

**The Challenges Faced by Supervisees in the
Writing Phase of the Supervision Process**



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Summary:

Dissertation writing is part of the supervision process and a prerequisite for Master's degree. Despite the fact that Master's students in the English Department –University of Tiaret- take writing and research skills classes, they struggle to write a dissertation that adheres to the academic research writing standards. This paper, therefore, explores the challenges faced by supervisees, at Master level, in the dissertation writing. The study is carried out at Tiaret University, with 40 Master 2 Didactics student, selected through convenience sampling. This investigation adopts a case study and a mixed methods approach. The data is triangulated and elicited through a questionnaire followed by a semi-structured interview. The data revealed that the participants lacked reformulation tools, demonstrated issues related to language proficiency and writing skill and lacked a common writing framework and guidelines.

Keywords: writing phase; supervision process; Master's dissertation.

1. INTRODUCTION

In Master 2, students are required to undertake a research on a given topic in an attempt to answer a research question and write a research project, this is academically called 'dissertation', of approximately 60 to 80 pages in which they report the related literature to their research problem and main results they gain from the fieldwork they undertake in the applied part. They end by presenting a set of recommendations with intention of participating in the progress of the field of interest.

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The process of dissertation writing has always been an obstacle and a source of anxiety for the majority of supervisees due to its challenging nature. This claim is backed up by the fact that students fail to fully meet the required academic standards of the Master's degree. According to earlier studies, the lack of awareness of the content criteria of particular parts of the dissertation namely the literature review and the results and discussion chapters is a notable hurdle (Bitchener & Basturkmen, 2006; Yeh, 2010; Mafa & Mapolisa, 2012; Loan, 2017; Peng, 2018). Wang and Li (2008) in their turn brought about another common issue related to English proficiency, they argue that a great portion of EFL students lack the capacity to appropriately express themselves in English.

Paltridge and Starfield (2007, p.56) suggested a set of criteria required for a successful Master's dissertation, they are as follows:

- A genuine investigation or the testing of ideas;
- Competence in independent work or experimentation;
- An understanding of appropriate techniques as well as their limitations;
- An expert knowledge of the published literature on the topic under investigation;
- Evidence of the ability to make critical use of published work and source materials;
- An appreciation of the relationship between the research topic and the wider field of knowledge;
- The ability to present the work at an appropriate level of literary quality.

Accordingly, the academic growing interest in Master Degree in Algeria lately with all the decision that provide a direct access to the level under the famous saying 'master to everyone' is in fact paradoxal to the ascending rate of students who drop out university without completing their research works due to the hindrances they face.

All of the abovementioned results instigated our interest in investigating the main challenges that prevented Master's students from writing a successful dissertation. Therefore, the study endeavour is meant to explore the complexities and challenges that the supervisees encounter in the writing phase of supervision process particularly at Ibn Khaldoun University of Tiaret with Master's students majoring in didactics. To this end, the following research question is generated: ***What challenges do the students of didactics, at the English Department - University of Tiaret - encounter in writing their Master's dissertations?***

Identifying the challenges will automatically lead to the examination of the factors that are believed to be responsible for the students' failure in writing the different parts of their dissertations. Knowing the reasons will help recommend a set of useful coping strategies and techniques that both students and teachers can adopt to overcome the challenges and facilitate the research writing process.

The studies that investigated graduate students' challenges in dissertation writing in various contexts outside of Algeria are not numerous (e.g., Ghana,

Nepal, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, China, Vietnam, Taiwan, Australia, and New Zealand). However, the studies that were undertaken in the Algerian context focused on students' difficulties in writing paragraphs and essays. This scarcity of literature triggered our interest in this research and oriented our attention towards exploring the challenges encountered by Master's students, from Tiaret University, in writing their dissertations. This study is delimited to the English Department at Tiaret University and the findings, conclusions and implications exclusively reflect the actual situation in this context. Therefore, our study is hoped to be a reference to other Algerian researchers who will investigate the same issue or any other related issues.

As argued earlier, academic literature has only limited research about dissertation writing process Master supervisees witness. Simply put, a dissertation is defined as a long academic paper that is submitted by Master's students at the end of the program (i.e., Master 2) in order to graduate and get an academic degree. In this paper, students clearly state the research problem, provide a detailed description of the research tools employed and the procedures followed to investigate the problem and finally report the research findings. According to Paltridge and Starfield (2007) Matser's dissertation is a written paper that should demonstrate the researcher's understanding of the main steps to conduct research, ability to do an independent work and skills to synthesize, analyze and critically evaluate ideas. Lovitts and Wert (2009) note that a dissertation is an academic document that examiners rely on to examine and evaluate quality of the research conducted by the student. That is, it shows them the extent to which the candidate is skilled, competent and qualified to be a successful and an effective member in the academic community. Moreover, a dissertation is considered as "a training document" (p.2) that provides the candidates with opportunities to develop their creativity, writing, research, critical thinking and problem-solving skills and prepares them to be experts in their field of research.

A bulk of research (Biklen& Casella, 2007; Evans et al., 2014; O'Hara et al., 2011; White, 2002) concur that a good dissertation should exhibit the following characteristics:

- **Good writing and clear academic format** which implies the correct use of mechanics and connectors as well as the inclusion of all the elements and referencing.

- **A thorough knowledge of the literature** which implies knowledge of the available literature and the ability of critically think about it.

- **Originality** which, according to Biklen and Casella (2007), "adds new information, provides an interesting perspective on a subject, proposes a new approach to a topic, offers a sophisticated analysis of an issue, presents rich descriptions of a group that has never been studied" (p.12).

- **Relevance to the context of existing knowledge** which means the bridge between the topic of interest and its theoretical background.

• **Researcher's critical and analytical thinking skills** According to White (2002), "a dissertation gives you a chance to show how good you really are. A dissertation is an excellent indicator of a student's true ability" (p.4)

Other features of a good dissertation, according to Evans et al. (2014) and Hart (1998), include:

- A clear and descriptive title that is informative of the content and focus of the dissertation.

- Clear research objectives and accurate definitions of key terms.

- Significant research problem.

- Clear relationship between theory and practice.

- Clear and detailed description of the research design and data collection and analysis procedures.

- Significant contribution of the study to development of knowledge in the area of interest in particular and the academic community in general.

- Well-developed conclusions based on the research findings and research framework.

- Acknowledgement of the study's weaknesses.

- Suggestions for future research on the basis of the study limitations.

2. Operational definitions

2.1 Dissertation: in this study, dissertation refers to a research project that is written and presented by the students at the end of the Master's program.

2.2 Dissertation writing: In this paper, dissertation writing is the process of composing text that fulfill the characteristics and purposes of each step of this process. These steps and elements must follow the organizational order:

1. Abstract
2. General introduction
3. Literature Review chapter
4. Methodology chapter
5. Results and discussion chapter
6. General conclusion

2.3 Challenges: In our study, this term refers to the difficulties/problems/issues particularly related to the schematic structure and content of the Master's dissertation.

3. Methodology

The issues in this section include study design, the population, sample as well as the sampling procedure, the research instruments, data analysis and discussion.

3.1 Study Design

The main objective of this study is to explore Master 2 students' challenges in dissertation writing. The research is, therefore, based on the exploratory mixed methods approach in which priority is given to the qualitative aspect

(predominant) over the quantitative strand (secondary). It is mixed because it involves collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data at the same time for the purpose of comparing and contrasting the results and triangulating them.

3.2 Population and Sampling

This study was carried out at the IbnKhaldoun University of Tiaret, with master 2 students at the English department. For the sake of the generalizability of the study outcomes, the researcher selected 40 Master studentsmajoring in Didactics and 04 supervisors, from the aforementioned university, using convenience sampling. This type of sampling, according to the researcher, was more convenient to the type of issue under investigation.

3.3 Instruments

In order to collect data for this research, two data collection instruments were used which are a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. These two tools were used because we believed that they would allow getting a large amount of data about the topic under discussion. In order to increase their validity and reliability, triangulation was used. McNeill and Chapman's words (2005) state that "triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods to cross-check and verify the reliability of a particular research tool and the validity of the data collected ... (p.23). This means simply that one can get more insights about what he is studying if he looks to them from different angles.

The questionnaire was used to gather data that provides insights about specific responses from respondents. It was piloted with four students, the piloting was important since it established the instrument's face validity and reliability, and to check and/or improve the items and/or the format. The questionnaire is composed of three questions, in the first and second the participants were required to specify their gender and age category respectively; the third was a table to fill in according to their background knowledge of the components of dissertations. It is worth mentioning that the data obtained from the two first questions (gender and group age) were irrelevant to this research, they were included just to encourage the respondents' participation in the study.

Whereas the two interviews were included to provide the informants with a chance to express themselves and say more about the topic under discussion and to check supervisors' perspective. According to Rubin and Rubin (2005), semi-structured interviews "allow depth to be achieved by providing the opportunity on the part of the interviewer to probe and expand the interviewee's responses" (cited in Alshenqeeti, 2014, p.40). Therefore, learners' semi-structured interview was used to complement the results obtained from the questionnaire and allow the participants to elaborate on their answers. It contains two questions aiming at getting an in-depth understanding particularly for **Q3** as it targets getting more insights and detailed descriptions for the challenges they face in each phase of dissertation writing process. On the other hand, 04 supervisors were interviewed

in an attempt to verify the data gathered from learners. It is worth mentioning that the supervisors included are teachers of writing techniques, dissertation writing, and research methodology, the choice of these modules in particular was made as an attempt to ask them also about their syllabi to know what students' have been introduced to.

3.4 Data analysis

The obtained data are presented, analyzed and interpreted in a consistent manner. The analysis process aimed to present data in an intelligible and interpretable form so as to pinpoint trends and relations in agreement with the research aims. In turn, these trends and relations would enable the researcher to shed light on the core issue, viz., challenges faced by Master 2 in the dissertation writing phase of the supervision process.

3.4.1 The questionnaire

Q1+ Q2: Gender + age group

Table 3.4.1.1: Participants' Gender and Age Group

Age group Gender	20 - 25	26 - 30	31 – 35	36 - 40	40+	Total + percentage
Males	11	01	02	01	03	18 (45%)
Females	20	00	00	00	02	22 (55%)
Total + percent age	31 (78%)	01 (2%)	02 (5%)	01 (2%)	05 (13%)	40 (100%)

As Table 3.4.1.1 reveals, the group of the participants of this study is not balanced in terms of gender distribution as there is a dominance of females (55%) over males (45%). The average age of most participants (78%) ranges between 20 and 25 years, while two students' age between 26 and 30 years, four students' ages are between 31 and 35, two students' ages are between 36 and 40, five students are more than 40 years old. As a reminder, the two previous questions about age and gender are just included as warming-up questions and did not serve any of our research objectives.

Q3: filling the table

Table 3.4.1.2 Participants' Answers of the Components of Each Part of the Dissertation

Part	Components	N	%
Abstract	1. Purpose, Method, Findings, conclusions.	13	33%
	2. Background, Purpose, Method, Findings,	09	22%

	conclusions and implications.	16	40%
	3. Purpose, Method, Findings.	02	05%
	4. Purpose, Questions, Hypotheses, method.		
General Introduction	1. Background, significance, questions, structure.	11	28%
		13	33%
	2. Background, rational, questions, hypotheses.	07	17%
	3. Background, objectives, questions, hypotheses.	09	22%
	4. Aims, Questions, Hypotheses, Concept definition.		
Literature Review	1. Reading, Comparing, Finding the gap.	11	28%
	2. Reading, Gap indicating, Synthesizing.	09	22%
	3. Reading, discussing the relationship between variables, Gap indicating, Synthesizing.	13	33%
	4. Reading, Comparing, Synthesizing.	07	17%
Methodology	1. Research design, Participants, Research tools	06	15%
	2. Population and sample, Research instruments, Data collection procedures.	08	20%
		14	35%
	3. Research methods, Data analysis and presentation.	12	30%
	4. Participants, Sample, Research tools and data presentation.		
Results and Discussion	1. Data presentation , analysis and interpretation	04	10%
		13	33%
	2. Discussion of results, Limitations and recommendations	17	43%
		05	12%
	3. Explanation of results, Limitations and recommendations	01	02%
	4. Results presentation, Results analysis, Results interpretation, providing solution.		
	5. Mentioning reasons, Mentioning consequences.		
	1. Restatement of the aims and questions, Summary of the main findings, Summary of chapters, Implications, Limitations.	14	35%
		04	10%

General Conclusion	2. Restatement of the aims and questions, Summary of the main findings, Implications, Recommendations.	06	15%
	3. Summary of the main results, Summary of the dissertation's chapters, Recommendations.	06	15%
		08	20%
	4. Restatement of aims and questions, Summary of chapters.	02	05%
	5. Summary of chapters, Summary of the main findings, Implications, Limitations, Recommendations.		
	6. Solutions		

This item relates to the abstract, it tries to find out whether students know the main parts (background/purpose, method, main findings and conclusions) that make up the dissertation abstract. Table 3.4.1.2 shows that there is a little agreement among the students regarding the content of the abstract. On the whole, 22 students (55%) know all the necessary parts. In more details, 09 of them (22%) are aware of the background of the topic which is optional. On the contrary, 16 students (40%) think that the abstract is composed of the three components: the purpose, the method, and the main findings and ignored the fourth part which is conclusions. 02 students (05%) know the purpose and the method but do not know the (background), the findings and the conclusions.

The purpose of the second item is to check whether the students were aware of the main parts that constitute the introductory section of the dissertation. The general introduction is made up of the background of the study, the problem statement, the research rationale/significance of the study, purpose of the study, research questions and/or hypotheses, definitions of key terms and structure of the dissertation. The results reveal that none of the participants is aware all the necessary elements, also; none of them know the problem statement. In particular 13 students (33%) believe that the general introduction contains only the background of the study, its rationale, research questions and hypotheses, whereas they discarded the problem statement, definitions of key terms and layout of the dissertation. 11 informants (28%) think that the general introduction is made up of the background of the study, its significance, structure of the dissertation and research questions and neglected the remaining elements. 09 supervisees (22%) confirm that there are only the purpose, research questions and hypotheses, add to this, only these participants mentioned concepts definition as part of the general introduction. The rest of the informants who are 07 (17%) consider the background, the objectives and research questions and hypotheses the essential elements constituting the general introduction.

The literature review should involve the following parts: significance of the topic, review of related theories and studies, synthesis of knowledge claims (showing relationship between ideas), theoretical position/framework, evaluation of previous studies' strengths and weaknesses, and gap identification. This item's aim is to check whether the participant actually know how to review the literature. As shown in the table, almost all of these parts are referred to in the respondents' answers, but none of the students stated them altogether in one answer. Rather, 13 (33%) see that reading, discussing the relationship between variables, gap indicating and synthesizing are the main skills that make up the literature review section. The remaining participants (67%) are aware of three options only. To be specific, 11 of them (28%) believe that reading, comparing and gap spotting are the main components, 09 (22%) consider reading, gap indicating and synthesizing, whereas 07 (17%) consider reading, comparing and synthesizing as the crucial parts of literature review section.

The method chapter needs the following elements to be complete: research design, population and sample, data collection instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis methods and data analysis procedures. The aim of this question, therefore, was to discover the extent to which students were aware of these main parts/sections. The table reveals that two components which are data analysis methods and data analysis procedures are not mentioned in all the informants' answers. 26 (65%) include in this section some irrelevant parts namely data presentation and discussion which particularly belong to the discussion section. The remaining sections, on the other hand, are present in some answers and absent in others. In further details, 20 participants (50%) mentioned research design/method, 20 participants (50%) mentioned population, sample and research tools and only 08 (15%) consider the data collection procedures as an important part.

The results chapter is composed of two main parts: data presentation and data analysis. While the main components that make up the discussion section are: restating the main findings, commenting on the findings through interpreting, comparing them with the literature and showing their significance. As indicates the table, the participants do not make the difference between the two. In particular, only one student see mentioning reasons and consequences which is not quite true while the majority of students (75%) mentioned limitations and recommendations which is irrelevant and belongs to the general conclusion section. 09 informants (22%) think that this section should contain data presentation, analysis and interpretation.

The general conclusion is made up of the following parts: restatement of the problem, restatement of research objectives and questions, summary of the main findings, pedagogical implications, limitations, and recommendations for further research. Except the restatement of the problem, all the other parts are present in the students' answers, yet no student mentioned them altogether in

one answer. Furthermore, for 26 participants (65%) the summary of the chapters is an important element and for 02 (5%) of them solutions need to be mentioned. However, both are irrelevant parts. Thus, according to the results, 14 supervisees (35%) believe that restatement of the aims and questions, summary of the main findings, summary of chapters, implications, limitations are the main components. 04 students (10%) consider the restatement of the aims and questions, summary of the main findings, implications, recommendations. 06 Master students (15%) believe that summary of the main results, summary of the dissertation's chapters, recommendations are what make up the aforementioned section. Also, 06 Master students (15%) believe that restatement of aims and questions, summary of chapters are the main elements and 08 students (20%) see summary of chapters, summary of the main findings, implications, limitations and recommendations the components of the general conclusion.

3.4.2 Supervisees' semi-structured interview

The participants were asked to clarify and state explicitly which parts they found the most challenging for them. The informants unanimously agree upon the fact that they are struggling to write their dissertations as a whole. In particular, they claim that they were not well informed about the main parts that should be included in each component of the dissertations which is ambiguous and confusing. They also experience difficulty in writing a condensed account of chapters. They justify this with the fact that they had not been well informed by methodology teachers not well equipped with dissertation writing skills, techniques and tools. They argue that the majority of the encountered difficulties primarily stem from their unfamiliarity with the 'how to include the content of each part' not with what the content of each part is'.

Furthermore, evaluating, summarizing and paraphrasing were among the main issues cited by the great majority of the study's interviewees, they reported that it was difficult to grasp the meaning of the data discussed by the original author(s) and judge its relevance to their research topics. Thus, they fail to write an accurate summary which should have involved a restatement of those ideas using their own style and end-up copying and pasting words as they appeared in the original texts in order to make sure that meaning is effectively conveyed. This latter leads to another important issue which is plagiarism, the lack of sufficient knowledge about referencing and citation leads them to pretend that the ideas are theirs. Once again, they express discontent towards their lack of training, they pinpoint that they dealt with theoretical concepts (such as, definitions, characteristics, types and purposes), yet they do not practice, they do not know how to transfer what they learn from theory and realize it in real world practice. On the same line of thought, Mapolisa and Mafa (2012) argue that transition from theory to practice by its nature is a challenging task for students regardless their level. So it is logical for us to think that it would be even more challenging to Master students who are first time researchers.

Interviewees admitted unanimously that their proficiency in English language is low, despite the fact that they lack practice, they attest that even if they practiced they would still face problems in writing their dissertations. Indeed, in the interview it has been noticed that they lack the academic style; they lack terminology and have a limited amount of vocabulary items.

3.4.3 Supervisors' semi-structured interview

Supervisors were asked to respond to three main questions adapted from the learners' questionnaire and interview to cross-check their findings. The first question aims at knowing the dissertations' main challenging components from teachers' perspective. The participants unanimously attest that their supervisees face flagrant problems in the literature review section and methodology.

The following question's aim is to know whether their supervisees can divide each component into its smallest elements. Three participants (75%) confirm that their students face hindrances in identifying the gap in the literature, they argue that their supervisees cannot spot what has not been tackled and build on what is already tackled. Three participants (75%) have noticed that their students are unable to carry out all the applied part; they design and construct tools then they do not know how to proceed. They do not know the necessary procedure of gathering data, how to present it in a written form and how to interpret the results. One teacher believes that his supervisees do not know how to give meaning to the findings; they cannot put their personal touch as researchers on the topic.

The final question requires the supervisors to provide the reasons because of which their supervisees encounter challenges in dissertation writing. The participants unanimously argue for more attention to the practical side of the modules. They think that times allocated are barely enough for the theoretical knowledge and they need more time to apply what has been introduced. One teacher also stresses the importance of co-ordination between teachers of writing techniques, documentary research, dissertation writing and research methodology as they should be complementary.

3.5 Discussion

According to the data gathering tools' findings, students and teachers opinions fall on the same line of thoughts majorly; still they are contradictory in some situation. Graduate students' major problem is their lack of knowledge of what goes into each section of the dissertation. Although information on writing an abstract was covered as confirmed by the teachers and their syllabi, some supervisees reported that they were almost unfamiliar with the key components of the significant elements of dissertation. It is hypothesized that they copied or imitated what they saw in the samples provided in the classroom without thoroughly grasping its composition or organizational structure. This result cannot be discussed in relation to previous works as, to our knowledge; studies on the abstract writing issues are not available. Instead, all the studies were mainly

concerned with the study of format and rhetorical organization of the abstract in different disciplines.

Regarding the general introduction, the results obtained from the instruments confirmed the difficulty of writing this section (Bunton, 2002; Nygaard, 2015) and indicated that the majority of students faced difficulties in writing three sub-components of the introduction: the background of the study, its rational and the statement of the problem. The research tools revealed that the students were unable to establish clear and relevant context for their research and failed to make target audience familiar with it through defining peculiar terminology and by reference to a few relevant studies. On the same line of thought, the majority of students cannot write an accurate, understandable and well-evidenced description of the issue. Additionally, many respondents expressed the difficulty of formulating a convincing rationale that justified the significance and demonstrated how their studies would help fill in the gap(s) in previous studies.

As for the literature review chapter, the findings of this study confirmed the widely held belief in earlier literature that it is the most challenging section to write for a dissertation (Cooley & Lewkowicz, 2003; Mathews & Kostellis, 2011; Oliver, 2012; Shaw, 1991; Swales & Feak, 2000). The respondents' ignorance of what constitutes the literature review was prevalent, all the respondents complained about their level in comparison to what is expected from them. However, the supervisors confirmed by evidence that they extensively explained and thoroughly clarified what is a review of literature and what are its main components.

Despite being seen as the easiest chapter to write, students' lack of understanding of the content of the methodology chapter was one of the most common difficulties they encountered, according to the results of the instruments used.

As far as the results and discussion chapter is concerned, the participants came to a close consensus that it was the second most challenging to write after the literature review. The fact that the majority of the participants alluded to specific components that were unrelated to certain parts of this section showed that their lack of knowledge and unfamiliarity with the chapter's content.

Results indicated that the general conclusion was primarily devoted to providing a general summary of the whole dissertation without considering the other important functions served by this section such as showing significance of the findings, offering pedagogic implications, acknowledging limitations and recommending further research on the topic (Bitchener, 2009; Chen & Kuo, 2012; Furseth & Everett, 2013; Ruyin & Allison, 2003; Thomas, 2009).

The students' lack of acquaintance with the dissertation's elements was not their only problem; inadequate summarizing and paraphrasing were also among the most remarkable challenges identified though they have been familiarized

with them in writing techniques module. The majority of students were unable to create a condensed account of the text key points and rephrase ideas in their own words. The students reported that it was a difficult task establish a logical connection between ideas, paragraphs and sections and create a smooth flow of thought.

In a nutshell, merging data from the different instruments revealed three main common themes: content/structure related challenges, writing tools related challenges: summarizing, paraphrasing and synthesizing issues, and low language proficiency. The aforementioned challenges are mainly attributed to: lack of practice in academic writing and research skills classes, low language proficiency and a lack of moral values from the students and responsibility beyond the classroom setting.

4. Recommendations and Limitations

On the basis of these results, a set of recommendations are offered. The study argues for more attention to developing students' research and dissertation writing by allocating more time for practice so that students in general and supervisees in particular get acquainted with the necessary knowledge as the parts of dissertation, the differences among them and the components of each part. Organising training workshops on dissertation writing, research methodology and supervision is also a good strategy that can identify the gap between theory and practice then bridge it; this can be achieved through incorporating the use of dissertations exemplars in writing classes.

Despite our efforts to produce the best possible article, our study has, by no means, inevitable limitations and shortcomings which should be acknowledged. The first limitation concerns the lack of previous studies relevant to our research topic which in turn made the discussion of the study's findings challenging for the researcher. Most of the previous studies we found were about thesis writing challenges faced by postgraduate students (Ph.D.). Hence, we suggest that future genre studies should consider this shortcoming and thoroughly examine this critical issue.

Another limitation relates to the small sample size and the limited context. It is unfortunate that the opinions and perspectives expressed by the exiguous number of participants who took part in our research could not be representatives of Algerian students in other contexts as our study was limited to Tiaret University context. Thus, we believe that replicating this study and including more students and even teachers from several Algerian universities will allow the researchers to achieve generalizability, widen the scope of the findings and get more valid and firm conclusions.

One last limitation is the fact that our study only focused on the challenges experienced by Master's students in relation to the schematic structure of the dissertation and methodological issues, yet other challenges related to the students involved in the investigation, whose characteristics in terms of age and

motivation to study English may have affected the results. Since none of these variables, amongst other important ones, such as personality types and socio-cultural context were examined to see how these affect students and may have an impact on the findings. Therefore, it is our hope that this exploratory research will lay the foundation for future studies to investigate these challenges.

5. CONCLUSION

This paper set out to explore the challenges Master Supervisees' of English Section at IbnKhaldoun University of Tiaret encounter during the dissertation writing phase of the supervision process. From data analysis and interpretation, it has been concluded also that Master supervisees' in the department of English at IbnKhaldoun University of Tiaret as participants lacked reformulation tools, demonstrated issues related to language proficiency and writing skill and lacked a common writing framework and guidelines. On the basis of these results, a number of pedagogical implications are offered for further future research. The study argues for more attention to developing students' research writing by practicing.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Supervisees' questionnaire

Dear students,

This questionnaire is part of a research project which aims at exploring Master 2 students challenges in dissertation writing. I would be very grateful if you spare a few minutes to fill in this questionnaire. Please tick the correct answer then fill in this table. Be assured that your answers will be kept confidential and your identity will remain anonymous. Your participation will be of great help to me. If you have any question about this study, please feel welcome to ask me. Thank you very much for your collaboration. 😊

Tick the correct answer

1) Gender:

☐

malefemale ☐

2) Age group

20 – 25 ☐

☐
☐

36 – 40 ☐

☐

3) Fill in the following table

Part	Components
Abstract	
General Introduction	
Literature Review	
Methodology	
Results and Discussion	
General Conclusion	

Appendix B: Supervisees' Interview

Dear student,

Thank you for participating in this study. As previously stated, the aim of this study is to explore Master 2 students' challenges in dissertation writing. During the interview, we will discuss your experience with the dissertation writing process, the challenges that you encountered while writing your master's dissertation and any other possible feedback related to this issue. Please remember that there is no right or wrong answer and everything you say will be very important to me and contribute to reaching the objectives of this study.

If you have any question before we start the interview, please do not hesitate. 😊

1. In which components of the dissertation exactly you face challenges while writing?
2. Can you specify which sub-elements of each part you find difficult to write?