisor participants. In this last chapter, discussion of the findings, implications, limitations of the study, suggestions for further research and conclusion are presented.

The interviews and the surveys revealed that students experienced a range of difficulties when writing their theses. From both student and advisor perspective, writing the thesis in English seemed to be a hindrance. Writing in English was a major difficulty for the majority of the students although all of them, except one, received English-medium instruction during undergraduate studies. Only of the students coming from another university, did not study in English. However, that student was required to pass the proficiency exam of the university to be fully admitted to the master program. On a sentence level, difficulties were faced while using the most appropriate and variety of vocabulary (Cooley & Lewkowicz, 1997; Dong, 1998). A similar finding was also observed by Wang's study (2011) revealing that Chinese graduate students' lack of appropriate academic vocabulary intervened with their transformation of ideas into written form besides decreasing the quality of writing. Students seemed to lack this variety, but they also wanted to produce a text composed of a variety of vocabulary and language structures. To be able to achieve

this, they either spent a lot of time by making use of other sources (e.g. dictionaries, online blogs) or they refrained from writing and constantly postponed the act of writing.

Students also compiled vocabulary items, phrases and structures from the readings they did in order to use them in their own writing, which was also reported in other studies such as Bitchener and Basturkmen (2006), Odena and Burgess (2017) and Shaw (1991). In addition, "thinking in Turkish" and "translating from Turkish to English" were among the phrases that students used to describe their struggle in L2 writing. This might be resulting from lack of writing experience in English. Yağız and Yiğiter (2016) identified that graduate students expressed more concern related to organization of ideas in their texts more than linguistic accuracy and they suggested that this could be due to students' previous education focusing heavily on grammatical accuracy both in L1 and L2. In the present study, however, one strategy that students employed to achieve a linguistically correct text is to make use of commercial online grammar checker tools such as *Grammarly*. Similarly, advisors reported encountering unclear and seemingly translated sentences in students' writing. Advisors also viewed language as a huge obstacle to producing a high-quality thesis. In other words, some advisors reported that students with high level of English also wrote high-quality theses. This suggests the importance L2 writing skill of the students from the advisor view.

The difficulty of paraphrasing is another issue reported both by advisors and students. It seems that this difficulty may be resulting from language proficiency level of the students. This appears to be surprising given the fact that those students took many courses in English both in undergraduate and graduate programs and completed a number of written assignments especially in their master programs. This

amount of English instruction is simply expected to facilitate the writing of a much longer academic text (thesis) by making use of skills such as paraphrasing. Another reason seems to be the lack of sufficient knowledge regarding how to paraphrase. To what extent they need to change sentence structure and vocabulary for a successful paraphrase seems unclear for the students. The paraphrasing skill is closely intertwined with another important issue, plagiarism. While some students reported fear of unintentional plagiarism, advisors' responses revealed that this was an issue they had to deal with very often. Notably, none of advisors evaluated instances of plagiarism as intentional. They associated unintentional plagiarism with lack of confidence in using English and lack of knowledge regarding the concept of plagiarism. This perception of advisors was also confirmed by students, who considered not plagiarism as one of their main responsibilities when writing their thesis. Given the perspectives of students and advisors, it can be argued that lack explicit instruction about how to paraphrase in order not to commit plagiarism could be one of the reasons of difficulty in paraphrasing and, in turn unintentional plagiarism.

Another important finding is related to limited genre awareness of the students. Students reported the difficulty they experienced in deciding the content, organization and the length of thesis sections. All of these issues indicate a lack of enough understanding regarding the functions of thesis genre. One reason of this could be lack of explicit instruction on functions and rhetorical organization of thesis sections. Although students wrote research papers as a part of their graduate courses, it seems that they had difficulty in applying those skills for thesis. It should be noted that thesis is a different genre and writing a research paper does not necessarily guarantee that the students will be able to manage thesis genre without further

instruction or support. Moreover, in order to familiarize themselves with thesis genre, all of the students reported that they analyzed another thesis during the course of writing their own thesis. Most of this analysis was related to rhetorical and structural organization. However, only one of the students examined parts of a thesis in a graduate course, but this was still a voluntary choice. It could be suggested that limited knowledge of thesis genre seemed to result in substantial difficulty for students (Paltridge, 2002). It appears that most students attempted to identify characteristics of thesis while writing their own thesis. In this regard, advisor feedback emerges to play a critical role. Bitchener and Basturkmen (2010) reported in their study that around one-third of the advisors thought students needed feedback on structure of different parts of the thesis. Most of those advisors also stated that they suggested guidebooks to their students. Additionally, many advisors participated in that study reported that they directed students, who faced difficulties related to thesis genre functions, to "other theses and journal articles as good examples of effective writing and appropriate organization" (Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2010, p.89). Similarly, student respondents in the present study pointed out their expectation from advisors regarding sending out or suggesting sample work such as theses and articles, which students can refer to see what is expected from them in terms of good writing might look like. Therefore, it can be suggested that students need to be provided with effective examples of writing.

Regarding the difficulty faced while writing individual chapters, there seems to be a consensus between advisors and students. Both interviews and surveys reveal that most difficulty is experienced in discussion, introduction and literature review. Similar findings were also observed by Roger, Zawacki and Baker (2016), who found discussion, results/findings and proposal as the most challenging sections for

students. As for the discussion section, some students related the difficulty they faced to lack of high order thinking skills such as analysis. Bitchener and Basturkmen (2006) argue that compared to other parts of the thesis, higher cognitive demands are required to be able to write discussion section, which in particular may necessitate more guidance from advisors. Another reason that may account for the difficulty experienced in writing the discussion part is writing it for the first time in their thesis, which was reported by some students. Notably, students overall commented on the importance of discussion section, however, those comments included almost nothing related to functions of discussion section. It should also be noted that, except two, none of the students reported consulting a thesis writing guide. This may partially explain the limited understanding of discussion section functions.

Another section that posed considerable difficulty when writing appears to be literature review. This finding is also confirmed in by Roger, Zawacki and Baker (2016). In other studies which focus on graduate student writing, but not thesis genre particularly, similar accounts of students are reported (Ho, 2013; Phakiti & Li, 2011; Yeh, 2010). Literature review tends to be challenging as it is a "task that requires skills such as mining sources, integrating and synthesizing ideas and theories- is often a brand-new experience and constitutes a formidable task" (Yeh, 2010, p.6). For the participants of this study the skill of "mining sources" seems to pose the most challenge. Students indicated that difficulties experienced was related to identifying most relevant sources among seemingly infinite number of research studies. However, contrary to the view of "brand-new experience", it is assumed that most of the students have been required to review literature for term papers, research projects as a part of both undergraduate and graduate courses. Therefore, the particular difficulty encountered in reviewing the literature for thesis could be attributed to

scope and length of this genre. Although students view reading the literature as their responsibility, none of them mentioned identifying the relevant sources as their responsibility. However, they value advisor guidance in this regard. Some students noted that advisors' suggestions on relevant sources and up to date articles could be helpful for them to deal with the review of the literature.

One of the important issues that students and thesis advisors commented on is feedback. It seems that the majority of the students are content with the feedback they received. The feedback from advisors focused on content, language and rhetorical organization of the sections and sub-sections of thesis. It is revealed by students that they want all sections of their thesis read and commented on by their advisors. Students also indicated that not only the content and the regularity of feedback, but also "how" the feedback is given matter for them. They highly value the positive comments and constructive feedback. It seems important for students to feel that they have strong aspects as well as areas need to be improved, but the effort they put is recognized by their advisors. The impact of this positive approach through feedback appears to be critical regarding their continuation in the process, especially for students who have tendency to drop out or on the verge of withdrawal. A similar finding was also identified by East, Bitchener and Basturkmen (2012). Their study pointed out that making positive and constructive feedback alongside critique was one of the most given responses when they were asked what kind of advice they would give to new supervisors regarding the most useful type of feedback.

Data from interviews and surveys indicated that frequent and timely feedback was considered as one of the responsibilities by advisors. As for the type of the feedback, it can be seen that feedback related to research question development and content of various parts of the thesis were areas that advisors thought they were

responsible to provide feedback. However, it appears that a great majority of the advisors do not consider dealing with language issues as their responsibility. A similar finding is also reported by Strauss et al.'s (2003) study. Although advisors seem to be well aware of the students' writing difficulties, they indicated that the time they spent while improving the language of the thesis was so immense that it also prevented them from focusing on content of the thesis. Advisors felt they could have used this amount of time to deal with content-related issues rather than language issues (Strauss et al., 2003). In fact, some advisors stated that they felt like an "editor" given the amount of feedback on the language. It seems that advisors want their names to appear on a thesis that is well organized and written with an error-free language. Thus, while most of the advisors take on this editor role, some advisors also mentioned referring their students to a paid editorial support when the thesis writing is completed. Moreover, assuming the responsibility to deal with the language issues is not something that all advisors feel competent or comfortable with (Allison et al., 1998). A great majority of the advisors participated in this study (and of the university in this context) are second language speakers themselves. Notably, some advisors stated that they are also experiencing writing difficulties and they do not feel confident in academic writing in English (Strauss et al., 2003). Cooley and Lewkowicz (1997) argue that language expertise is needed for advisors to manage student writing and this is not a probable case for EMI universities where the majority of students and faculty members are second language speakers of English.

The data reveals that students' perceptions of responsibilities and advisors' expectations from students in the stage of thesis overlap in some areas. For instance, both students and the advisors agree that it is student's responsibility to decide on the research topic (Paltridge & Woodrow, 2012). Advisors appreciate it when students

start their research process having a topic of interest and research questions in mind. Similarly, some students commented that thesis is their "product" and thus they should determine what to conduct research on. Although this reflects what is expected, some students stated that advisor guidance towards more unexplored areas in the literature could be helpful, since students may not have enough time to read and identify less investigated issues. Given this limited time to explore the literature on a particular topic, advisors reported that students with a predetermined research focus tend to be in an advantageous position in terms of timing of their thesis. It can be said that advisors are more likely to prefer to supervise those students. Otherwise, advisors may need to spend a lot of time to guide students to find a research topic and develop research questions, which was also reported by advisors as a time-consuming and challenging stage.

Another responsibility that students took on was time management. It seems that students are aware of the importance of planned and systematic study and effective time management. Surprisingly, however, guidance related to managing the process of thesis writing across time appears to be one of the expectations from advisors. Moreover, students even expect time-related pressure from their advisors. They believe having deadlines set by the advisor could be effective for their thesis writing process. Arguably, students may not hold such a time-related guidance expectation at the beginning of their process as they perceive time management as their responsibility. However, it appears that students become aware of their ineffective management of time during the writing period. It, therefore, generates such an expectation of guidance from the advisors. On the part of the advisors, reminding students to follow deadlines, turn in their chapters on time is not necessarily their job. They expect students to "own" their thesis and study

accordingly. In this regard, revealing expectations and learning those of students seems to be important in reducing further mismatches in expectations, given the complexity of the relationship. Casanave (2016) points out that as an advisor:

> …it is my responsibility to explain my expectations carefully to students, not just one at the beginning of a term, but repeatedly- at the beginning and throughout each term. It is also my responsibility to learn as much as I can about the students' expectations of my role, and theirs, in the advisor-advisee relationship (Casanave, 2016, p.107).

Data also revealed a high demand on additional writing support from the university. Nearly all students and advisors participated in interviews and surveys indicated the need for writing assistance provided by writing professionals. Writing centers, workshops and writing courses were most preferred support type by both advisors and students. Data reveals that writing center is more preferred option than writing courses. Three reasons may account for this preference. First, it is very likely that by the time thesis writing begins, students may have already completed the writing course. So, they may need to deal with writing issues on their own or wait for advisor feedback. However, writing center could offer help whenever a problem is encountered during the writing process. Second, students may not be willing to receive writing instruction in the form of a course which they need to attend regularly during a semester. Third, it may also be believed that the help offered at a writing center could be more individualized than a course. Nevertheless, support programs offered by the university seems to be particularly important given the fact that advisors become the sole provider of writing support and guidance in thesis writing process. In such a case, advisors tend to perceive it as a burden. Casanave (2016) asserts that "no single person, no matter how expert, can or should take on the role of sole advisor-proofreader-editor-mentor" (p.111). In fact, this is the case for

the advisors of this study as the university in this research context does not offer any kind of writing support for graduate students.

Advisors indicated that students could benefit from writing support offered by the university (Cooley & Lewkowicz, 1995). Supporting graduate student writers is a very common practice in countries such as United States, Australia and New Zealand. Many universities in those countries offer graduate students with English as a second language programs involving different options such as individual tutorials, workshops, writing centers and academic English writing courses (Storch & Tapper, 2009). A number of studies also indicate the effectiveness of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) courses aiming to improve academic writing skills in many aspects (e.g. Storch & Tapper, 2009; Terraschke & Wahid, 2011). For instance, Storch and Tapper (2009) reported a considerable improvement regarding accuracy, text structure and use of academic vocabulary in students' writing who took the EAP course. It should be noted that not all of the students start the master program with all required writing skills and thesis genre knowledge.

5.1 Conclusion

This study has investigated thesis writing experiences of graduate students. By taking the perspective of students and faculty members, it specifically explored writing difficulties encountered by students who is required to write a thesis in the L2. This study also aimed to explore the perceptions of students and thesis advisors regarding their responsibilities and expectations from each other as well as the university. Master students writing their theses or just completed their thesis and faculty members advising theses in the last three years participated in the study. As for the data collection tools, this study employed surveys and follow-up interviews with a

subset of survey respondents from each group. As an exploratory study, it was carried out at an EMI university in Turkey with participants from social sciences disciplines.

This study identified major writing problems both from student and advisor perspectives. One level of this difficulty occurred at English-language level. In other words, graduate students encountered considerable difficulty in writing a master's thesis in English. These difficulties included translating ideas into English, using most appropriate and a variety of vocabulary, paraphrasing. Other difficulties identified are related to functions of thesis genre and its parts. The content and organizational problems were mostly reported by students. Due to the extent of writing difficulties experience by students, advisors experience difficulties in allocating the time needed for feedback. On part of the advisors, the struggle to deal with language of the thesis was pronounced in the study.

With regard to perceived responsibilities, this study identified that students consider finding a research topic, reading the relevant literature as their responsibilities. When it comes to writing, it seems that students are aware of their duty to avoid plagiarism as a researcher. What is more, students reported that adopting a planned and systematic study approach and following the deadlines during the process are their responsibilities. However, findings indicate their expectations regarding time-management from the advisors. Similarly, advisors reported that choosing a research topic and completing the thesis on time as student responsibilities. Their role as an advisor encompasses guiding the student into conducting a sound research and providing content-related feedback. Although advisors do not consider dealing with language issues as their responsibility, they often find themselves in a position to take on the editor role, which requires a lot of

time and effort among their many academic and administrative duties in the university.

Finally, the findings of the study also point out a need for thesis writing support for students. This support could be offered by the university in a number of ways such as graduate writing courses or other services to be provided by a writing center.

5.2 Pedagogical implications

This study suggests several implications for graduate thesis writing at an EMI university in an EFL context where the majority of students and faculty members supervising graduate theses are second language speakers of English.

Results showed pedagogical intervention in thesis writing is necessary for this graduate student body in this higher education context. Paltridge and Starfield (2007) suggest that "more explicit induction into research writing" could be useful for many students (p.25). One way of doing that could be a writing course offered to graduate students. A writing course focusing on various sections of thesis by providing students with opportunities to examine thesis sections, its content and functions could develop thesis genre awareness of students. It should also include instruction on writing ethics and how to avoid plagiarism. This course could be given by writing specialists or subject-based professionals with teaching and writing experience in each program. Such a course could be offered to students who are at the stage of writing so that they can make use of their own research projects to complete the tasks in the course (Paltridge, 2003).

Establishing a writing center for graduate students could be another option for supporting graduate student writing. Such a center could provide a variety of services

for graduate writers not only during thesis writing but also for any writing project that they need help with in the process of graduate studies. Individual appointments with tutors for thesis writing can be offered to students throughout the semester. Along with one-to one tutoring, writing groups can also be formed so that students from same or related programs can come together and peer support, which has been reported among the expectations of the students in this study, can be realized (Phillips, 2016). Graduate writing groups may also reduce the isolation that some students felt in during their thesis writing. Workshops on the writing issues identified in this study and on research methodology and data analysis could also be provided in a writing center. These workshops could also be organized separately by faculty members, doctoral students or recent graduates who are considerably familiar or expert in a particular research methodology.

Paltridge and Starfield (2007) suggest that "much supervisor knowledge is tacit" and it could be challenging for supervisors to guide students to produce a good writing (p.48). Given the fact that the majority of the advisors did not receive a writing instruction themselves, advisors could make use of handbooks designed as guides for supervisors working with L2 writers of English (e.g. Paltridge & Starfield, 2007). Supervisors can benefit from such books in helping their students learn the rhetorical organization and functions of thesis. Additionally, advisor can suggest sample writing work to guide students.

As for the supervisory relationship, scheduling regular meeting seems noticeably critical (Paltridge & Starfield, 2007). Communicating expectations regarding the role of advisors and advisees should be initiated by the advisors so that each party clearly understands each other's roles and responsibilities (Casanave, 2016).

5.3 Limitations

The findings of this exploratory study should be read with caution as it has some limitations. First, this study was conducted at one English-medium university in this context. Similar studies in different higher education contexts may yield different results. Therefore, the results of this study can only reflect the thesis writing issues for this research setting.

Another limitation of this study is that it did not include equal number of students and advisors from each graduate program. Considering the variation in the expectations of thesis writing in each discipline, the results obtained in this study may not represent all the social sciences disciplines equally. Also, not all of the programs were represented in the interviews.

The study was also limited by the number of participants. Especially, the number of faculty members participated in the study remained somewhat limited. The results of the study should not be generalized to other contexts with this limited number of participants. Conducting interviews with more students and advisors could provide more comprehensive results.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

Since this study is exploratory, it provides several areas for further research. This study employed surveys and interviews to reveal perceptions of students and advisors regarding thesis writing difficulties and supervisory relationship. Further research could use different methodologies such as longitudinal case studies to track thesis writing process from beginning to end to capture more detailed nuances of their difficulties and strategies to deal with those issues.

Disciplinary- based research can also uncover challenges students face in specific programs. Case study approach can be employed to explore writing issues inherent in disciplines. In addition, this study only focused on students and advisors from social sciences disciplines. Further research can also investigate graduate student writing in sciences and engineering disciplines.

Further studies could also explore specific sections of thesis. As it has been identified in this study, the most challenge is faced in the writing of introduction, literature review and discussion sections. Case studies can explore writing processes of these sections and how students make use of advisor feedback to improve their writing.

APPENDIX A

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS OF STUDENT SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Program	n
Psychology	8
Educational Sciences	6
Management Information Systems	5
Philosophy	5
Social Policy	5
Political Science and International Relations	5
Sociology	4
Critical and Cultural Studies	3
Management	3
Sustainable Tourism Management	3
Asian Studies (with thesis)	2
Cognitive Science	2
International Relations: Turkey, Europe, and the Middle East (with thesis)	2
International Trade Management	2
Educational Technology	2
Economics	2
Guidance and Psychological Counseling	2
History	1
Primary Education	1
Total	63

APPENDIX B

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS OF ADVISOR SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Program	**n**
Economics	4
Educational Sciences	5
Educational Technology	2
English Literature	1
Guidance and Psychological Counseling	2
History	2
International Trade Management	1
Management	1
Management Information Systems	2
Modern Turkish History	1
Philosophy	3
Political Science and International Relations	1
Primary Education	1
Psychology	4
Sociology	2
Sustainable Tourism Management	3
Total	35

APPENDIX C

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

1. What is your graduate level?

☐ M.A. student
☐ M.A. graduate

2. Which graduate program are/were you enrolled in?

_____

3. In which semester are you in your graduate studies?

_____

4. If you have finished your program, please indicate a date (month and year).

_____

5. How many languages do you speak (at least intermediate level)?

_____

6. How would you rate the difficulty of writing the following sections of thesis?

	Very easy	Easy	Neutral	Difficult	Very Difficult
Abstract					
Introduction					
Literature Review					
Methodology					
Results/Findings					
Discussion					
Conclusion					

7. Have you ever analyzed a thesis written in your discipline?

_____

8. How do you consider the level of your academic writing skills?

1 2 3 4 5

Very Poor Very Good

9. How much academic writing have you done before you started writing your thesis/dissertation?

1 2 3 4 5

Very little Very much

10. Have you taken any academic writing course?

- ☐ Yes, in the undergraduate program
- ☐ Yes, in the master program
- ☐ Yes, in the doctoral program
- ☐ No, I have not taken any academic writing course

11. How would you rate the difficulty of the followings while writing your thesis?

	Very easy	Easy	Neutral	Difficult	Very difficult
Summarizing and paraphrasing					
Choosing the most appropriate words					
Integrating source materials					
Citation/Giving references					
Writing grammatically correct sentences					
Knowing when to quote					
Using the right tone					
Planning before writing					
Organizing and structuring chapters and sections					
Transforming ideas into written form					

	Very easy	Easy	Neutral	Difficult	Very difficult
Using appropriate punctuation					
Developing arguments					
Connecting sentences and paragraphs with effective transitions					
Editing and proofreading					

12. What kind of support would you like to receive during your thesis writing?

- ◯ Tutoring on writing
- ◯ For-credit writing course
- ◯ Non-credit writing course
- ◯ Workshops on writing
- ◯ Writing center services for graduate students
- ◯ None of the above
- ◯ Other: _____

13. How often do/did you meet with your thesis advisor?

- ◯ Every day
- ◯ Once a week
- ◯ A few times a week
- ◯ Once a month
- ◯ A few times a month
- ◯ Once in a semester
- ◯ A few times a semester
- ◯ Once an academic year
- ◯ A few times an academic year
- ◯ Never
- ◯ Other: _____

14. How often do you think you should meet with your thesis advisor?

- ◯ Every day
- ◯ Once a week
- ◯ A few times a week
- ◯ Once a month
- ◯ A few times a month
- ◯ Once a semester
- ◯ A few times a semester
- ◯ Once an academic year
- ◯ A few times an academic year
- ◯ Never
- ◯ Other: _____

15. How satisfied are/were you with the amount of support you get from your advisor?

1 2 3 4 5

Not at all satisfied Very satisfied

16. Is there anything you would like to add?

_____

17. Interview : Dear participant, thank you very much for completing the survey. If you want to participate in a follow-up interview for us to be able to get a more detailed account of your experiences in thesis writing, please write your e-mail address so that we can contact you.

Your e-mail address: _____

APPENDIX D

SURVEY QUESTIONS FOR ADVISORS

1. What is your department?

_____

2. How many M.A. theses are you currently supervising ?

_____

3. How many M.A. theses have you supervised until now?

_____

4. How often do you think your students are aware of your expectations in thesis writing?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Always

5. How often do you think your students are aware of the requirements of thesis writing?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Always

6. How often do your students know what to include in each chapter of thesis?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Always

7. Which section of the thesis is the most challenging part for your students?

◯ Abstract

◯ Introduction

- ◯ Literature Review
- ◯ Methodology
- ◯ Results/Findings
- ◯ Discussion
- ◯ Conclusion
- ◯ Numerical and Visual Data
- ◯ Experiments

◯ Other: _____

8. Do you think the advisor should be responsible for supporting the students with content-related difficulties in thesis writing?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all responsible	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Completely responsible

9. Please rate the difficulty of supervising the following areas.

	Very easy	Easy	Neutral	Difficult	Very difficult
Topic selection					
Finding research questions					
Critical literature review					
Appropriate use of research methods					
Writing the results					
Writing the discussion					
Writing the conclusion					

10. What kind of support do you think your students should receive offered by the university?

- ◯ For-credit writing course
- ◯ Non-credit writing course
- ◯ Writing Center
- ◯ Workshops on writing

Other: _____

11. How do you consider your thesis students' level of academic writing skills?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Very poor	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Very good

12. How often do your students experience language-related difficulties in thesis writing?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Never	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Always

13. Do you think the advisor should be responsible for supporting the students with language-related difficulties in thesis writing?

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not at all responsible	◯	◯	◯	◯	◯	Completely responsible

14. Is there anything you would like to add?

_____

15. Interview: Dear scholar, thank you very much for completing the survey. If you want to participate in a follow-up interview for us to be able to get a more detailed account of your experiences in thesis writing, please write your e-mail address so that we can contact you.

Your e-mail address: _____

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself? What is your research topic?
2. In which stage of thesis writing are you right now or have completed?
3. Have you ever analyzed a thesis/dissertation written in your research field?
    a. If so, when?
    b. What can you say in terms of its effectiveness?
4. What are the main writing skills that you should possess at graduate-level studies?
    a. Do you think you have those skills?
5. Do you think your graduate courses prepared you for thesis writing?
6. Do you experience language-related difficulties while writing your thesis?
    a. If so, what are these problems?
7. What are your strategies to be able to overcome difficulties that you are facing while composing your text?
8. What kind of feedback do you receive for your writing from your advisor?
    a. Can you think of any other types of feedback that could be/could have been useful for you?
9. What has been the most challenging aspect of thesis/dissertation writing in general?
10. Which part of the thesis/dissertation writing is the most challenging part for you? Why?
11. What are your expectations from your supervisor for thesis supervision?
12. What do you think your responsibilities are in thesis writing process?

13. Other than your thesis advisor what kind of support would you like to have for your thesis writing?

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ADVISORS

1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself? What are your research interests?
2. Do you supervise MA theses? What are some of the issues that you encounter during this process?
    a. How did you learn how to deal with your students' thesis writing issues?
3. Have ever taken or taught a writing course?
    a. When you supervise your thesis do you ever refer back to this course?
4. What are the main writing skills that students should possess at graduate level?
    a. Do you think your students have those skills?
    b. What do/can they do to improve their writing skills?
    c. What type of strategies do you have in order to help them produce better texts?
5. What are some language related issues that your thesis students face as they write their theses? (e.g. word choice, grammar) (L2 users of English)
    a. When your students experience language problems (that obscure the meaning) in thesis writing, what do you generally do?
6. What are most challenging aspects of thesis/dissertation writing for your students? (organization, citation, developing arguments etc.)
    a. Do you or your students decide on the topic?
    b. Which chapter do you think is the most difficult for your students to write?
7. What are the most challenging aspects of thesis supervision for you?
    a. How do you give feedback on drafts?

b. How do you handle drafts?

8. Have you ever consulted/used a book on thesis and dissertation writing?
    a. Which book was it?
    b. In what way was it helpful?
9. What do you think your students' responsibilities are in thesis writing process?
    a. How do you negotiate those responsibilities with your students?
    b. What should your students expect from you during thesis supervision?
10. Have you experienced any conflict regarding your perception of responsibilities and that of your students?

APPENDIX G

STUDENT CONSENT FORM

Araştırmayı destekleyen kurum: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi

Araştırmanın adı: Lisansüstü programlarda tez yazma deneyimi: Öğrencilerin ve tez danışmanlarının görüşleri

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Nur Yiğitoğlu Aptoula

E-mail adresi: nur.yigitoglu@boun.edu.tr

Telefonu: +90 212 359 69 06

Araştırmacının adı: Selin Yıldırım

E-mail adresi: yildirim.selin@outlook.com

Telefonu: +90 534 036 0060

Sayın yüksek lisans öğrencisi,

Bu araştırma, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Öğretim Üyesi Dr. Öğretim Üyesi Nur Yiğitoğlu Aptoula'nın danışmanlığında Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Selin Yıldırım tarafından yüksek lisans tez çalışması kapsamında "Lisansüstü programlarda tez yazma deneyimi: Öğrencilerin ve tez danışmanlarının görüşleri" adı altında yürütülmektedir. Bu araştırmaya katılarak lisansüstü öğrencilerin yabancı dilde tez yazma sürecinde karşılaştığı dilsel ve sosyal zorlukların anlaşılması ve gereken desteğin sağlanmasına katkıda bulunmuş olacaksınız. Bu araştırma için sizden yaklaşık 10 dakika sürecek ankete ve daha sonra siz ve araştırmacı tarafından belirlenecek bir zamanda yaklaşık 20 dakika sürecek röportaja katılmanız istenmektedir.

Bu araştırmaya katılım tamamen isteğe bağlıdır. İstediğiniz zaman araştırmaya katılmaktan vazgeçebilirsiniz. Sürecin herhangi bir yerinde çalışmadan geri çekilmeniz durumunda, o ana kadar toplanan veri kullanılmayacaktır. Araştırma sırasında sizden alınan bilgiler sadece araştırma amaçlı kullanılacak ve gizli tutulacaktır. Bu araştırmaya katıldığınız için size herhangi bir ücret veya ders kredisi teklif edilmeyecektir.

Araştırma projesi hakkında ek bilgi almak istediğiniz takdirde proje yürütücüsü ve/veya araştırmacı ile iletişime geçebilirsiniz. Araştırmayla ilgili haklarınız konusunda Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Yüksek Lisans ve Doktora Tezleri Etik İnceleme Komisyonu – SOBETİK'e danışabilirsiniz.

Bana anlatılanları ve yukarıda yazılanları anladım. Bu formun bir örneğini aldım / almak istemiyorum (bu durumda araştırmacı bu kopyayı saklar).

☐ Hem ankete hem röportaja katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

☐ Sadece ankete katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

Katılımcı Adı-Soyadı: ……..

İmzası: ……

Tarih (gün/ay/yıl): ...../...../.....

APPENDIX H

ADVISOR CONSENT FORM

Araştırmayı destekleyen kurum: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi

Araştırmanın adı: İkinci Dilde Lisanüstü Tez Yazımı: Öğrencilerin ve tez danışmanlarının görüşleri

Tez Danışmanı: Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Nur Yiğitoğlu Aptoula

E-mail adresi: nur.yigitoglu@boun.edu.tr

Telefonu: +90 212 359 69 06

Araştırmacının adı: Selin Yıldırım

E-mail adresi: yildirim.selin@outlook.com

Telefonu: +90 534 036 0060

Sayın akademisyen,

Bu araştırma, Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Öğretim Üyesi Dr. Nur Yiğitoğlu Aptoula'nın danışmanlığında Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Yüksek Lisans Programı öğrencisi Selin Yıldırım tarafından yüksek lisans tez çalışması kapsamında "Lisansüstü programlarda tez yazma deneyimi: Öğrencilerin ve tez danışmanlarının görüşleri" adı altında yürütülmektedir. Yabancı dilde yüksek lisans/doktora tez yönetme sürecindeki deneyimlerinizi ve karşılaştığınız zorlukları anlamak amacıyla, sizden yaklaşık 10 dakika sürecek ankete ve daha sonra siz ve araştırmacı tarafından belirlenecek bir zamanda yaklaşık 20 dakika sürecek röportaja katılmanız istenmektedir.

Bu araştırmaya katılım tamamen isteğe bağlıdır. İstediğiniz zaman araştırmaya katılmaktan vazgeçebilirsiniz. Sürecin herhangi bir yerinde çalışmadan geri

çekilmeniz durumunda, o ana kadar toplanan veri kullanılmayacaktır. Araştırma sırasında sizden alınan bilgiler sadece araştırma amaçlı kullanılacak ve gizli tutulacaktır. Bu araştırmaya katıldığınız için size herhangi bir ücret ödenmeyecektir.

Araştırma projesi hakkında ek bilgi almak istediğiniz takdirde proje yürütücüsü ve/veya araştırmacı ile iletişime geçebilirsiniz. Araştırmayla ilgili haklarınız konusunda Boğaziçi Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Yüksek Lisans ve Doktora Tezleri Etik İnceleme Komisyonu – SOBETİK'e danışabilirsiniz.

Bana anlatılanları ve yukarıda yazılanları anladım. Bu formun bir örneğini aldım / almak istemiyorum (bu durumda araştırmacı bu kopyayı saklar).

☐ Hem ankete hem röportaja katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

☐ Sadece ankete katılmayı kabul ediyorum.

Katılımcı Adı-Soyadı: ……..

İmzası: ……

Tarih (gün/ay/yıl): ...../...../.....

APPENDIX I

ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

T.C.
BOĞAZİÇİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Yüksek Lisans ve Doktora Tezleri Etik İnceleme Komisyonu

Sayı: 2019 - 44 18 Nisan 2019

Selin Yıldırım
Yabancı Diller Eğitimi

Sayın Araştırmacı,

"Lisansüstü programlarda tez yazma deneyimi: Öğrencilerin ve tez danışmanlarının görüşleri" başlıklı projeniz ile ilgili olarak yaptığınız SBB-EAK 2019/35 sayılı başvuru komisyonumuz tarafından 18 Nisan 2019 tarihli toplantıda incelenmiş ve uygun bulunmuştur.

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi İnci Ayhan

Prof. Dr. Feyza Çorapçı

Doç. Dr. Mehmet Yiğit Gürdal

Doç. Dr. Ebru Kaya

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Şebnem Yalçın

REFERENCES

Akbas, E. (2012a). Exploring metadiscourse in master's dissertation abstracts: Cultural and linguistic variations across postgraduate writers. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*, *1*(1), 12-26.

Akbas, E. (2012b). Interactional metadiscourse in Turkish postgraduates' academic texts: A comparative study of how they introduce and conclude. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, *2*, 35-45.

Akbas, E. (2014). Are they discussing in the same way? Interactional metadiscourse in Turkish writers' texts. In A. Lyda, K.Warchal (Eds.), *Occupying niches: Interculturality, cross-culturality and aculturality in academic research* (pp. 119-133). London/Berlin: Springer.

Akbas, E., & Hardman, J. (2018). Strengthening or weakening claims in academic knowledge construction: A comparative study of hedges and boosters in postgraduate academic writing. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, *18*(4), 831-859.

Alagözlü, N., & S. Saraç-Süzer. (2010). Language and cognition: Is critical thinking a myth in Turkish educational system? *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *2*, 782-786.

Allison, D. (1995). Assertions and alternatives: Helping ESL undergraduates extend their choices in academic writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *4*(1), 1-15.

Allison, D., Cooley, L., Lewkowicz, J & Nunan, D. (1998). Dissertation writing in action: The development of a dissertation writing support program for ESL graduate research students. *English for Specific Purposes*, *17*(2), 199-217.

Altınmakas, D., & Bayyurt, Y. (2019). An exploratory study on factors influencing undergraduate students' academic writing practices in Turkey. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 37*, 88-103.

Atay, D., & Kurt, G. (2006). Prospective teachers and L2 writing anxiety. *The Asian EFL Journal Quarterly*, *8*(4), 100-118.

Azman, H., Nor, N. F. M., & Aghwela, H. O. M. (2014). Investigating Supervisory Feedback Practices and their Impact on International Research Student's Thesis Development: A Case Study. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 141*, 152-159.

Badenhorst, C., Moloney, C., Rosales, J., Dyer, J., & Ru, L. (2015). Beyond deficit: Graduate student research-writing pedagogies. *Teaching in Higher Education, 20*(1), 1-11.

Belcher, D. (1994). The apprenticeship approach to advanced academic literacy: Graduate students and their mentors. *English for Specific Purposes, 13*(1), 23-34.

Bitchener, J., & Basturkmen, H. (2006). Perceptions of the difficulties of postgraduate L2 thesis students writing the discussion section. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 5*(1), 4-18.

Bitchener, J., Basturkmen, H., & East, M. (2010). The focus of supervisor written feedback to thesis/dissertation students. *International Journal of English Studies, 10*(2), 79-97.

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2007). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods*. Boston, MA: Pearson.

Bruce, I. (2010). Textual and discoursal resources used in the essay genre in sociology and English. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 9*(3), 153-166.

Bunton, D. (2002). Generic moves in PhD thesis introductions. In J. Flowerdew (Ed.), *Academic discourse* (pp. 57-75). London: Longman.

Bunton, D. (2005). The structure of PhD conclusion chapters. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 4*(3), 207-224.

Can, H. (2007). *An analysis of freshman year university students' argumentative essays* (Unpublished master's thesis). Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey.

Carkin, S. (2005). English for academic purposes. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 85-98). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Casanave, C. P. (2002). *Writing games: Multicultural case studies of academic literacy practices in higher education*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Casanave, C. P. (2016). What advisors need to know about the invisible 'real-life' struggles of doctoral dissertation writers. In S. Simpson, N.A. Caplan, M. Cox & T. Phillips (Eds.), *Supporting graduate student writers: Research, curriculum, and program design* (pp. 97-116). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Casanave, C. P., & Hubbard, P. (1992). The writing assignments and writing problems of doctoral students: Faculty perceptions, pedagogical issues, and needed research. *English for Specific Purposes, 11*(1), 33-49.

Cooley, L., & Lewkowicz, J. (1995). The writing needs of graduate students at the University of Hong Kong: A project report. *Hong Kong Papers in Linguistics and Language Teaching, 18*, 121–123.

Cooley, L., & Lewkowicz, J. (1997). Developing awareness of the rhetorical and linguistic conventions of writing a thesis in English: Addressing the needs of ESL/EFL postgraduate students. In A. Duszak (Ed.), *Culture and styles of academic discourse* (pp. 113–140). Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Çandarlı, D., Bayyurt, Y., & Martı, L. (2015). Authorial presence in L1 and L2 novice academic writing: Cross-linguistic and cross-cultural perspectives. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 20*, 192-202.

Doğan, F. Ş., Yağız, O., & Kaçar, I. G. (2018). An investigation of the citation transformation types in MA and PhD theses. *International Journal for Educational Integrity*, *14*(1), 9.

Dong, Y. (1998). Non-native graduate students' thesis/dissertation writing in science: Self-reports by students and their advisors from two US institutions. *English for Specific Purposes*, *17*, 369–390.

Dudley-Evans, T., & St John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in English for specific purposes: A multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

East, M., Bitchener, J., & Basturkmen, H. (2012). What constitutes effective feedback to postgraduate research students? The students' perspective. *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice, 9*(2), 7.

Flowerdew, J., & Peacock, M. (2001). Issues in EAP: A preliminary perspective. In J. Flowerdew & M. Peacock (Eds.), *Research perspectives on English for academic purposes* (pp. 8-24). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Greene, J. C., Benjamin, L., & Goodyear, L. (2001). The merits of mixing methods in evaluation. *Evaluation, 7*(1), 25–44.

Ho, M. C. (2013). The difficulties in disciplinary research writing: A case study of first year graduate students in Taiwan. *Journal of Teaching and Teacher Education, 2*(4), 77-87.

Hyland, K. (1999). Talking to students: Metadiscourse in introductory coursebooks. *English for Specific Purposes, 18*(1), 3-26.

Hyland, K. (2000). *Disciplinary discourses: Social interactions in academic writing*. Harlow, UK: Pearson Education.

Hyland, K. (2004). Disciplinary interactions: Metadiscourse in L2 postgraduate writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing, 13*(2), 133–151.

Hyland, K. (2010). Researching writing. In B. Paltridge & A. Phakiti (Eds.), *Continuum companion to research methods in applied linguistics* (pp. 191-204). London, UK: Continuum.

Hyland, K., & Shaw, P. (Eds.). (2016). *The Routledge handbook of English for academic purposes*. New York: Routledge.

Kurt, G., & Atay, D. (2007). The effects of peer feedback on the writing anxiety of prospective Turkish teachers of EFL. *Journal of Theory and Practice in Education, 3*(1), 12-23.

Lee, A. (2008). How are doctoral students supervised? Concepts of doctoral research. *Studies in Higher Education, 33*(3), 276-281.

Leki, I., Cumming, A., & Silva, T. (2008). *A synthesis of research on second language writing in English*. London: Routledge.

Lewkowicz, J. (2009). Concluding your master's level thesis. *Revista Canaria de Estodios Ingleses, 59,* 63-72.

Lewkowicz, J. (2012). The challenges of writing a successful thesis conclusion. In R. Tang (Ed.), *Academic writing in a second or foreign language: Issues and challenges facing ESL/EFL academic writers in higher education contexts* (pp. 107-125). London: Continuum.

Li, T., & Wharton, S. (2012). Metadiscourse repertoire of L1 Mandarin undergraduates writing in English: A cross-contextual, cross-disciplinary study. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, *11*(4), 345-356.

Love, A. (1991). Process and product in geology: An investigation of some discourse features of two introductory textbooks. *English for Specific Purposes, 10,* 89-109.

Love, A. (1993). Lexico-grammatical features of geology textbooks: Process and product revisited. *English for Specific Purposes*, *12*(3), 197-218.

Nwogu, K. N. (1997). The medical research paper: Structure and functions. *English for Specific Purposes, 16*(2), 119-138.

Odena, O., & Burgess, H. (2017). How doctoral students and graduates describe facilitating experiences and strategies for their thesis writing learning process: a qualitative approach. *Studies in Higher Education*, *42*(3), 572-590.

Öztürk, H., & Çeçen, S. (2007). The effects of portfolio keeping on writing anxiety of EFL learners. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, *3,* 218- 236.

Paltridge, B. (2002). Thesis and dissertation writing: An examination of published advice and actual practice. *English for Specific Purposes, 21*(2), 125-143.

Paltridge, B. (2003). Teaching thesis and dissertation writing. *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *8*(2), 78-96.

Paltridge, B., & Starfield, S. (2007). *Thesis and dissertation writing in a second language: A handbook for supervisors*. London: Routledge.

Paltridge, B., & Woodrow, L. (2012). Thesis and dissertation writing: moving beyond the text. In R. Tang (Ed.), *Academic writing in a second or foreign language: Issues and challenges facing ESL/EFL academic writers in higher education contexts* (pp. 88-104). London: Continuum.

Paltridge, B. (2018). Graduate student writing. In J. I. Liontas (Ed.), *The TESOL encyclopedia of English language teaching* (pp. 1-6). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and methods: Integrating theory and practice.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Pearson, M. & Kayrooz, C. (2004). Enabling critical reflection on research supervisory practice. *International Journal for Academic Development, 9*(1), 99-116.

Phakiti, A., & Li, L. (2011). General academic difficulties and reading and writing difficulties among Asian ESL postgraduate students in TESOL at an Australian university. *RELC Journal, 42*(3), 227–264.

Phillips, T. (2016). Writing center support for graduate students: An integrated model. In S. Simpson, N.A. Caplan, M. Cox & T. Phillips (Eds.), *Supporting graduate student writers: Research, curriculum, and program design* (pp. 159-170). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Rasmeenin, C. (2006). *A structural move analysis of MA thesis discussion sections in applied linguistics* (Unpublished master's thesis). Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Rogers, P., Zawacki, T. M., & Baker, S. (2016). Uncovering challenges and pedagogical complications in dissertation writing and supervisory practices: A multimethod study of doctoral students and advisors. In S. Simpson, N.A. Caplan, M. Cox & T. Phillips (Eds.), *Supporting graduate student writers: Research, curriculum, and program design* (pp. 52-77). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Salager-Meyer, F. (1992). A text-type and move analysis study of verb tense and modality distribution in medical English abstracts. *English for Specific Purposes*, *11*(2), 93-113.

Saldaña, J. (2013). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Shaw, P. (1991). Science research students' composing processes. *English for Specific Purposes, 10,* 189–206.

Strauss, P. (2012). 'The English is not the same': challenges in thesis writing for second language speakers of English. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *17*(3), 283-293.

Strauss, P., Walton, J. A., & Madsen, S. (2003). "I don't have time to be an English teacher": Supervising the EAL thesis. *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *8*(2), 1-16.

Swales, J. M. (1990). *Genre analysis: English in academic and research settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swales, J. M. (2001). EAP-related linguistic research: An intellectual history. In J. Flowerdew & M. Peacock (Eds.), *Research perspectives on English for academic purposes* (pp. 42-54). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Talmy, S. (2010). Qualitative interviews in applied linguistics: From research instrument to social practice. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *30*, 128-148.

Thompson, P. (1999). Exploring the contexts of writing: interviews with PhD supervisors. In P. Thompson (Ed.), *Issues in EAP writing research and instruction* (pp. 37-54). Reading, PA: Centre for Applied Language Studies, University of Reading.

Thompson, P. (2013). Thesis and dissertation writing. In B. Paltridge & S.Starfield (Eds.), *The handbook of English for specific purposes* (pp. 283-299). West-Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

Tıkaç, S. (2013). *Writer visibility and reader engagement in university students' argumentative essays* (Unpublished master's thesis). Boğaziçi University, Istanbul, Turkey.

Vagias, W. M. (2006). *Likert-type scale response anchors.* Retrieved from Clemson International Institute for Tourism & Research Development: http://media.clemson.edu/cbshs/prtm/research/resources-for-research-page-2/Vagias-Likert-Type-Scale-Response-Anchors.pdf

Wang, M. (2011). Chinese postgraduate students learning to write in English: Toward an understanding of L2 academic writing. In L. H. Phan & B. Baurain (Eds.), *Voices, identities, negotiations, and conflicts: Writing academic English across cultures* (pp. 41-58). Bingley, UK: Emerald.

Wang, T., & Li, L. Y. (2008). Understanding international postgraduate research students' challenges and pedagogical needs in thesis writing. *International Journal of Pedagogies and Learning, 4*(3), 88-96.

Yağız, O., & Yiğiter, K. (2016). The academic writing approaches of Turkish graduate students of English language. *Atatürk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, 20*(1), 73-92.

Yastıbaş, G. Ç., & Yastıbaş, A. E. (2015). The effect of peer feedback on writing anxiety in Turkish EFL (English as a foreign language) students. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 199*, 530-538.

Yaylı, D. (2011). From genre awareness to cross-genre awareness: *A study in EFL context. Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 10*(3), 121-129.

Yaylı, D. (2012). An overview of research on skills instruction in Turkey. In Y. Bayyurt & Y. Bektaş-Çetinkaya (Eds.), *Research perspective on teaching and learning English in Turkey* (pp. 149-177). Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Yeh, C. C. (2010). New graduate students' perspectives on research writing in English: A case study in Taiwan. *Journal of Academic Language and Learning, 4*(1), A1-A12.

Yükseköğretim Kurulu, (2016). *Lisansüstü Eğitim ve Öğretim Yönetmeliği.* Retrieved from https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2016/04/20160420-16.htm