ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE RESEARCH CULTURE OF ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY: THE CASE OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (TEFL) PHD PROGRAM



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ABSTRACT

An Investigation into the Research Culture of Addis Ababa University: The case of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) PhD Program

Zewdu Emiru

Addis Ababa University, 2012

This study aimed at investigating the research culture of the Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) PhD program of Addis Ababa University. It also aimed at identifying factors contributing to this culture. Mixed methods approach was employed for the study, which is mainly qualitative, but also uses quantitative techniques for triangulation purposes. The study participants were 40 TEFL PhD students of the university selected using stratified random sampling technique and 16 EFL educators of the university selected using comprehensive sampling technique. The qualitative data was collected using interviews held with five EFL Educators and five TEFL PhD candidates; focus group discussions with 12 PhD candidates; and document review of relevant policy documents and research guidelines of the University. The quantitative data was drawn using two types of questionnaires—one type administered to 16 EFL educators of the university and the other to 40 TEFL PhD candidates; and a content analysis of titles of ongoing TEFL PhD researches and of dissertations done at the department in the years 1993–2010 and available at the library. While a thematic content analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data, percentages were used to analyze the quantitative data.

The study found out that even though official documents of the university, TEFL PhD candidates and their guides state that EFL research, including PhD researches should serve problem-solving purposes, little or no result gets into actual use. And PhD students' knowing of this reality is found to be discouraging that many feel also their dissertations will remain on shelf, and thus they feel they do the research mainly for fulfillment. Selection of titles for a PhD research was found to focus on what can be done just for fulfillment rather than what pressing problems can be solved. Most of the PhD researches from 1993–2010 and also the ongoing ones concentrate around certain themes, contexts, and employed almost similar methods. Mixed results were found regarding supervision of PhD researches, while advisors claim that they give critical feedback and allot adequate time for discussion with their advisees, advisees reflected a range of concerns in relation to the quality and process of supervision, i.e. the feedback and overall coaching was found to be unsatisfactory in terms of depth and breadth, and the advisor-advisee relationships were characterized quite unfriendly, and thus affecting advisees commitments and the quality of their researches. It was also found that seminar and defense sessions are becoming venues just for evaluative reflections from the side of examiners or

facilitators and defensive stances from presenters; audiences are usually left passive. As such, inputs expected from such sessions are very limited, as the sessions do not encourage open and genuine academic debates between and/or among the presenters, examiners and audiences. Furthermore, limitation on the side of the department in terms of controlling and monitoring PhD research topics and research processes, creating network of thematic research groups, and facilitating more collegial environments has been found to result in duplications of work on similar titles by researchers who don't even know each other. While advisory and teaching workload compounded to lack of rewards, avenues, and incentives limit educators' engagement in research activities, inadequate supervision, financial constraints, and more of evaluative rather than deductive attitudes were found to affect PhD researches. What is more, research results, whatever the quality, are not disseminated and remain on shelves. This in turn is found to discourage both the teachers and PhD students to engage in problem-solving researches. All these findings attest that the research culture of the department is weak and needs revamping.

The findings have implications for action or practice, policy and research. In terms of practice, the department should institute mechanism and revitalize efforts towards making researches more problem-solving and useable. These include means of control and monitoring of PhD research areas, improving advisor-advisee relationships, creating collegial environments, and the like. The university at large should design and enforce means of embedding dissemination with the research itself starting from initiation of researches. It should also create more avenues where researchers can share their findings, and also create appropriate reward and incentive mechanism to encourage researchers.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAU	Addis Ababa University
AR	Action Research
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
E.C	Ethiopian Calendar
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EGSECE	Ethiopian General Secondary Education Certificate Examination
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
G.C	Gregorian Calendar
HEIs	Higher Education Institutions
HDP	Higher Diploma Program
NEA	National Examinations Assessment
SNNP	Southern Nations Nationalities and Peoples
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TGE	Transitional Government of Ethiopia
TDP	Teacher Development Program

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

In recent years, one of the prominent changes observed in general education including the area of language teaching is the change in the understanding that knowledge is something that is constructed by a learner rather than received (Zeichner and Liston, 1996). This change, which has been introduced by the theory of constructivism, has predominantly changed the role of language teachers from providers of knowledge to creators of a situation where knowledge creation by language learners is possible (Holzer, 1994). In this regard, teachers are recognized as active generators of contextualized knowledge necessary to be effective in their teaching practice. This, according to Wallace (1991), requires language teachers to continuously revise their prior knowledge gained from earlier exposures in a way that fits current classroom realities. They do this through an active enquiry into and reflection on their practices and whatever is involved in the whole process. This engagement of language teachers in the task of enquiry and investigations is expected to enable them to construct knowledge that is necessary to help language learners of diverse needs and styles (McDonough & McDonough, 1990; Burns, 1999).

Continuous revision of knowledge through research has a very special role for teachers who teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL) since they teach the language in the presence of a number of contextually constraining factors like social, cultural, and environmental variables. Kramsch (1993) indicates that due to these factors, proposed methodological innovations that are 'imported' from countries where the language is used as the first or second language are mostly found contextually inappropriate as they fail to address the needs of learners in which the learning takes place. For this writer, it is more the role of EFL teachers to think of ways as to how the proposed innovations can be adapted to fit the needs of language learners in their contexts. It is through enquiry, research and practice that these teachers can do this. Thus, if EFL teachers want to teach the language

effectively, they have to construct contextual knowledge necessary to at least reduce the impact of these factors and meet the indigenous learning needs of the students.

The need for EFL teachers to engage in the process of inquiry and investigations has also been echoed in the recent notion of 'continuous professional development'. According to Freeman and Johnson (1998), EFL teachers can develop their own theories of teaching and strategies relevant to the actual context if they are engaged in continuous professional development activities which involve inquiry and reflection. This inquiry, as Ferraro (2000) notes, ranges from teachers' classroom inquiry through action research to engagement in other large scale academic researches. According to Freeman (1998), this involvement in some inquiry and research projects offers teachers the opportunity to actively reflect on an aspect of their work in a context-relevant and focused way. This makes research another responsibility of teachers to make informed decisions in their practices so that they can teach the language effectively.

If research has this much contribution in enabling/empowering EFL teachers to teach the language effectively, undoubtedly EFL teachers teaching at different levels should engage in researching EFL teaching. However, it is possible to argue that EFL teachers who teach the language at higher institutions, especially at teacher education institutions, should take this responsibility more seriously.

Firstly, when these EFL teachers are engaged in real problem- solving researches, they can make their teaching evidence-based (Allwright and Bailey, 1991). This will in turn have immense contribution in preparing effective EFL teachers who will reach a wider community of learners in primary and secondary schools. Secondly, engagement in research will help higher institution EFL teachers to develop researching skills so that they can do more problem-solving researches and in turn make research part of their professional practice (Hiep, 2006). It is when these higher institution teachers have the skill of researching and asking the right questions for

research that they can teach the would-be EFL language teachers about research in general and teacher and/or action research in particular. Finally, contextually relevant researches done at this level, if communicated and used, can inform the practice of not only university teachers but also of others involved, directly or indirectly, in the overall system of EFL education, thus positively affecting teachers teaching at lower levels, material designers, curriculum writers, policy makers (Bridges, 2009). The relevant question here is, 'what kind of research culture can make these EFL professionals of HEIs do research that can have such a wider impact?'

Very recently, Ethiopian higher institution EFL teachers are given different professional development opportunities including studying in the MA, PhD and Higher Diploma Programs (HDP) at different institutions as part of the package of reforms in the overall system of teacher education. Moreover, there is much pressure in the reform agenda to enable teachers do more researches as part of their professional development and to improve their practice by linking their teaching to research; and publishing and disseminating their research results in different journals as well as presenting on seminars and workshops (FDRE, 2003).

Despite these opportunities, there are complaints and concerns that research done by Ethiopian HEI academics is not serving the purpose of solving contextual problems in education. For example, Tsegaye (2000) argues that the apparent marginalization of the research activities (of the staff of AAU) from teaching has led to the persistence of educational problems. Related concerns have also been expressed in government policy documents (e.g. TGE, 1994). According to these sources, education in Ethiopia, including EFL, has problem of quality and relevance. Part of the reason for these problems has been attributed to the very limited contribution of researches done especially at HEIs which, according to Desalegn (2006), is the result of the absence of effective research culture.

Hence, for research done at Ethiopian HEIs by EFL professionals to serve the purpose of improving the quality of teaching-learning, primarily at

universities, and ultimately bring about change in the overall system of EFL education at different levels, there will be a culture of doing contextually relevant and problem solving EFL research at universities. This will be more so in the case of the PhD program for EFL professionals who are currently studying in this program are expected to produce many more problem-solving EFL professionals in Ethiopian HEIs.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In Ethiopia, knowledge of English language is becoming the key for the success of students studying in different fields. This is because, it is used as a medium of instruction "from grade 9, except for Addis Ababa and Gambela where it begins at grade 7 and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP) region which recently began to offer different subjects in English starting from grade 5" (Abiy, 2005:33). Beyond the instructional purposes, communicative function of the language is becoming more important, especially at this time of 'globalization and information technology' which, according to Burns (1999), is increasingly requiring the skills of using English for practical purposes.

The fact that English is taught as a foreign language in Ethiopia as in many other countries makes the effectiveness of its teaching to be highly affected by different contextual factors. In this regard, Alemu (2004) points out that EFL teaching in Ethiopia is surrounded by problems including unsuitability of methodologies to classroom realities, lack of trained teachers, and the top-down nature of the policy that worsens the situation.

Although effectiveness, especially in the context of teaching, is relative, one important measure of effectiveness in EFL teaching is the proficiency level of the students who pass through the process (Darling- Hammond, 2000). When EFL teaching in Ethiopia is seen in terms of this measure, there are evidences that its quality is deteriorating in recent years. A national assessment made on EGSECE (Ethiopian General Secondary Education Certificate Examination), for example, indicated poor achievement of students in English and other subjects (NEA, 2007). Amare (2009) reported

that some studies of EGSECE achievement of students in five preparatory schools in Tigray reported poor performance of students in English language and mathematics. Similar findings have also been reported by Tesema (2009).

Currently, many EFL teachers of HEIs in Ethiopian are complaining that preparatory graduates lack the required command of English even to express themselves, by the time they start their tertiary studies. Concerning this issue, Solomon (2006) notes that the expansion of higher education in Ethiopia has opened the road for less affluent students to get into the system. This complaint was reflected also in four secondary schools the researcher observed in Amhara Region where EFL teachers of the schools expressed that recent graduates who teach EFL at these schools lack the competence to provide their students with the necessary language skills (Zewdu, 2007).

This, as experience[1] shows, seems to have recently come to be an issue of dissatisfaction where university teachers and secondary school EFL teachers are blaming one another as being the cause for students' low performance in the English language and thus for decline in the quality of EFL education. University teachers complain that new graduates of preparatory schools were not exposed to practicing the necessary English language skills at high school and these students go to universities without the required level of English language proficiency to start with. High school teachers, especially experienced ones, on the other hand blame university teachers that they are recently producing inefficient EFL graduates who lack both the pedagogical and content knowledge of the language necessary to teach the language effectively at schools.

---

[1] *This debate has been evident when my colleagues and I were supervising prospective graduates of English department of Bahir Dar University while they were in their practicum course (in 2005 & 2006) in schools found in three towns nearby Bahir Dar and when I was supervising school placement activities of Higher Diploma Program/HDP/ candidates at different schools in Bahir Dar (in 2006).*

No matter which side is responsible for the decline, these circumstances and the observations made in local studies mentioned earlier could be taken as evidences for the problems of EFL teaching in Ethiopia at different levels.

What is more, after years of research in the area of EFL in Ethiopia, for example, regarding how to apply CLT, different people and institutions (e.g. Alemu, 2004; USAID, 2006) reflect that many EFL teachers use the traditional methods in EFL classrooms. One important observation is that, although much research is presumably done on such issues which will ultimately lead to the improvement of the quality of EFL education in Ethiopia, the situation does not seem to change. This may mean that, the recommendations suggested by researchers (especially in graduate programs) as expressions of the need for change towards better handling of EFL classrooms, writing textbooks, designing curriculum, etc. are made simply as academic requirements (Befekadu, 2000). This raises the question as to whether future researchers should keep on doing research on similar issues or turn the focus to asking and answering the question, 'why what is already known is not helping make a difference?'

Hence, on the basis of the constructivist theoretical rationales explained in the background section regarding the role EFL research can play in improving EFL, the researcher argues that EFL research done by Ethiopian higher institutions should have a considerable role to redress the current problems of EFL teaching in Ethiopia. Because it is when more is known about how contextual problems are affecting the teaching- learning process that more can be done to adjust to these problematic situations (Hiep, 2006).

According to Freeman and Johnson (1998), as EFL teachers teach the language in different and more difficult situations than where English is taught as a first or second language, the need to develop contextual knowledge through inquiry and investigations into whatever is involved in the teaching-learning process appears evident. When these EFL researches are done at higher institutions by teacher educators, they will hopefully have a multiplier effect of improving the quality of their teaching, primarily at

universities and ultimately bringing about change in the overall system of EFL education at different levels (Bridges, 2009). This can happen when there is a research culture at higher institutions where EFL professionals engage in real problem solving and contextually relevant research undertakings with broad-based impacts. Moreover, the research culture should enable these professionals to transfer the research skills and make use of the skills in making research part of their future teaching task and pass it onto others through their teaching.

Literature also shows that the traditional 'top-down model' of educational research, where expert/non-teacher researchers propose solutions to educational problems and the teacher implements with fidelity, have not impacted on practice (Rubdy, 2008). Using the top-down model, researchers very often ask and answer questions that may not help practitioners deal with day-to-day problems in their specific contexts (Crookes, 1993). However, as far as the Teacher Development Program (TDP) of Ethiopian HEIs is concerned, since EFL teacher educators are expected to engage in research activities either in parallel to their teaching task or in studying in the graduate programs, they are both practitioners and researchers. This would provide EFL teachers with the opportunity to address issues relevant to the EFL education and their teaching practices.

Hence, the question is, 'if issues relevant to Ethiopian EFL education are addressed in researches, why is it not still possible to improve the practice of EFL teaching in Ethiopia?' Why doesn't the research experience help graduates to do more research that helps them develop their professional competence? These questions may get satisfying answers when the research culture of EFL professionals at HEIs is investigated.

In the Ethiopian context, there are few studies done on problems of research at higher institutions (e.g. Taye, 1993; Adane, 2000; Befekadu, 2000; Derebssa, 2000; Firdisa, 2000; Tsegaye, 2000). These studies revealed that research at higher institutions in general, is surrounded by a number of problems, one of which is inappropriate research culture. They also

indicated that these problems have made research a separate and even a competitive, rather than a complementary, task to teachers' teaching responsibility.

Since the focus of these studies has mainly been on identifying factors affecting research engagement of HEI academics in the wider area of education, the research culture of HEIs, specifically in the context of EFL, appears to be not adequately investigated.

Moreover, while it is currently understood that graduate programs are key in the production of professionals who are expected to solve, and help others solve, the problems of the country through relevant investigations (FDRE, 2003), a relative neglect of the question of how these subjects are developing this research skill (and of the research culture at large) is a puzzling paradox.

It is true that the overall system of higher education in Ethiopia has recently undergone major changes including the development of teachers and the role of HEIs (FDRE, 2003) which will potentially have some impact on the prevailing research culture of university academics in general and the EFL professionals in particular. In this case, even though Taye (1993), Adane (2000), Befekadu (2000), Derebssa (2000), Firdisa (2000), and Tsegaye (2000) have assessed the problems of HEI research that were prevalent in Ethiopia before 2000, they haven't captured the recent picture.

This study, therefore, attempts to explore the research culture of the TEFL PhD program of Addis Ababa University and identify the factors behind this culture.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

1.3.1. General Objective

The general objective of this study is to avail evidences that would be useful for improving the quality and usability of future EFL researches for improving EFL teaching-learning (the practice).

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

Specifically, this research aims to:

1. Determine the place official documents of the University accord to research by graduate students and academics of AAU.
2. Identify whether there are gaps between what is stipulated in these documents about graduate research and research by the academics at the university on the one hand and the actual practice on another,
3. Explore what research contexts, topics and methodologies are given more focus in the PhD researches done and being done in the TEFL PhD program,
4. Explore the beliefs of TEFL PhD students and EFL teacher educators of AAU regarding the purposes of EFL research including the PhD research.
5. Look into how these EFL professionals conduct EFL researches right from initiation through presentation,
6. Identify whether or not TEFL PhD students and EFL educators of AAU disseminate their research outputs, and if they do, how they disseminate it,
7. Look into how supervision is practiced in the TEFL PhD program,
8. Identify the factors contributing to this culture of research in the TEFL PhD program.

1.4. Research Questions

1.4.1. Basic Research Question

The basic research question this study seeks to answer is:

What kind of research culture prevails in the TEFL PhD program of Addis Ababa University from the perspectives of what is stipulated about researches in the program as well as in the university at large? And what factors are contributing to this culture?

1.4.2. Specific Research Questions

The study tries to seek answers to the following specific questions:

1. What place do official documents of the university accord to research by graduate students and academics of AAU?
2. Are there gaps between what is stipulated about graduate research and research by the university academics on the one hand and the actual practice on the other hand?
3. What research trends are observed in TEFL PhD researches done and being done in the program in terms of research contexts, topics and methodologies?
4. What do TEFL PhD students and EFL educators of Addis Ababa University believe to be the purposes of EFL research including the PhD research?
5. How do these EFL professionals conduct EFL researches right from initiation through presentation?
6. Do these EFL professionals disseminate their research results? If 'yes', how?
7. How is supervision practiced at the TEFL PhD program of AAU?
8. What are the factors that contribute to the prevailing culture of research at the TEFL PhD program of AAU?

1.5. Significance of the Study

The researcher believes that the results of this study would have the following contributions:

1. It would serve as a good source of information for Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) and EFL teachers at HEIs regarding the current EFL research culture and the factors that affect EFL teachers' knowledge creation in the ongoing professional development programs. This understanding would in turn help these institutions to devise a more productive system that enables EFL teachers to enter into a more coordinated research environment.

2. It would also help graduate programs and research institutions to devise a system in which the institutional, departmental and personal factors would have a more productive relationship in the overall indigenous knowledge creation and utilization.

3. Furthermore, it may inform policy and decision-makers to design a system where local knowledge creation by higher institution teachers would have a more informative role in the overall education policy, curriculum development and practice of EFL teachers in Ethiopia.

4. It would also serve as a source of information for other researchers and students.

1.6. Scope of the Study

Since the main purpose of this study is investigating the research culture of the TEFL PhD program of Addis Ababa University,

1. It is delimited to TEFL PhD candidates who are currently studying in the graduate program of Addis Ababa University and EFL teacher educators of the university who are teaching in the graduate program and are supervising the research activities of these candidates;

2. It focuses on the research culture as it occurs in Addis Ababa University. Hence, it may not be generalizable to other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) of the country.

1.7. Limitations of the Study

This study had some limitations. Firstly, since TEFL PhD candidates were not found in one place at the time of the questionnaire data collection, it was difficult to reach as many of them as the researcher wanted. Hence, their number was limited to thirty-five. Moreover, since some of the EFL educators participated in the pilot study and some others started advising TEFL PhD candidates recently, they were not considered in the main study. This has limited the number of EFL educators, who participated in the main study, to only sixteen. However, since the study draws more on the qualitative data

collected through other instruments, the quantitative information taken from these subjects would not affect the findings of the study. Moreover, since the purpose of the study is to understand a particular phenomenon rather than to generalize it to a wider population, its results would not be affected by the size of the samples.

1.8. Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters. Followed by an overall introduction, the Second Chapter provides the conceptual framework the present study draws on. The Third Chapter reviews relevant literature and provides a theoretical rationale for the study. The Fourth Chapter is on methodology where participants of the study, instruments of data collection, procedures of data collection and analyses employed in this study are discussed. This chapter also discusses the pilot study conducted and the major insights gained from the study which helped the researcher to make improvements to the instruments and procedures used in the main study. The Fifth Chapter contains the main study data analyses, findings and discussions. The last chapter of the thesis provides the summary, conclusions, recommendations and implications for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Introduction

This chapter will begin by the conceptual clarification of 'research culture' in the context of this study. This will be followed by a discussion of the theory of constructivism which explains the process of learning that today's professional language teachers are expected to pass through. Finally, the chapter will explain the social constructivist model developed by Williams and Burden (1997), which provides a basic framework for the present study.

2.2. Conceptual Clarification of Research Culture

As the term 'culture' by itself is broad in meaning, it seems difficult to find an entirely satisfactory definition for what we refer 'research culture' in this study. Presenting conceptual clarification of research culture in the context of this study is therefore important.

According to Cheetham (2007), research culture can be described well by first explaining the terms 'research' and 'culture' separately. In his explanation, research is a "creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge ... and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications" and culture generally refers to "patterns of human activity and the symbolic structures that give such activity significance" (Cheetham, 2007:4). Hence, on the basis of these explanations, research culture in a university is defined as "the cultural structure based around the behavior of the staff and students that allows us to generate and transfer the knowledge gained through this systematic process (research) to our students and to the community" (Cheetham, 2007:5). In this definition, research culture is understood as the cultural structure that characterizes how research is done by both the faculty and students (particularly graduate) so that its output (knowledge) is used to inform and influence the teaching-learning in the institutions and to be of some help to the outside community.

CARLA (2010: 1) defines the concept 'culture' as, "the shared patterns of behaviors and interactions...affective understandings that are learned through a process of socialization." This definition implies that members of a cultural group share these patterns when they perform activities. When this activity is seen in terms of research, people doing the research share the stated patterns and these patterns are in turn learned through the social interaction of these individuals.

A richer explanation of 'research culture' is provided by Hill (1999). He describes the concept 'research culture' in terms of the cultural elements reflected in research processes. He notes:

> *Research culture reflects the values, ideals and beliefs about research within the organization. They, in turn, are reflected in the research behaviors, research actions and research symbols of the organization. Just as the "teaching culture" of the institution is found in the teaching values and styles, and the "management culture" found in the managerial values and styles then the "research culture" would reflect the research values and styles (Hill, 1999:2).*

In this explanation, research culture is understood as the research practices of members of the cultural group as determined by the values and beliefs that members have about research. Hence, the questions of 'how the research is done and why' are central in describing the research culture.

From these two explanations, it is possible to draw two important characteristics of research culture:

1) Research culture at institutions is a group phenomenon. Hill (1999) strengthens this point by saying that one of the common purposes of developing a research culture is creating a situation where research becomes an activity of 'interconnected colleagues.' For Hill, the development of a collaborative research spirit among colleagues and/or departments is one of

the different indicators of a developed research culture as opposed to individuals doing it on their own.

2) Research culture is a learned process. In this case, one can see how this learning occurs through interactions where the learning comes from what Hill (1999) identifies as 'significant others'/ perhaps role models through socialization. These significant others in the context of graduate research are research supervisors who guide students.

Hence, in the description of the research culture at the TEFL PhD program of AAU, it will be reasonable to consider how both TEFL PhD students and their supervisors do EFL research as members of a cultural group and why they do it as well as the kind of socialization that goes on between the two parties. Research culture in the context of this study, therefore, refers to the underlying causes and practices of EFL research by these subjects- along the continuum of research (problem identification, doing the research, and dissemination of results).

2.3. Theory of Constructivism

Unlike the traditional view which takes learning as the accumulation of facts or development of skills, the fundamental principle upheld by the theory of constructivism is that individuals learn by actively involving in the construction of personal meaning (Williams and Burden, 1997). Based on this central premise, the theory has introduced the view that knowledge is something that is constructed by learners rather than received (Zeichner and Liston 1996; Murphy, 1997). This change has had a considerable impact on education in general and the field of language teaching in particular.

In the field of language education, this change has clear implications both for language learners and the teacher. On the one hand, in the process of language learning, students will actively construct knowledge, connect it to their previous experience and make it their own on the basis of their own interpretations; on the other, the teacher is the creator of a situation where this knowledge creation by language learners is possible (Brooks & Brooks,

1999). The fact that there is no finished and readymade knowledge that the language teacher has to pour into the students' mind makes it necessary for him/herself to be immersed in the business of creating the knowledge necessary for the specific context. In this case, both the teacher and the students will engage in this non-stop process of creating knowledge. Hence, in the constructivist framework the tendency to make practitioners (language teachers) apply knowledge produced by expert researchers has been denounced and replaced by the demand that language teachers should theorize their own teaching (Sarac-Suzer, 2007).

Moreover, central to the theory of constructivism is the consideration that the teacher should be engaged in a continuous inquiry into his/her own teaching and other activities and reflect, hence, the name "reflective practitioner" (Zeichner and Liston, 1996). It is at this practical point that theoretical knowledge (from research) and practical application (of teaching) meet in the form of knowledge construction by the teacher. According to Wallace (1991), this constructivist approach enables EFL teachers to draw on the results of their own inquiry and in turn re-assess their assumptions and previous knowledge to develop/customize theories of teaching in line with their practical contexts.

According to Zeichner and Liston (1996), in this framework, the traditional 'top-down' model where expert researchers produce knowledge and practitioners (language teachers) 'apply' that prescriptive knowledge is expected to be replaced by the 'bottom-up' one where language teachers themselves create knowledge relevant to their own context. In this case, we can see how interrelated learning and research are as both are about constructing knowledge (Smith and Brown, 1995). This could mean that EFL teaching can be better assisted when the language teacher constructs the knowledge necessary for his/her practice of teaching rather than receiving knowledge generated through expert researchers for application.

The next section presents how this learning (knowledge construction) process that is underpinned by the theory of constructivism is developed

into a coherent framework to account for other aspects involved in the process of learning/teaching and explain the kind of learning that the language teacher engages in through attention to research.

2.4. The Social Constructivist Model

This model, developed by Williams and Burden (1997), is basically informed by the theory of constructivism and the social interactionist perspective which emphasizes that learning takes place in an interaction with others. According to these writers, in the contextualized social interaction, there is a dynamic interplay among teachers, learners and tasks. In explaining the different aspects of teaching/learning that happen as a result of this interaction, they have identified four important factors which influence the process of learning (see Fig. 2.1)

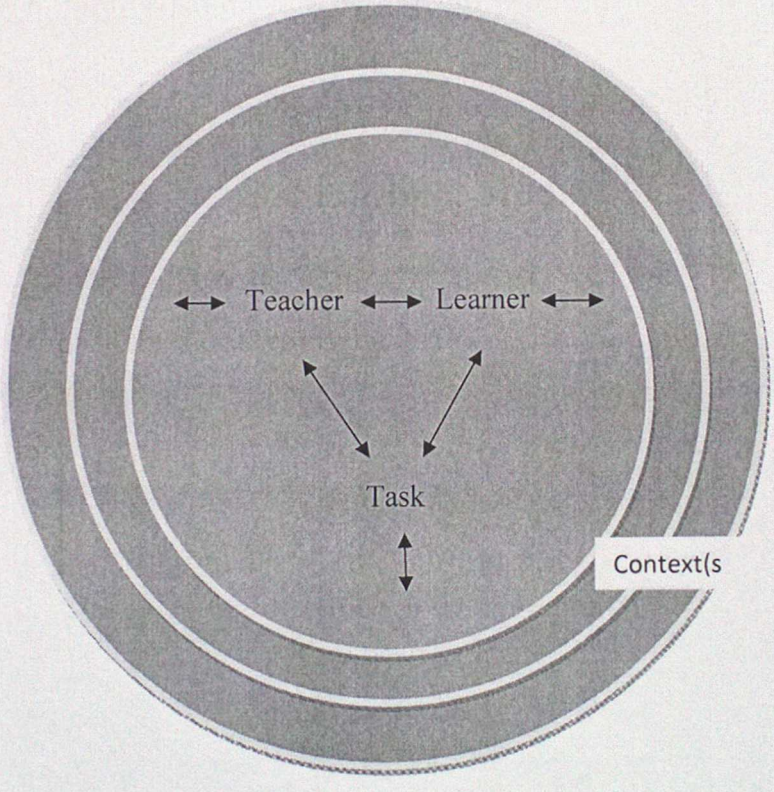


Fig. 2.1. A social constructivist model of teaching-learning process (Williams and Burden, 1997:43)

In this model, the learning task is selected by the teacher on the basis of his/her belief about what learning and teaching are. Learners also interpret tasks in personally meaningful ways as learning is a process of constructing personal meaning (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). Hence, the task serves as an interface between the teacher and learners. This explains what goes on between EFL teacher educators (teachers in the model) who supervise PhD students (learners in the model) in the task of doing EFL researches. However, the tasks (the research projects) are not necessarily selected by the teachers (in this case, supervisors).

As illustrated in the figure, teachers and learners interact in the process of learning. Williams and Burden (1997:44) explain, "the way that teachers behave... reflects their values and beliefs, and the way in which learners react to teachers will be affected by the individual characteristics of the learners and the feelings that the teacher conveys to them. These three elements—teacher, task and learner are in this way a dynamic equilibrium". Similarly, EFL teacher educators who supervise PhD TEFL students and the PhD students interact throughout the different stages of the doctoral research. The mentoring supervisors provide to students in the research depends on the teachers' belief regarding their role and research students and the values they attach to the whole process (Gardner, 2010). Moreover, the personal attributes of these research students and their perception of their relationship to these supervisors determine how they interact with them in the process of doing the research (Alqahtani and Aldaihani, 2007).

In the social interactionist model, Williams and Burden (1997:44) explain that context includes "the emotional environment, for example, trust and belonging; the physical environment; the whole school ethos; the wider social environment; the political environment and the cultural setting." As to them, the concentric circles in the figure represent the influences these domains have on each other. Inside the circles of influence, the three central components play an ongoing part in shaping the context. Context is another important factor that affects the overall research culture in which students doing their PhD researches and supervisors supervising these students and

doing their own EFL researches come together. Context includes the social environment (the kind of collegiality, collaboration among doers of EFL researches), the physical environment (the research infrastructure) and the influence of these factors on the process and quality of researches and their intricate relationship to one another.

In general, on the basis of the social constructivist framework described here, an EFL research culture at HEIs can be taken as a socio-cultural practice that describes what EFL professionals do in research-related activities and why they do so. In this process, the experiences, beliefs and values individuals (such as research students and supervisors) bring to the general context (the department/institution) and the context itself shape how the research is done (the research culture) (Macdonald, 2004). Hence, fitted into the social constructivist model, the relationship of these domains can be shown in the following figure (Fig. 2.2).

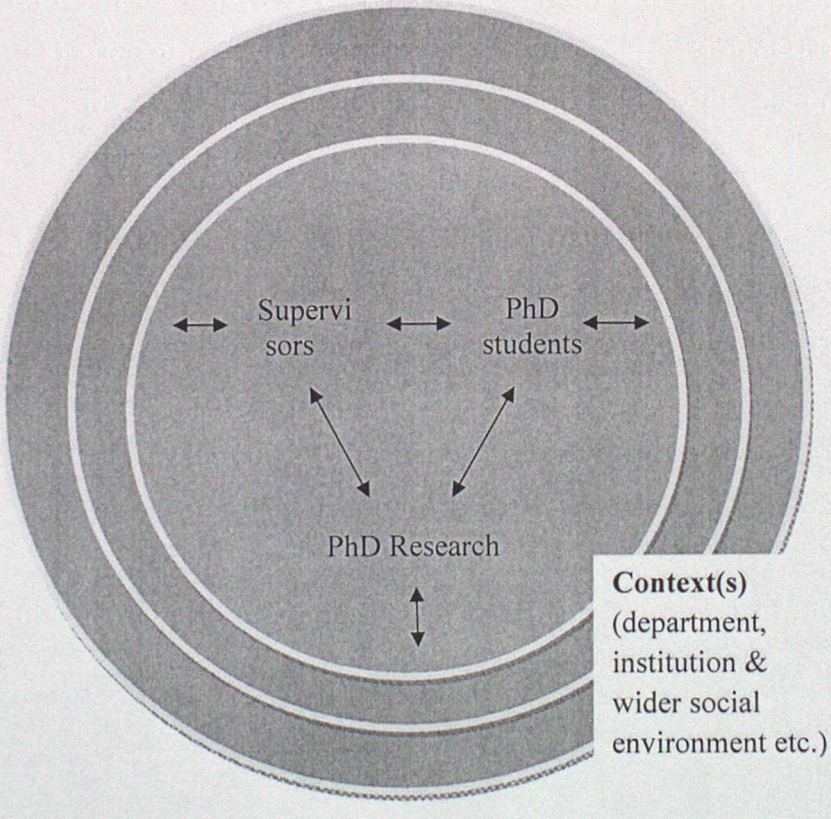


Fig.2.2. A model of the interplay among graduate students doing EFL research, their supervisors (EFL teacher educators) and the context (Adapted from Williams & Burden, 1997)

CHAPTER THREE: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter literature related to research culture in general and EFL research culture in particular will be reviewed.

In the first section, issues related to research and the practice of teaching will be discussed. In so doing, the current debates on the link between research and teaching will be presented. This will be followed by a discussion of the role of research in EFL education and the evolving paradigm of EFL research for language teachers.

Next, the chapter will discuss also how research culture has been described in previous studies and the important components that are going to be used as units of analysis in the description of the research culture at the TEFL PhD program of Addis Ababa University and the factors affecting this culture.

Finally, studies which have addressed the issue of higher education research in Ethiopian context will be reviewed.

3.2. Debates about the Link between Research and the Practice of Teaching

Research and teaching are the two important mandates and are also major responsibilities of universities worldwide (Bridges, 2009). Shami and Kifir (2002) point out that this task of doing both research and teaching activities is what distinguishes HEIs and universities from other teaching institutions. However, the question remains as to whether there is a productive interaction between these two functions and whether university academics practically link their teaching to research. Hence, it is worthwhile to discuss what the literature says about the association between the two activities.

There have been different views on the type of relationship that exists between research and teaching at HEIs. Quoting Ramsden and Moses



(1992), Brew and Boud (1995) classified the widely held views into three. These are:

1. **The strong integrationist view**: the view that in order to be a good university teacher, you have to be an active researcher;

2. **The integrationist view**: the view that there are links between teaching and research at the departmental or institutional level but not at individual level; and

3. **The independence view (unpopular one):** the view that there is no causal relationship between the two.

In reporting a meta-analysis of different studies, Hatie and Marsh (1996) argue that there is no significant relationship between research and teaching. They maintain that there is no ground to say good researchers are effective teachers and effective teaching makes teachers good researchers. While this may not necessarily be true, good research results can impact on teaching-learning by other teachers and students—provided that the research results are disseminated and that there is the tradition of using research results to inform the teaching-learning.

However, Brew and Boud (1995) note that studies done to date to examine the type of link between research and teaching failed to statistically demonstrate it. Commenting on the researches done on the area, they attribute this failure to the way research itself is viewed and conceptualized in these studies. They argue that much of the research on the relationship between research and teaching is based only on an outcomes view of research as publication. Moreover, these authors maintain that it is not teaching and research that are directly related, but that each is related to another domain, i.e., learning. Focusing attention on research as learning is, therefore, shifting to a view of research as a process in which the researcher becomes more of a learner than a problem solver. Both research and learning involve processes of revisiting existing knowledge and exploration of new knowledge, thinking, and critical reflection; both involve the human act

of making meaning and making sense of phenomena in the world (Smith and Brown, 1995).

In fact, it is when research is taken as a productive and applicable process that the link between teaching and research can be realized in terms of what the language teacher learns from it and uses this learning to improve his/her practice rather than mere publications. Teachers' focus only on publications will ultimately lead to the separation of research and their teaching practice (Barnard *et al.*, 2007). Bridges (2009: 17) emphasizes the more direct link between research and teaching in the postgraduate studies, as follows: "There is, undoubtedly, a stronger case for requiring teachers to be researchers on postgraduate programs where the practice into which the students are being initiated is itself a research practice."

Overall, it may be an oversimplification to conclude that it is only good researchers that can make effective teaching possible and vice versa. However, the symbiotic relationship that exists among research, teaching and learning "explains the contribution of research to teaching and to the quality of education on the one hand and the opportunities that teaching creates for research activities to be undertaken on the other" (Adane, 2000:141).

With this understanding, in the next section, the practical contribution of research to EFL education in the assumed link will be discussed in more detail.

3.3. The Role of Research in EFL Education

McIntyre (2005) indicates that teaching is a good example of research-based profession. According to this author, an effective EFL teacher is the one who is professionally informed by knowledge from research of his/her own or of others in the teaching practice. This is because, "the key to effective teaching is definitely a balance between theory and practice" (Pacheco, 2005:4). McIntyre (2005:379) further emphasizes the role of research knowledge for better teaching practice in these terms: "If schools are to improve, as they

certainly must, then one of the best hopes for them doing so is through teachers' use of research-based knowledge." However, there is no doubt that research-based knowledge is one of the different sources that EFL teachers use in making their teaching effective. Bridges (2009) lists four important sources that university teachers (especially those teaching undergraduate students) draw on to inform their teaching. These are: their own learning in higher education, the continuing development of their scholarship through reading and discussions with others, their own research and their working and professional experience.

Since much of the subject of EFL teachers' reading is supposed to have something to do with solving an educational problem and their everyday professional experience also involves either formal or informal inquiry, it is possible to say that research is still at the centre of all the stated resources teachers draw on. Glew (1992), as cited in Garnett and Holmes (1995:52), summarizes the place of research in the practice of teaching as follows:

> *Research can transform the teaching/learning experience. For the teacher, it creates confidence, promotes self-esteem and releases motivating power during class contact. For the student, it provides the opportunity to engage in the skill of enquiry and critique, which is a pivotal experience in higher education; it also gives them exposure to the current state of the art in a particular field of study. In addition, it provides staff with a framework to develop a range of teaching/learning inputs, including up-to-date teaching material and research related projects and workshops.*

This shows that research and teaching are, and must be, closely related so that important actors in the teaching-learning process—i.e. teachers and students benefit from the link.

Derebssa (2000) explains three interrelated benefits university academics gain when doing research. These are:

1) Updating the content of their practical work through the knowledge generated from research,

2) Being effective in supervising researches of their students since being up-to- date in research will enable them to know changes in methods, materials and procedures of analysis and current literature, and

3) Contributing to knowledge through publications and in turn getting promoted.

According to Boyer (1990), doing research enables teachers to make teaching well-informed and carefully planned and assists the development of critical and creative thinking skills in the students. For McCormick and Pressley (1997), it is the development of these skills that makes lifelong learning possible for students. However, these authors further note that in addition to direct instructions, teachers can help students develop these critical thinking skills by making students do researches by themselves and giving them appropriate guidance at different stages of the research process.

It is true that quality and effectiveness in EFL education are multifaceted concepts determined by the intricate relationship of a host of variables. Hence, the author is not in a position to argue that research is/will be the sole remedy to all the problems relating to the quality of EFL education. However, the fact that research is the means for identifying factors and their relationships in affecting the practice of EFL education makes it an unavoidable agenda for Ethiopian EFL teachers in their attempt to improve the status of EFL education at different levels.

3.4. The Evolving Paradigm of EFL Research

In teaching English language in an EFL context, teachers' contribution to the available stock of knowledge doesn't seem to have been given much attention until recently. This, according to Wallace (1991), was because it was believed that improvement of education could be brought only by changing, in a 'top-down' fashion, the curriculum used by language teachers. Owing to this belief, EFL teachers have been made to prescriptively follow curriculums dictated by expert researchers from countries where English is used as a first or second language. However, these prescribed curriculums are in most cases incompatible to the actual contexts where the teaching-learning takes

place (Kramsch, 1993; Holliday, 1994; Rubdy, 2008). Working behind these beliefs had been the view that knowledge is a finished product generated by expert researchers and applied by practitioners (language teachers in this case).

The introduction, in recent years, of the theory of constructivism, however, has changed this long-established view to knowledge and has in turn changed the traditional roles of language teachers. As a result, teachers are now regarded as professionals who learn over time and engage in a lifelong process of learning and development (Atay, 2006). In this approach, EFL teachers are considered as reflective practitioners who join the profession with a certain knowledge base and will build new knowledge and experiences based on that prior knowledge and improve their expertise in the field (Posteguillo & Palmer, 2000). These developments have given more prominence to the following paradigms of research for today's EFL professionals in making their teaching effective.

3.4.1. Collaborative Action Research

Literature related to professional development of language teachers (eg. Burns, 1999; Atay, 2005; McDonough, 2006) indicate that language teachers should make their learning continuous by engaging in inquiry and reflection alongside their teaching. According to these writers, the incongruity between what theories say about language learning and the classroom realities is overcome by the engagement of teachers in collaborative action research.

Along the line of constructivist framework, McIntyre (2005:362) notes that it is up to the language teachers to "investigate the merits of research-based proposals by testing them through action research in their own teaching" and in turn assist their decisions in the teaching. Through this process of creating a useful and applicable knowledge, EFL teachers can link the theoretical knowledge available in the courses they learn, academic journals they read and their actual teaching practice.

When EFL teachers involve in collaborative action researches, they will have the chance to gather different situations encountered in real classrooms and assist their professional decisions. Kemmis & McTaggart (1988) cited in Atay (2006:1) note, "Collaborative action research as a form of inquiry requires teachers to engage in a cycle of questioning, planning, acting, observing, reflecting, pre-planning, and often questioning further." This non-stop process of questioning and giving solutions to problems in this cyclic process explains the lifelong learning opportunity EFL teachers enjoy when engaged in such researches. The knowledge generated in this cyclic process of research is not only relevant to EFL teachers' context but also has a better chance of utilization. Bridges (2009:31) notes, "While large scale research aspires first to have an impact on policy and only then and through policy changes on practice, locally applied and action research conducted in close cooperation with practitioners has a direct route into change." Bridges' words in this citation also imply the desirability of collaboration going to the extent of incorporating educational researchers and practitioners in achieving the common goal of contributing to policy and practice (in this case EFL teaching) through their researches.

In fact, action research is neither a means of confining language teachers only to their classrooms, nor a research done only by teachers (Burns,1999).What it only shows is language teachers' better chance of solving educational problems by themselves without waiting for other 'therapists' (expert researchers who have no direct involvement in the teaching-learning process). In indicating what language teachers do both inside and outside the immediate classrooms through action research, (Burns, 1999) notes;

> *Action research, while it is a very recent form of research in the ELT field, holds great promise as a form of research that can be considered by teachers, with a view to exploring, understanding and improving various areas within the educational context. The areas selected can relate, for example, to issues of curriculum development, materials, assessment or program management, or to specific practices and interactions in the classroom.*

Hence, it is possible to say that action research is a legitimate form of research that puts language teachers at the centre of all decisions necessary to make effective language teaching possible.

3.4.2. Diversity in Research Methodologies

If language teachers must have a dependable knowledge-base, they should be able to see different sides of the reality they are facing (the context in which they teach). This is because context is perhaps the most prominent factor that determines language teachers' decisions and effectiveness in their practice (Freeman, 2002). According to Griffiths (2009), generalizable /universal knowledge which applies to all situations has a more legitimate role in the physical and biological sciences rather than in the field of education which is highly affected by perceptions, actions and desires of people. The scientific methods which are used in generating this kind of knowledge that has measurable attributes give an incomplete picture when they are used in education (Muijs, 2004). In this case, a collection of data regarding what is happening in real environments will be there, pointing to the importance of also using methods which capture what is not measurable. This tends to give equal prominence to qualitative methodologies in providing rich data and evidence for an educational decision by language teachers.

In this case, for EFL teachers to teach the language effectively, they have to make research and inquiry part of their teaching through practice-related action research. Moreover, in the development of contextual knowledge which they require in teaching the language, they have to employ varieties of research methods which are found in the continuum of quantitative and qualitative methods.

Unless EFL teachers have the skill of using these methodologies and, for one or another reason, incline to use 'common and simple' methodologies, they may not enjoy the merits of creating different types of knowledge necessary to make their teaching effective. In reality, failure to do this will lead teachers to revolve around what is already known— a threat to the development of

new knowledge which would attract its users (such as, decision makers, practitioners, and other researchers). Bridges (2009) emphasizes the importance of teachers' employing varieties of research designs, methods and methodologies in their attempt to benefit from diversified body of knowledge and contribute to this knowledge. This is true for "research is an area where different paradigms currently do co-exist" (Hill, 1999: 4).

Hence, it is possible to say that in the development of a productive EFL research culture that enables doers generate knowledge relevant to their contexts, the utilization of varieties of methods to collect, analyze and interpret data contributes a lot.

3.4.3. Interdisciplinary Research

One of the recent developments observed in research and gave way to the diversification of knowledge in different fields is the emergence of the paradigm of interdisciplinary research. This development requires researchers to incorporate theoretical insights and methodological approaches from different disciplines (Given, 2008). Hence in their attempt to generate relevant knowledge, EFL teachers are expected to develop the skill of integrating theoretical insights and methodologies from relevant fields. This kind of research endeavor requires EFL teachers to work in collaboration with others from other fields, mix approaches and methodologies creatively. This is actually one of the ways by which researchers can incorporate some element of originality (newness) in their research endeavor and address cross cutting issues. Implying the challenge in doing interdisciplinary researches in Ethiopia, Bridges (2009:29) notes "the range of methodologies in which Ethiopian researchers have received training is drawn from only a very small selection of this diversity."

3.4.4. More Inclusive Dissemination of Knowledge

Teaching provides a very cost-effective way of testing the implications and applicability of research (Adane 2000:144). It is true that the subject of much of teachers' research has something to do with the teaching-learning

process. Hence, if teachers do the research to improve their practice, they have to test the implications of their findings in their teaching. This makes the language classroom the immediate scenario where teachers disseminate knowledge to the immediate stakeholders. This will also serve as a fertile ground for making a reasonable link between research and teaching. In line with this, Lucio and McNeil (1979) cited in Adane (2000:144) point out, "by increasing ones understanding and building ones store of conceptual knowledge, the prime purpose of research is to change and improve the quality of teaching practice of the researchers themselves."

However, what the language teacher has learnt from the research will not be limited to classroom testing. Ideas can be improved and have a potential value when they are made public (Ingvarson *et al.*, 2005). This makes it necessary for EFL teachers to communicate ideas from research to others in workshops and seminars as well as publications— hence inclusive dissemination of knowledge.

Overall, on the basis of these considerations, it is possible to conclude that future EFL teachers should use an inclusive dissemination of their research results. However, whether EFL professionals can make this possible is the question of whether they believe that these are all relevant as far as their responsibilities are concerned. Making these teachers have such a culture in the future will considerably be determined by the degree to which they are exposed to practice these things while they are in their studies (e.g. graduate programs).

3.5. Conceptions and Perceptions of Research Culture

With the aim of understanding the prevailing research culture of Philippines' HEIs as viewed by the faculty, Salazar-Clemeña and Almonte-Acosta (2007) developed a conceptual framework of research culture. In the framework, they considered: (a) the impact of research, (b) administrative practices, (c) inter-institutional collaboration, (d) institutional research strategy, (e) financial reward system, (f) infrastructure, (g) the presence of ethical policies, and (h) the availability of research funding as indicators of research culture.

They collected information from 40 HEI academics to identify the academics' view of whether these indicators were there in the institutions, and found that the academics do not believe that these indicators were there in their institutions.

Viewed in light of these factors, research culture is a very broad concept which is hard to address in a non-longitudinal study. For example, the first indicator, the impact of research, is a component that may not easily be checked against a set period and may intricately be connected to a host of other variables. In fact, Salazar-Clemeña and Almonte-Acosta (2007) listed these indicators of research culture in the context of different institutions where researches of various faculties, academics and their relationship to the policy are considered altogether. Moreover, since their focus was on identifying the academics' view of these indicators, they didn't portray how these elements interact in describing the research culture in these institutions.

Hiep (2006) investigated the research culture of English language professionals of Vietnam's universities using data from seven EFL teacher educators of different universities. He found that subjects' dissatisfaction with evaluation regulations, the conventions and format requirements in reporting research results, inappropriate training, lack of time and infrastructure tend to discourage their aspirations to do research. This study also addressed research culture across different institutions which are likely to have their own distinct systems and organizations. However, as compared to the wide area the study covered (HEIs of the country), the small size (seven EFL teacher educators) of the population considered in the study might not have given a generalizable picture (Creswell, 2009).

In another study, with the purpose of identifying the kinds of contradictions arising in an emerging research culture of Iceland University of Education (IUE), Macdonald (2004) carried out a case study in one institution. The issues he identified as describing the evolution of research culture were "the nature of the support given to academic staff within the university

environment, the value attributed to research in education by academic staff, policy-makers and the government, and the influence of the increasingly competitive environment for research in Iceland, both internally and externally" (Macdonald, 2004:2).

Overall, in the three studies mentioned here, research culture has been understood in terms of the different factors which determine research productivity of institutions. Moreover, these studies evidence that research culture can be studied at different levels, i.e., at a national level by taking different institutions or can also be seen at an institutional level for "culture reflects the personality of each university and distinguishes one from another" (Marchant, 2009:6).

In addition to these studies, Bridges (2009) lists three interrelated clusters: collegiality, openness and professional morality (ethical responsibility and academic virtue) in describing research culture and emphasizes that they make a basic foundation in a productive research environment.

In explaining the pertinent role of collegiality for a research culture, Bridges writes: "A research culture is not something which one can build or participate in simply as an individual researcher. It suggests a community (communities) of scholars, collegiality, conversation, a shared language, at least some shared literature and tradition, collaboration and mutual support" (Bridges, 2009:22).

According to Bridges' explanation, collegiality, collaboration and mutual support imply the presence of positive interplay of different forces in the culture so that a common goal can be achieved. It is true that, in a cultural interaction that some group of individuals identify themselves with, it is the presence of a common concern that gives rise to and drives mutual support and collaboration. In this regard, Hill (1999) notes that "for there to be a research culture, there is the need for cognitive order and consistency—common language about research, some semblance of research agenda and shared categories of perceptions." In terms of EFL research culture of an institution, this collegial and collaborative relationship may stem from the

shared concern of adding something to English language education as well as from interpersonal and inter institutional relationships. This suggests that while research requires mutual support among people who have a stake in research at an institution, a sense of isolation and individuality will go counter to the development of a productive research culture.

Noting the importance of critical review of research, Bridges (2009) describes openness as another indispensable element in the development of research culture. He stresses, "the exposure of research to peer review and critique and to public discussion is not just an optional extra: these are, rather, the very conditions required for its refinement, development and the conditions under which it achieves credibility and hence integral to research culture." (Bridges, 2009: 22). As Ingvarson *et al.* (2005) maintain, "When ideas are in the public domain, they can be developed, shared and critiqued much more productively than when working in isolation". This implies the indispensability of openness and collaboration in the development of research culture.

Ethical responsibility and academic virtue are the other important elements that Bridges (2009) used in his description of research culture. In explaining these constructs, he emphasizes the importance of interpersonal responsibility and individual virtue of researchers. With regard to interpersonal responsibility, he mentions the determination of researchers in respecting "the rights and sensibilities of people who participate in the research...(including issues to do with access to research sites, confidentiality, privacy, 'ownership' of research data, fair representation etc.)" (Op. cit.:22). However, in his explanation of academic virtue, he acknowledges that there are various personal qualities identified by different scholars. Among those qualities, what Bridges (2009) quotes from Montmarquet (1986) as clusters of virtue are worth mentioning here. These are: "intellectual impartiality or openness to the ideas of others; intellectual sobriety, i.e., the virtues of the careful enquirer who accepts only what is warranted by relevant reasons, evidence and argument, and intellectual courage, which includes perseverance and determination" (Op. cit.:22–23).

From Bridges' explanation of research culture, the three clusters: openness, collegiality, and professional morality characterize important attributes which come into play when individuals interact in doing research. Bridges himself acknowledges that the picture of research culture described here is, "one of a culture embedded in social practice and indeed interfacing with wider cultural values" (Bridges, 2009: 25). This could mean that these social aspects of the research culture are part of a bigger picture of the culture that operates at wider levels—an institution and even a national culture which, according to Moss (2005), has its own potential influence on the cultural values held by a specific group of people.

In general, on the basis of the conceptual clarification of 'research culture' provided under (section 2.2 of Chapter Two), and discussions on how research culture was seen in some studies as well as Bridges' (2009) identification of important clusters of research culture, it is possible to sort out the components against which the research culture of the TEFL PhD program of AAU can be explored.

3.6. What Constitutes EFL Research Culture

3.6.1. Individual Attributes as Ingredients of EFL Research Culture

Individual attributes are personal qualities that important actors (research students, supervisors and other researchers) who do EFL research at a higher institution bring to the context (the department, institution etc.). Pratt *et al.* (1999) and Lertputtarak (2008) found that, among other things, research productivity of higher education academics is highly affected by personal attributes such as beliefs and aspirations, motivation, and background.

3.6.1.1. Beliefs and Aspirations

Literature indicates that among other things, teachers' activities are highly influenced by their belief. As Williams and Burden (1997) point out, beliefs have more potential than knowledge to determine how teachers organize

activities. According to Pajares (1992), teachers' beliefs regarding the activity they are engaged in and their role affects the way they act in performing the activity. Hence, in what EFL teachers do in taking part in individual or collaborative researches, their belief regarding what the research involves and the value they attach to it will have immense impact on how they do the research. Noting that culture is a system of widely shared and strongly held values; Marchant (2009: 6) argues "for a university, faculty or school to claim a strong research culture, research must be valued by a majority of its members."

When teachers engage in the sense-making process of learning, what they consider as true or preferable comes into play and determines the knowledge construction process (Pajares, 1992). This could mean that in the process of doing research, EFL teachers' belief regarding, for example, whether the activity should be done individually or in collaboration with others will determine the degree of their interaction. In indicating the powerful role of teachers' belief in changing their practices, Richards *et al.* (2001) note that beliefs play a central role in the development of teachers for the change in beliefs results in the change in teachers' practice.

This indicates that EFL professionals' engagement in professional development practices (including research undertakings) and effectiveness of their engagement is highly determined by their belief. For example, Prosser *et al.* (2004) point out that teachers who believe that their research is part of a wider debate in the discipline see their research as a means of learning and are more likely to connect their research to their teaching practice. There is also more possibility for such researchers to get involved in discussions over their own and others' works. The importance of strong belief about research in the development of a research culture is reported in Pratt *et al.* (1999) study. In this study, strategies which mainly focused on the change in academics' belief have significantly contributed to the development of research culture at an institution and in turn led to more research productivity.

Hence, it is possible to say that if EFL teachers believe that doing research helps them make informed decision in their classrooms and teaching and research are both legitimate sources of learning, their engagement will increase. However, Burton (2005:1) forwards the following skeptic about the presence of such belief among English language teachers: "Most teachers ... see teaching as a consuming, complex activity, which is made even less manageable when research is an additional requirement, even though it is exactly that experience of teaching complexity that makes teachers' input vital to research and reflection on teaching." In other words, if EFL teachers believe that what they know is enough and if they think that teaching and research are basically separate activities meant to be done by different individuals, they are likely to take research as an optional extra. Whereas, as discussed earlier research is not an unnecessary extra; thus positive attitudes and favorable beliefs about the importance of research by academics themselves would have tremendous contributions to the development of productive EFL research culture.

3.6.1.2. Motivation

Another personal factor that teachers bring to the teaching-learning process and that determines the success or otherwise of their performance is motivation. Explaining that there is the possibility for individuals to be intrinsically or extrinsically motivated in performing an activity, Williams and Burden (1997) emphasize the role of motivation in terms of the perceived value that individuals attach to the activity they perform. They argue, "the greater the value that individuals attach to the accomplishment of or involvement in an activity; the more highly motivated they will be both to engage in it initially and later to put sustained effort into succeeding in the activity" (Williams and Burden, 1997:125). This implies that the kind and degree of motivation EFL teachers have determines the extent of their involvement in the real learning through research and the sustainability of the activity in the continuous professional development of these actors.

In a study on the conceptions held by English language teachers, Borg (2009) collected data through survey questionnaire and follow-up written and interview from 505 teachers from 13 countries. He found that English language teachers held conceptions of research aligned with traditional scientific inquiry. Moreover, while teachers had moderate to low level of doing and reading research, those who were engaged in research undertakings were found to be driven internally by practical and professional concerns rather than by external drivers such as encouragements by employers or promotion. This may indicate that as compared to an extrinsic motivation, intrinsic motivation makes EFL teachers to sustain the effort they exert in doing research. Hence, whether EFL teachers are intrinsically motivated to learn from the research through their curiosity or extrinsically motivated to do research only as a means for another end (e.g. their degree completion) will have an influence in the culture of making research part of their teaching practice. It is true that the degree of motivation of these subjects is also a factor of the actual context (the environment including research infrastructure, the reward system, etc) where they do the research activity (Hiep, 2006; Lertputtarak, 2008).

3.6.1.3. Background

The significant role background plays in the activities of teachers is among the issues which have been well documented in the literature about professional development. Undoubtedly, one of the domains that constitute the background of EFL professionals and determine how they do research in their graduate studies is their previous exposure and skill of doing research. In Ethiopian context, EFL teachers who study in the PhD program have already had research exposure while they were studying in the undergraduate and graduate programs. Hence, the theoretical knowledge and practical skills of doing research they are assumed to have possessed will determine how they do it (the culture of doing EFL research) in their further studies.

Abdinasir (2000) lists different skills researchers grasp from the research courses they take and apply in doing successful research. These are the skills of: "identifying researchable topic, shaping and limiting the research topic, designing the research work, selecting appropriate research methods, developing appropriate data collection instruments, analyzing and interpreting the research data and concluding the findings and giving sound recommendations" (Abdinasir, 2000:134). These are actually the steps that researchers should go through in doing effective research.

In the description of the EFL research culture of PhD students, it may be difficult to check how much control they have over these skills and to see how that level of control contributes to their way of doing their PhD research. However, it is still possible to check in which of these skills they think they are confident and in which they have limitations and make prediction about their culture of doing EFL research.

In the context of the formation of EFL research culture of an institution where EFL professionals are engaged in research, whether or not they had the experience of open discussions in a professional community, and whether or not they were working in a research active environment in their previous professional lives will have an influence in what they do today.

Another factor related to background may be the cultural values which these people have been a part of. This is because activities performed as part of any educational system are essentially the results of the history and culture of a society (Rubdy, 2008). For instance, if debating and free and open discussions are not encouraged in a particular society, these cultural values have a potential impact on these individuals' degree of openness when interacting with members of another group.

3.6.1.4. Professional Morality

In discussing clusters of research culture, Bridges (2009) discussed briefly the issue of professional morality as one important element of research

culture. He included interpersonal responsibility and academic virtue as elements of this cluster.

One realization of professional morality in any research activity including EFL is the researcher's responsibility and determination to make research significant to others. In principle, a piece of research, whether a dissertation or an article, can't be done without purpose (Dornyei, 2007). According to Creswell (2009:88), "it is important to identify a research problem that benefits individuals being studied, one that will be meaningful for others besides the researcher." In fact, what makes research worthy is the focus it gives to a problem that seeks an answer and presentation of useful findings for those who are studied and other potential users (eg. the policy and decision makers). The requirement that researchers should justify the significance of their researches in writing proposals implies this concern. The recommendation sections that thesis and dissertation monographs contain are other indications that the researches are useful and have potential users in mind. In this regard, if a researcher claims to address a problem in a way that benefits study participants but ends up doing it for his/her own ends only, this may raise ethical concerns from two sides. Firstly, tempting subjects (eg. at the data collection stage) that they will benefit from the study and using the data only to complete one's degree may be a deceptive exploitation of subjects. Borg (2003:3) explains how this tradition erodes teachers' (the common research subjects) trust on researchers as follows:

> *Teachers are generally not involved in the design, implementation, and dissemination of studies conducted in their schools by researchers, and hence the whole process can come across as a top-down affair in which teachers may even feel exploited. This lack of ownership can result in a lack of interest by teachers in what researchers have to say. The outcome is that teachers do not read the research.*

This mistrust can also lead to a more serious problem—i.e., the possibility that these subjects provide false data simply to please the researcher (Derebssa, 2004).

Secondly, this will deny participants their right to know about the findings of researches done about them/the problems that affect them. In such situations where there is no way for research subjects to know about the findings of researches, there is no means of checking whether the information they provided is reported genuinely. Patton (2002) cited in Creswell (2009) notes that involving participants at different stages of the research, i.e., at the design, data collection and analysis, report writing and dissemination of findings, helps researchers to minimize this ethical problem. Concerning the need to embed dissemination in the research efforts, Wiersma (2000) advises that researchers should also devise ways of disseminating their research findings right from the beginning.

Hence, the question remains as whether EFL professionals initiate researches on problems that exist, that are worth investigating and whether they have the determination to make their subjects benefit from the study by communicating their findings. Moreover, is there a system that encourages EFL researchers to take this side of the research activity or is the focus only on what these individuals find out at any cost? Creswell (2009) argues that these ethical issues should be anticipated and ways of addressing them should be devised while researchers are at the proposal writing stage.

Intellectual courage of EFL researchers can also be seen in terms of their determination to do researches on issues which have practical relevance to practice, policy and decision-making rather than going to what is easier to handle. According to Mangubhai *et al.* (2007), while many of the pressing questions EFL teachers had about effective language teaching years back have been answered through researches, their practice doesn't seem to change. This suggests that there are other timely questions that EFL researchers should answer in their contexts. In this case, while it is imperative for researchers to identify a topic which has some relevance, this can be well assisted by a set agenda that indicates the advances made so far and the gaps that future EFL research should fill.

In mentioning the condition of research in Ethiopia, Derebssa (2004) notes that the attitude of instructors and decision makers towards research and researchers, the well entrenched cultural inhibitions of the society not to accept research and researchers goes to the extent of making the link between research and decision making very poor. In another article, Derebssa (2000) notes that because of cultural inhibitions (e.g. culture of secrecy and fear of the unknown), sometimes subjects provide false data for researchers. In one country where a culture in a specific context is in most cases influenced by the common national culture (Moss, 2005), there is no guarantee against facing similar realities even in the researchers' camp, i.e. for researchers themselves not to fabricate data and produce results unwarranted by evidences. Creswell (2009: 92) describes the ethical concerns pertaining to writing the research as "the potential of suppressing, falsifying, or inventing findings to meet a researcher's or an audience's needs." This ethical problem has something to do with a 'wrong assumption' that the greatest insights arise only from researches which confirm the expectations of the researchers and their research designs (Kanefsky, 2001). In this connection, Kanefsky (2001) also notes, "Well conducted studies which do not find evidence to support the assumptions on which they are predicated and conclude that no change could be justified, or which conform that existing policies and practices are appropriate, may tell us just as much if not more about "what works" and how to secure best practice" (Kanefsky, 2001:5).

From this, it is possible to understand that if EFL professionals are not courageous even to take researches which do not confirm their previous assumptions as valuable, they may tend to push findings to meet their needs. This will breach the professional morality they are supposed to possess. The question is how much these professionals are confident and the rest of the professional community is also ready to accept such researches as valuable as findings which confirm the expectations.

With regard to academic virtue, Bridges (2009) emphasizes the importance of openness to the ideas of others. In the case of EFL professionals, this can be

taken as the courage to publicly accept weaknesses, for example; in seminar and workshop discussions. While discussion is very important for the development of one's ideas upon refinement, lack of openness for others' ideas for one or another reason will be detrimental.

In short, issues that have to do with professional morality are central to any research endeavor for they come into play at different stages of the research process. However, since they are probably the most private sides of the research practices of individuals, there may not be a readymade ethical measurement to check the presence or otherwise of these elements of the research culture, especially in relation to what researchers do in collecting and analyzing research data. But still, researchers' determination in purposely selecting relevant issues, making subjects benefit from the results, their virtue of openness as part of professional morality are detectable in the description of their research culture. Moreover, the presence of research monitoring bodies and some ethical policies and guidelines at an institution can be seen as an indicator of the development of a culture that gives way to the development of these important qualities of researchers (Salazar-Clemeña and Almonte-Acosta, 2007).

To sum up, such individual attributes, as the beliefs EFL professionals have about research, about their role, the value they attach to research, their motivation to take part in the activity of research, their background and the level of their professional morality have immense influence on their overall research culture.

3.6.2. EFL research culture in the Professional Community

3.6.2.1. Collaboration

The importance of collaboration in research and other professional practices of teachers emanates from the noticeable change in the understanding that knowledge is constructed and reconstructed in social context (Yates, 2008). This is actually how learning is understood in the social constructivist model discussed under (section 2.4). It is also stated that, as lifelong learners, EFL

teachers should enter into a process of exploration and negotiation of knowledge (Wallace, 1991). Moreover, collaboration in the negotiation of knowledge through research and other professional learning is the best opportunity to avoid the sense of isolation that is common in teachers' practice (Burton, 2005).

In principle, collaboration as an element of a research culture of an institution can operate at different levels. For example, it can include researches done in collaboration between institutions and outside bodies. What Derebssa (2004) mentions as AAU's collaborative research linkages with well developed foreign universities is a case in point. It can also be established between different faculties inside an institution in the case of interdisciplinary research as well as between the department staff and research students they supervise and even among research students themselves. Undoubtedly, for an institution to develop a strong research culture at a wider level, establishing the stated types of links is an added advantage. However, it is possible to argue that, to come to this big picture, the kind of collaboration established among the major actors of research undertaking inside an institution should also take root. This is because; the development of such a culture among these subjects is the base for the university to assume bigger roles in collaboration (Marchant, 2009). Sawyeer (2004: 226) notes, "The continued dominance of individual rather than team or multidisciplinary work, especially in social science research, tends to limit the capacity of African researchers to undertake fundamental work with the many-sidedness required to achieve breakthroughs in modern science."

In the case of the EFL research culture at a single institution, collaboration among peers is useful for it provides a supportive environment for change. For Reeves *et al* (2002), changes in practice are very difficult to put into operation without the support of peers.

EFL research students in the graduate studies can collaborate at different stages of their research activities. One such possibility is discussions over their research topics to get better insights on the researchability of issues,

methodological requirements and other issues which should be dealt with before they develop their research proposals. It is true that informal discussions among peers are important sources for research ideas (Gray, 2004; Wirsma, 2000). Moreover, they give the opportunity to challenge pre-established beliefs of individuals (Fullan, 2001b cited in Yates, 2008). One can imagine how much role this collaboration can have when these students are in the actual research process. Gardner (2007) cited in Gardner (2010) points out, "interaction with peers serves to promote the socialization process, particularly as newer students interact with more veteran students." In this case, discussions with senior colleagues especially those who are doing research in related areas have a considerable role for the development of good research culture.

As far as the EFL research culture of an institution is concerned, the stated patterns of collaboration can be assumed among faculty members (EFL teacher educators). Smith and Brown (1995:17) note:

> *There are unarguable benefits to cooperation in writing and research. In deed we have found that co-authoring with a range of colleagues has been one of the most significant sources of our own professional and personal development. To write collaboratively is a highly developed skill, requiring negotiation, tact, teamwork, sensitivity all the kinds of ability that we would hope to promote in our students.*

From this, one can understand that the engagement of EFL professionals in the culture of collaboration and team working today will help them to instill this culture in their students so that students practice it in their subsequent lives.

The importance of maintaining collaboration also between research students and the faculty members is stated by Fullan (2001a) who maintains, "collaborating only with like-minded colleagues can sometimes simply reinforce old habits: 'collaboration is powerful', which means that people can do powerfully wrong things together" (Fullan, 2001a cited in Yates, 2008: 20). Hence collaborating with 'more capable others' (in this case supervisors) will also be there for the purpose of challenging students' beliefs, learning

research and the role students also play in this social process, it is reasonable to take supervision as an important component of research culture in doctoral programs.

Gardner (2010) notes that in the context of doctoral studies, faculty members come into the socialization process and transmit their attitudes and values through the courses they teach and through the academic supervision in the research process. Among the academic supports of supervisors, the written feedback they provide on the students' works is perhaps the most important one. This is because, "written feedback on drafts of thesis or dissertation is arguably the most important source of input on what is required or expected of thesis-writing students by the academic community" (Bitchener and Basturkmen, 2010:79). These authors point out that supervisors' written feedback has an irreplaceable role especially in a situation where students do not have the opportunity to get explicit instruction about doing the research and writing the dissertation.

One practical rationale for the students' need for written feedback is the reality that thesis writing is often a challenge both for native (L1) and non-native (L2) students (Bitchener and Basturkmen (2010). For these authors, the sources of this challenge are "limited understanding of the characteristics of the thesis genre and its component parts (for example, part-genres like the introduction and discussion sections/chapters) and uncertainty about the expectations and requirements of their discipline-specific communities of practice" (2010:80). It is true that in the process of doing the research and writing their thesis; students may have difficulties that vary from one individual to another. Moreover, what supervisors consider to be appropriate feedback may vary from one supervisor to another. But what helps students in improving their work is when supervisors give feedbacks on the areas the students have difficulties.

Appropriate feedback assists research students in many ways. Quoting Hyland (2009), Bitchener and Basturkmen (2010:82) list the functions of feedback as "it helps students understand 'the norms and values of their

particular disciplines ...helps a student 'discover one's own standpoint', 'gain recognition for one's "own work"', and 'find ways of expressing it in one's "own voice". In other words, feedback is important for helping students become independent researchers and writers."

Literature indicates that student' decisions to revise their research works depends on the type of feedback they receive and their attitude towards these feedbacks. For example, citing Kumar and Stracke (2007) Can and Walker (2010: 511-12) reported that:

> *-doctoral students who had positive attitudes toward critical feedback had a considerable amount of revisions in the draft, examined the draft with a new perspective, and developed a more critical stance for future writings,*
>
> *-The feedback provider who acknowledged and respected the opinions of the student while presenting their own opinions from a different perspective was found to be the most helpful regarding students' revisions and improvement, and*
>
> *-Written feedback in the form of dialogue was perceived as most helpful compared to other feedback forms in the revision process.*

It is true that the kind of supervision faculty members provide to PhD students in the research process is highly determined by how these supervisors perceive what their role should be (Alqahtani & Aldaihani, 2007). In examining how doctoral supervisors view their practices, Barnes and Austin (2009) found that the most successful advisors they studied felt their roles to include helping their students be successful, such as through assessing their students' needs, helping them progress, and helping them deal with failure. This implies that supervisory role should not be limited to addressing academic issues but should also nurture the social side of the relationship.

Not only is the quality of the supervision determined by how supervisors view their roles. But, equally important is how students doing research see the process and their own role in making the socialization successful. Gonzalez (2006) cited in Gardner (2010) notes the possibility of a

unidirectional conceptualization of the process of advising (socialization) that doesn't allow students to affect the role of supervisors and underscores the importance of the role of the student in challenging the socialization process. In this regard, Macdonald (2004: 12) maintains, "The encouragement of a collaborative culture can be difficult when unilateral decisions must sometimes be made." In such cases, collegiality (the spirit of power sharing in a collegial relationship) will also be strained which at the end of the day will block the opportunity of entering into important discussions that could lead both parties to more learning.

In emphasizing the role this collegial relationship plays in making students independent problem solvers and how this is supported in the socio-cultural theory of learning, Bitchener and Basturkmen (2010:83) explain:

> *Seen from the perspective of socio-cultural theory, a 'master-slave' view of the supervisory relationship ... is reconceptualized as a more egalitarian 'peer-to-peer' relationship – albeit with the supervisor representing the more capable peer whose role is to scaffold the less capable peer in ways that enable the less capable peer to ultimately reach a higher and independent level.*

Another important influence that faculty members (including supervisors) can have on the doctoral students' motivation in doing successful research is their own involvement in research-related activities and in turn making the environment research-active (Jenkins et al., 1998). Studies by Neumann (1994) & Jenkins (2004) indicated that, students of different levels (ranging from undergraduate to doctoral) had a strong motivation to work in an environment where their teachers and supervisors actively engaged in research activities. In their study on motivation of university students, Breen and Lindsay (1998) found that students who study in an environment where their teachers were research active were intrinsically motivated, had a positive view of research and wanted to participate in it. Sharing a related view, Rubdy (2005: 280) notes "Providing a research rich environment is one way to ensure that students are socialized into the ways of speaking and writing acceptable within the research community."

When the faculty is research active, it can have a number of benefits. Firstly, when faculty members themselves are up-to-date with current research, they can assist their advisees with current theoretical and methodological inputs and resourcefully help research students (Derebssa, 2004). Secondly, faculty members and research coordinators can play an inspirational role by being role models through their successful researches (Marchant, 2009). Being research active for faculty members also provides opportunity for another important element of the culture—collegiality and collaboration among themselves and their supervisees. Finally, it is an important means of promotion for the staff for it enables them to engage in individual as well as co-authoring with their colleagues and their supervisees, and peer reviewing and thereby make the culture of collaboration flourish. Moreover, teachers who can make students know about or involve in their research have a better chance of linking their teaching and research (Prosser et al. 2004).

3.6.2.3. Research Dissemination

> *Too much research stays within the confines of the academic community that produces it, and is locked away in reports and articles that are only read by a handful of specialists.*
>
> *(Barnard et al., 2007:3)*

In parallel to the recent notion of evidence-based practice (a proposed model for professional action in education), many writers have emphasized the importance of research dissemination as a highly inseparable element to research process. Freeman (1998), for example, argues that making one's finding public should be part of the definition of language teacher research. This, according to Burton (2005), is because if EFL professionals do not communicate their research results, their learning will be lost to the profession; and this means that they will have little chance of making their learning continuous. Moreover, if the knowledge and expertise developed by successful teachers must foster educational reform at large, these teachers' research results should be made accessible (Rainey, 2000).

The concomitance of dissemination with the overall process of research is noted also in Brown's (2005:393) explanation of 'research' as "an activity which is concerned primarily with knowledge acquisition on the part of the researcher, and secondarily with knowledge dissemination to academic peers and students." From this, we can see the two immediate situations for dissemination of university EFL research i.e., students both directly through the teaching practice and indirectly by involving them in discussions over research findings in seminars and workshops (Jenkins *et al.*, 1998) as well as to colleagues. At this point, it is reasonable to raise a question as to whether EFL academics consider their teaching as one means of communicating their research results and in turn assist the link between teaching and research or their researches are not primarily related to classroom contexts and there is no need to bring them to their teaching.

As far as university academics' researches are concerned, dissemination of research results is commonly done through presentations (workshops, seminars and conferences) as well as through publishing in local and international scholarly journals (Derebssa, 2004). On the basis of studies done on utilization of research, Crookes (1993) points out that findings only presented in academic journals have little chance of being utilized. This means that seminar and workshop presentations should also be given equal attention so that knowledge from these studies is constructed in a social context and utilized on the basis of the preferences of individuals. Crookes' argument also implies that since academic journals give priority to pure academic researches, EFL professionals may incline to do researches which may not be directly applicable to practice.

In the face of the changing role of universities with respect to the importance of university academics to use research to inform their practice, much reliance on academic journals for academics' publications can potentially detach these subjects from doing problem solving and applicable researches. Harman (2000) cited in Macdonald (2004:17) notes that "academics are being encouraged to publish in academic journals rather than in practitioner publications, thus possibly lessening their impact on practice and

professional work". For Harman, this tradition tends to jeopardize the missions of universities to bring teaching and research together through academics who do collaborative and problem-solving researches. Boyer (1990) suggests the creation of a culture where there are ways of rewarding a wide spectrum of knowledge generated in a context and has wider application rather than knowledge only from basic research.

Two important themes recurring in literature on research communication and dissemination are the gap between universities' missions which require academics to do collaborative and problem-solving researches and the practical requirement of journals to publish highly scientific researches which encourage competition among individual academics. Harman (2000) cited in Macdonald (2004) argues that in the situation where researches are assessed only for their high level academic worth without giving due regard to their contribution to integration, application and collaboration, the assessment goes to the detriment of teaching. This again points to the separation of research and teaching, which is outside the missions of today's HEIs. In this connection, Burton (2005:1) notes:

> *With its emphasis on following style guidelines and meeting standards for research, editing processes in formal writing are widely seen by teachers as denying them voice and academic recognition on their own terms in public professional settings: That is, refereeing and editing processes function as gate keeping. Consequently, teacher-writers tend to mark achieving refereed publication as an unusual professional milestone, rather than a natural means of communication. This is a disservice both to themselves and to the profession.*

If there is a tendency to give priority for publishing in highly academic avenues and there is no means of making academics publish more problem-solving researches directly related to their professional practice, this will serve produce researchers who will get promoted and do more such research which will not add to the practice (Sunder, 2008). Moreover, the dream to make EFL professionals do action research will be under question.

As indicated earlier, EFL research done at HEIs should be followed by appropriate communication, dissemination and use so that findings and

the indigenous knowledge generated by EFL teachers can serve to solve practical problems observed in the teaching learning process (McKee, 2003). In this regard, the role of researches in informing decision makers is a case in point.

One of the common complaints heard at Ethiopian HEIs in relation to dissemination of research results is that their researches are not considered by decision-makers (Derebssa, 2004; Bridges, 2009). There are also concerns from the decision makers that university researchers do not do researches that inform/influence decisions and reports are not written in a language and style comprehensible to decision makers (Derebssa, 2004). While the real reasons for this poor link between research and decision need further investigation, one can see the importance of disseminating research results in a way they are understood by potential users.

3.7. Factors Affecting Research Culture at HEIs

In the discussion of factors that affect research culture, one thing must be clear first i.e., the fluid nature of the distinction between what the culture is and what the factors are. The following example can show this difficulty: In Hill's (1999:2) definition (that has provided a basic framework of research culture as is used in this study), "research culture reflects the values, ideals and beliefs about research which in turn are reflected in the research behaviors, research actions and research symbols of the organization." In this definition, 'belief', for example, is taken as a reflection of 'culture'. Indeed, strong belief in research is also taken as one of the indicators of research culture in Salazar-Clemeña and Almonte-Acosta's (2007) study. However, strong belief in research is still one of the personal factors that affect the way individuals do research (their research culture). The same is true for such components as 'institutional research policy', and 'positive group climate' that the above authors used in describing research culture.

Hence, on the basis of this analysis what have been discussed as 'individual attributes as ingredients of research culture', (i.e., belief, motivation, background and professional morality) can be taken as aspects of the

research culture of EFL professionals as well as personal factors that affect the research culture—the how of doing research.

In the theoretical framework of the study (Chapter 2), it was presented that once different subjects who have a stake in doing EFL research come together with their beliefs and attitudes, their research culture will be affected by the contexts that operate at different levels (the department, the institution and the wider social context as represented by the concentric circles in Fig. 2.2). In emphasizing the considerable impact context can have on the research culture of teachers, Borg (2003: 11) maintains "even where teachers have appropriate attitudes, knowledge, and skills, it will be very difficult for them to make research a meaningful part of their professional lives if the educational and institutional systems they work in are not supportive." However, what individuals bring to the research context will itself affect the context considerably as has been represented by the double arrows in the same figure (Fig. 2.2).

Sawyeer (2004) categorizes factors affecting research culture into two sets of conditions—general or broad societal conditions and institutional conditions. In the broad societal conditions, he mentions a nurturing system of education in a country as a critical factor for the development of research interest and individual capacity. He notes:

> *An educational system that encourages and equips people to be curious about nature and society and to develop an interest in the pursuit of knowledge and ideas is an indispensable general condition for the development and sustenance of a research culture. Also important are social policies and practices that encourage and facilitate the flow of information and reward innovation and inquiry.... Further, social recognition of achievement and the ready utilization of good ideas provide nonmaterial but powerful incentives to research excellence and innovation. (Sawyeer, 2004: 220).*

Hence, if there is a culture of appreciation and respect for new knowledge and creators of this knowledge (researchers) in the outside society (different systems), that will have a positive impact on the development of strong research culture at a national as well as institutional level. It is also true

that the recognition given to good ideas (the results of indigenous investigations) today is what inspires generations to engage in more innovations.

Salazar-Clemeña and Almonte-Acosta (2007) have identified key indicators of a supportive research environment for the development of a productive research culture. They are: institutional research policies and agenda, departmental culture and working conditions, budget for research, infrastructure, collaboration with and access to research professionals in other institutions, policies and guidelines on research benefits and incentives, research committee and publications. In order to see how and at what level they shape the research culture, we better categorize them into two: institutional and departmental.

3.7.1. Institutional Factors

Research policies and agenda: Since HEIs have their own vision, mission and goals with respect to their teaching, research and outreach activities, they are expected to have an established research policy and agenda by which research can be supported and promoted. Geuna & Martin (2003) cited in Millwater & Hudson (2008) note that the issue of relevance is becoming more and more important in recent years for HEIs and governments are entering into a new relationship where governments buy knowledge through the funding they provide to HEIs and institutions generate relevant and usable knowledge. In such situations, focus on relevant and timely issues is possible when there is an institutional research agenda. Citing Lucio and McNeil (1979), Adane (2000:146) points out "every institution has to determine the important areas and devise a set of priorities for attacking the most urgent problems...this becomes more true in cases where the resources (human, financial, physical) are scarce." Unless the advances made, for example, in the area of EFL education and the remaining gaps are made public through an organized research agenda at institutions, researches will be done only on the basis of individual interests rather than relevance. And this will ultimately lead to duplication and non-use of the findings.

Policies and guidelines on research benefits and incentives: These are the rules and procedures which govern granting of financial and non-financial (e.g. professional recognition) rewards for research. We have already said that one very important incentive for researchers is seeing their findings being used to inform practice and/or policy decisions. However, financial and professional returns are also vital drives which encourage university academics to do more investigations (Sawyeer, 2004). To make this possible, a university will have clear guidelines by which it manages such incentives for research. In a situation where these professionals are not assisted through a promising reward system, they are forced to "take on extra teaching loads and some academics choose to do this at the expense of their research activities" (Macdonald, 2004). This is a disservice to the institutional research culture.

Infrastructure and budget for research: This includes the funds allotted by the institution for research done by academics as well as graduate students and the provision of adequate research services and facilities including libraries. It is true that quality research is possible if these two resources are fulfilled. Allocating reasonable budget for research and providing adequate infrastructure support is one of the important motivational conditions for good/productive research culture to flourish in an institution. Salazar-Clemeña and Almonte-Acosta (2007) note that the ability of institutions and departments to pull external sources for financial resources assists the research culture in this regard.

3.7.2. Departmental Factors

Departmental culture and working conditions: In this category are included research programs and strategies designed to encourage research activities among the faculty, including graduate students, positive group climate, decentralized organization, participative governance, and frequent communication that would enhance research. This shows that as a subset of the institution, departments should have decentralized system of research management. Emphasizing the contribution of a healthy departmental

culture in student learning, Gardner (2008a) points out that a department that establishes a positive relationship between the staff and students plays a more significant role in student development as compared to the one that plays a passive role in the students' education.

Departmental culture further involves human resource development in terms of providing training in and exposure to research in order to build research capacity among the faculty. This indicates the importance of providing research-related trainings to both faculty members as well as graduate students for this will help both sides to develop the knowledge and skills of doing good quality research. Rubdy (2005) notes that for graduate research students and their supervisors; there will always be an opportunity to refresh their knowledge and skills through formal training and/or informal discussions in seminars, workshops and other avenues.

Research committee: This refers to the research monitoring body that screens the types of research conducted and looks into ethical dilemmas involved. Concerning researches by graduate students, this committee serves as a checkpoint where the researches are reviewed so that the quality of the graduate research is maximized. In reality, it is the presence of such control mechanisms that encourages graduate students to take more responsibility to do what is professionally moral in their research works.

Publications: One important indicator of the development of a vibrant research culture at an institution and/or a department is the quality and quantity of research produced by the faculty members and graduate students. This is actually one of the measures of excellence for institutions (Lertputtarak, 2008). However, research productivity is well assisted by the availability of different journals. Sunder (2008) notes that when academics and graduate students lack local journals to publish their research results, the remaining possibility is to face fierce competition to get published in other international ones. This lack of alternative journals for publication will discourage these subjects to involve in research activities and in turn damages the research culture.

Collaboration with and access to research professionals in other institutions: This refers to linkages with other institutions, local or international, in order to create intellectual synergy. Collaboration which is only outward-looking and that doesn't have a room for linking indigenous researchers provides a backdrop to the development of indigenous knowledge production capabilities (research culture) (Sawyeer, 2004). Sawyeer (2004) emphasizes the role of a strong graduate program in the development of a dependable research culture in an institution in the following terms: "an obvious measure for improving both the institutional and the human aspects of research capacity development has to be the revitalization of graduate study."

3.8. Local Studies on the Status of HEI Research in Ethiopia

Although the focus of this study is investigating the EFL research culture of AAU specifically with reference to the PhD program, it is worthwhile reviewing local studies about the issue of research traditions of Ethiopian HEIs.

Taking two public universities as the focus of his study, Firdissa (2009) investigated motivating and/or demotivating factors to do action research in teaching EFL. He concluded that HEI EFL teachers are not doing action research to inform their teaching. The study indicated that heavy workload, large class size, less enabling environment and support, low skills/knowledge and deep-rooted traditions that implicitly guide their practices are factors that are affecting these educators not to do these research. These EFL educators were found not empowered to take ownership for the improvement of their practice through action research.

Amare (2000) assessed the major characteristics of the educational researches published in the Ethiopian Journal of Education (EJE) from 1967-1999. He found that educational research in Ethiopia had more coverage of tertiary and secondary levels than primary and pre-primary. He also concluded that descriptive designs govern most educational researches

and even descriptive designs have been used in simplified ways involving surveys and secondary sources.

A collection of reports on the research status of Ethiopian HEIs appeared in the Proceedings of the Conference on the "Current Status of Educational Research" edited by Amare *et al.*, (2000).

From these reports, two studies (Befekadu, 2000; and Wosenu and Zenebe, 2000) have specifically addressed the issue in the context of the graduate studies. Using a descriptive survey study, Befekadu (2000) investigated the major research gaps in the Education Faculty of AAU and found no significant association between the issues addressed in the MA researches at the graduate program and the educational research demands of regions in Ethiopia. Moreover, the study identified the lack of dissemination of research results to regional policy makers and lack of attention to include research topics from the peripheral areas in the country as the major research gaps in the Education Faculty.

Wosenu and Zenebe (2000) explored the research fund allocation practices of the School of Graduate Studies of AAU. With the purpose of determining whether the school had a fair and equitable distribution of funds across different faculties, these authors considered the time period 1995-1999. They found that the School of Graduate Studies didn't have a clearly defined set of criteria for allocating funds to different faculties. And this resulted in inequitable treatment of graduate students in different faculties in the stated time period. Moreover, they found that this has degraded the motivation of graduate students especially in the faculties of social sciences.

Wosenu (2009) investigated the problems of thesis defense experiences of graduate students in the College of Education at AAU. He reported that the questions examiners raise during defenses are not rigorous enough to check the quality of the thesis and to develop the research skills of advisees. Moreover, in the study advisors were found to assume the role of a passive listener. It is true that what happens at the end of the graduate research in the examination sessions is mainly the result of what has been going on

while the research was in progress and in what both the advisor and the advisee were doing and their relationship (Gardner, 2010). Hence, considering the advisors' responses too in the study could have given even a more visible picture for these findings.

Using questionnaire survey and document review, Derebssa (2000) investigated the factors that influenced the development, survival and utilization of educational research in the Institute of Educational Research (IER) of AAU. He found that insufficient and/or unsustainable funding, lack of skilled staff, inadequate facilities, unattractive salary, undefined career structure, undeveloped research culture and weak research demand by policy makers work counter to the development, survival and utilization of research. However, Derebssa acknowledged that progresses which point to alleviating these challenges have been made.

Using a qualitative case study approach, Amera (2005) investigated the personal and institutional factors affecting Bahir Dar University teachers' engagement in educational research activities. On the basis of the data collected through interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis, he found that in their engagement in educational research activities, these subjects are affected more by personal factors than institutional ones. And among the personal factors, teachers' knowledge of educational research was found to influence other personal factors such as interest, perception, and commitment. The study also indicated that although institutional factors are not as strong predictors as personal factors, especially the administrative system and incentives were found to affect teacher engagement in research activities. Adane (2000) also conducted a related study on the involvement of Bahir Dar Teachers College (the present day Bahir Dar University) instructors in educational research. He found that such problems as absence of research budget, up-to-date journals, an organizing body for research, heavy teaching load, and the absence of research culture as institutional factors that made the research involvement of these subjects very low. However, he also reported his optimism for there was an effort to publish some researches in bulletins.

Overall, these local studies have looked into some aspects of the wider area of educational research and the different contextual factors which influence higher education academics' engagement in research undertakings. The majority of these studies concluded that personal factors (including lack of interest, inadequate research skill), the underdeveloped infrastructure, inadequate incentives and the undeveloped research culture are the major factors affecting the engagement of academics in research activities.

Although these studies reported much about the factors which affect research undertakings at Ethiopian HEIs and mentioned undeveloped research culture as one of these factors, none of them have explored the nature of this culture especially in the context of the graduate PhD programs.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1. Introduction

This chapter will discuss the research methodology—i.e. the design employed the research site and participants, instruments of data collection, procedures of instrument validation, methods of data collection and analyses used in the study.

4.2. Design of the Study

A mixed methods design was chosen for this study due to the nature of the research problem, the researcher's fundamental beliefs about the role of research and the researcher's role in this particular study. Firstly, as Mertens (2005) cited in Dorneyi (2007:149) notes, "mixed methods have particular value when we want to examine an issue that is embedded in a complex educational and social context." It is true that the culture of doing research in the context of institutions is the result of the intricate relationships of various educational and social domains. Hence, research culture embedded in such contexts can be better investigated if a mixed methods approach is employed.

Secondly, since culture is a social phenomenon that describes shared beliefs and practices of individuals, an investigation into it requires a researcher to see different aspects of the phenomenon (Jacob, 1987). Such information gathering may primarily capitalize on qualitative methods. However, the mere dependence on this subjective interpretation of the phenomenon may not give full picture unless complemented by an objective account of the phenomenon through quantitative approaches (Creswell, 2009). This pragmatic position held by the researcher made the mixing of qualitative and quantitative approaches appropriate for this study.

The last reason has something to do with minimizing the risk of having preconceptions that may affect results in such a study where the researcher is familiar with the topic of the research (Davis, 2007). In this study, since

the researcher is a member of the study population (PhD students) and familiar with the subjects, he found taking only qualitative data from few subjects would be inappropriate for this may lead to subjective interpretation of the results. Hence, he decided to use mixed methods design through which information of both quantitative and qualitative nature could be collected from different sources for a more dependable result.

Dorneyi (2007) and Creswell (2009) indicate that in mixed methods study, it is common and even advisable to use an embedded model of data collection where one form of data (either qualitative or quantitative) predominates. According to these authors, this strategy enables researchers to make their study more focused and manageable. In this study, since more weight is given to the qualitative data, a design suggested by Dorneyi (2007), i.e., QUAL + quan, was used. (Capital letters indicate the comparative dominance given to the qualitative data and the plus sign indicates the concurrent collection of both the qualitative and quantitative data. Details about the nine possible typologies are found in Dorneyi (2007)).

Hence, by employing this design, interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), questionnaires and document reviews were used to elicit the data required for the study. Interviews were used to get in-depth information from TEFL PhD candidates and EFL educators on their beliefs relating to the role of doing EFL researches in general, their individual and shared research practices including what they do together in the process of supervision and the factors affecting their practices. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with TEFL PhD candidates to trace candidates' research- related practices shared with their peers and their supervisors. Questionnaires were used to triangulate and crosscheck the results of interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Moreover, document reviews were made to check whether there are gaps between what is generally stipulated about research (by graduate students and the academic staffs) in different documents of the university and the actual practice of research by these groups of subjects.

Since the study drew both on qualitative and quantitative data, the analysis of these data employed qualitative and quantitative procedures. The qualitative data which provided the dominant base for the study and collected from interviews, Focus Group Discussions, and reviews of some relevant documents of the university was analyzed thematically after a systematic coding of information had been employed (See section 4.8.1 below). On the other hand, the quantitative information gathered through questionnaires from both groups of subjects as well as the data collected from the reviews of EFL PhD works currently in progress and those completed in the years 1993-2010 were analyzed using percentages.

4.3. Research Site and Participants of the Study

4.3.1. Research Site

Since this study was a study on the research culture of TEFL PhD program, it was conducted at Addis Ababa University taking the current TEFL PhD candidates and their supervisors as main subjects. Addis Ababa University was selected as a site for this study because the institution fulfills characteristics relative to the phenomena under study. The following are the characteristics:

1. PhD in TEFL has been given only at AAU though Bahir Dar University has started a similar program very recently,

2. Veteran EFL teacher educators who may have research and supervisory experiences are found in relatively considerable number in this university,

3. Since AAU is the oldest HEI in Ethiopia, it is appropriate for a study of research culture. As compared to new universities, older ones will have a culture that might have taken root and hence can be deciphered in some way (Hill, 1999). This will also give the researcher more opportunity to find other supporting documents which will be used for the in-depth investigation of the research culture (e.g. documents which may serve as sources of information about what place is given to research in general at

the university, what the research policies, guidelines dictate about research including PhD research etc.).

4.3.2. Participants of the Study

Participants of this study were TEFL PhD candidates enrolled from 2007-2010 G.C or 1999-2002 E.C and currently studying in the graduate program of AAU and EFL teacher educators of the university who are teaching in the program and supervising these candidates.

In this study, which is aimed at investigating the research culture of the TEFL PhD program of AAU, EFL teacher educators of the university were also taken as subjects for one main reason. Culture in such practices as research is a group phenomenon (Hill, 1999 & Marchant, 2009). Hence, an investigation into it requires considering different individuals contributing to the making of this culture (Jacob, 1987). In the context of research culture at the TEFL PhD program of the university, these educators are, in principle, members of the 'cultural group' since students interact with these professionals in the process of doing the PhD research. Moreover, since successful PhD research is partly a function of the supervisory support doctoral students get from their supervisors (Abiddin, 2007; Gardner, 2010), it is justifiable to include them in the study.

4.3.3. Selection Procedure

According to the information obtained from the Department of Foreign Language (DFL) of AAU, there were a total of 71 students enrolled in the TEFL PhD program of the university in the years 2007-2010 G.C or 1999-2002 E.C. Of these, 40 (56.3%) were selected for the main study. Since the major purpose of this study is to explore research culture as it occurs in the specific context, AAU, it aims for in-depth understanding of the phenomena than for generalizing in statistical sense and representativeness (Dorneyi, 2007). Hence, the researcher was convinced that this size was enough for the study.

In selecting these subjects for the main study, both purposive and stratified random samplings were used. First, in using the purposive sampling, one criterion was set, i.e., participants had to be at least in their second year of the study. This was because; they would have much more information than the first year students due to their greater experience in the research process and contact with supervisors. Next to this, stratified random sampling technique was employed. This technique was used because if the selection was made fully random, many PhD candidates who were supervised by the same supervisor might get the chance to be selected. Since the intent of the study was to explore ranges of responses from different subjects and gain rich insight about the shared research culture, selecting many subjects working with the same supervisors would not lead to the required information.

Hence, in selecting subjects using this technique, first, based on the list of candidates and supervisors obtained from the department, candidates who were supervised by 20 different supervisors were categorized separately. Next, students supervised by each supervisor were given numbers in the categories. Then, every 1st and every last numbered students were selected from each category making a total of 40 TEFL PhD candidates (Given, 2008).

Based on the information from the department, there were a total of 25 EFL teacher educators who were supervising TEFL students in the PhD program of AAU. From these educators, since two have got their PhD degrees and started supervising PhD students recently, they were not considered in the study. Hence, from the remaining 23 educators, since 6 participated in the pilot study, they were excluded in the main study. Moreover, since one of the remaining 17 EFL educators declined to participate, only 16 educators participated in the main study.

4.4. Data Collection Instruments

In gathering the required data for the study, interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), document analyses and questionnaires were used.

4.4.1. Interviews

Interviews were used as the main instruments of data collection in this study for they allow generating enough details when used in association with other instruments (e.g. questionnaires). In this kind of study which mainly draws on qualitative information interviews are used as effective means of collecting rich data used to understand subtle meanings in the phenomena under focus (Nunan, 1992).

In collecting the major qualitative information from the two groups of subjects, semi-structured interviews were prepared. Semi-structured types were preferred for the sake of making the questions flexible and giving the interviewees more control over the course of the interview as suggested by Nunan (1992). According to Dornyei (2007:123), semi-structured interviews allow the interviewee to "elaborate on the issues raised in an exploratory manner." Moreover, since semi-structured format enables the subjects to freely express their feelings, the researcher believed that it would help him to get information that may not be obtained through other data gathering techniques.

The interview items were adapted from Hiep (2006) and made to fit the purpose of this study through some modifications (See Appendix D for Hiep's (2006) interview schedule). Hiep (2006) used the interview schedule to investigate the research culture of Vietnamese EFL teachers of HEIs. Hence, it was found reasonable to use the questions in the investigation of the EFL research culture in this study. However, since part of the focus of the present study was investigating what the two different subjects (TEFL PhD students and EFL teacher educators) do together in the research supervision; the researcher felt that Hiep's interview schedule may not well capture this component of the study. For this reason, questions which can elicit information regarding supervisory practices were included in the adapted version. In order to see the contents of the interviews, let us discuss the two interviews separately.

4.4.1.1. TEFL PhD Students' Interview

This interview schedule was intended to elicit information from TEFL PhD students on: 1) how they evaluate the role of PhD research for them and for others, especially in relation to their professional development, their future EFL teaching and research practices, 2) how they identify topics for their research and what issues they take into consideration in this process, 3) whether these subjects have intrinsic or extrinsic motivation in doing the PhD research, 4) their views on communicating their research findings, 5) how they see the supervisory support they get from their research supervisors, 6) how they see their own contribution in making the supervision successful, 7) how much they openly deal with their supervisors in research-related matters, 8) whether or not and what types of challenges (if any) (material, financial etc.) they face at different stages of the PhD research and 9) what they recommend to improve the research situation in the TEFL PhD program.

4.4.1.2. EFL Teacher Educators' Interview

The purpose of this interview was to gather information from EFL teacher educators of AAU on three related themes: their own EFL research practices (how they do researches, opportunities, challenges etc.), their supervisory practice, and how they perceive the overall research environment. In relation to the first theme, five questions were included to elicit information on: 1) how they see the contribution of doing EFL research in their professional development, their EFL teaching and supervisory practices, 2) what kinds of motives they have in doing EFL researches at the university, 3) how the institution rewards them when they do EFL researches, 4) what problems (material, financial, collegial etc.) they face when they do researches and 5) how they disseminate researches and what problems they face in this regard. Questions 6-9 required information on how EFL teacher educators see their role in supervising PhD TEFL students, what problems they face in the process of supervision, what mechanism they use in assisting students develop critical thinking skills, and how they evaluate the research performance and commitment of PhD students. The last two questions were

intended to gather information on how these subjects see the overall research environment and what things they recommend for better handling of research, especially in the TEFL PhD program.

4.4.2. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

FGDs were used as another important data gathering tools in this study for they naturally help to elicit information about a socially and culturally constructed phenomenon. Dornyei (2007) points out that focus group discussion is flexible and information-rich by nature and it allows the emergence of a useful discussion about a broad topic. Also Lederman (1990) notes, people who share a common concern will be more willing to talk amid the security of others. Wiersma (2000), Singh (2008) & Creswell (2009) suggest that focus group discussions are effective instruments of data collection in a situation where the researcher is interested in the shared social and cultural practices. While individual interviews were used to give subjects the chance for free expression of their individual opinion that they may not want to share with others, the focus group discussions were used as the main tool of generating subjects' socially shared beliefs and opinions which shape their EFL research practices.

The questions used in the focus group discussions (See Appendix G) were intended to elicit information from PhD TEFL students on: 1) their willingness and interest to make open discussions with their peers on their PhD research-related matters, 2) their commitment and determination to do effective PhD research given the actual research environment in the PhD program, 3) their relationship to supervisors in the process of supervision, 4) their evaluation of seminar and defense sessions in terms of their (students') expectation and, 5) their participation in these sessions.

4.4.3. Document Analyses

In this study, the analysis of documents was made for two purposes: to identify the formal position of research by graduate students and academics at AAU and to look into the trends of EFL research in the TEFL PhD

program. To identify the formal position of research by graduate students and the academics, such documents as the Higher Education Proclamation, the AAU Legislation, the AAU Research Handbook and PhD guidelines and Governance were analyzed. On the other hand, to examine the research trends observed in the TEFL PhD program of the university, topics of PhD researches currently in progress in the program as well as EFL PhD researches done in the years 1993-2010 and documented in the ILS library of AAU were analyzed. In the case of EFL PhD researches in progress, the research topics were analyzed to see what EFL issues and educational levels were given frequent focus. On the other hand, in the completed EFL PhD works, the educational levels and EFL issues given frequent focus as well as the methods, the data type used and the types of recommendations forwarded were examined.

4.4.4. Questionnaires

In this study, two sets of questionnaires were prepared to collect the quantitative data from TEFL PhD candidates and EFL educators of AAU.

4.4.4.1. TEFL PhD Students' Questionnaire

The students' questionnaire was designed for six purposes: 1) to illicit data about PhD students' research-related background, 2) to examine their belief regarding their PhD research, their role and of their supervisors, 3) to identify how these subjects see their own research skills, 4) to look into their current research-related practices, 5) to examine the supervisory support they are provided with and 6) to examine factors affecting candidates' current research practices.

As to the content of the questionnaire and the corresponding nature of items (See Appendix B), questions 1-5 were related to the subjects' characteristics; items 6-8 were about the research related backgrounds of these participants. Items 9-15 concerned PhD students' beliefs on the role of their PhD research, their role as researchers and the role of their supervisors. For these questions, respondents were asked to express their degree of



agreement on a 5 point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In the next questions (items 16-25), subjects were asked to evaluate themselves as to whether they have the basic research skills they require to do their PhD research. Respondents were asked to use a 5 point Likert scale from 1(Very Unsatisfactory) to 5(Very Satisfactory). In questions 26-32, subjects were asked to express the extent to which they practice the activities stated using a 5 point Likert scale from 1 (Never) to 5 (Very often). In relation to this theme, two questions (questions 33&34) asked whether PhD students were using qualitative, quantitative or mixed-methods design in their PhD work and the practical reason/s for their choice. Following this, three questions (items 35-37) asked respondents about the number of supervisors they have and how these supervisors were selected. Questions 38-46 were about how subjects describe their supervisors and what goes on in the supervision. In this section, they were asked to use a 5 point Likert scale from 1 (Never) to 5(Very often). The last two sections were about how PhD students see what goes on in seminar and defense sessions and what factors they think go counter to their current PhD research practice. In these sections, questions (47-54) required subjects to determine their attendance of these sessions and the degree of relevance of the questions asked in seminar and defense sessions using a 5 point Likert scale from 1(Never) to 5(Very Often). In the last section (questions 55-64), they were asked about the extent to which the stated factors are affecting their PhD research activity. In expressing the degree of persistence of these influences, subjects were asked to use a 5 point scale from 1(Never) to 5(Very Often).

How the Questionnaire was Developed

This questionnaire was developed by the researcher based on the literature reviewed and adaptation of some questions from Adane (2000) and Abdinasir (2000). The questions adapted from Adane (2000) were those used in Part V of the questionnaire which included questions about factors affecting the research activities of PhD TEFL students. Questions 55, 57, 59, 60 & 61 (See Appendix B) were used by Adane (2000) to examine factors affecting Bahir Dar University instructors' research activities and the degree of persistence

of these factors. These questions were adapted at a phrase level and used in this questionnaire (of TEFL PhD students). Since PhD students do research in a relatively different context and their research activity may be constrained by additional factors, the researcher was convinced that using these questions would not be enough. Hence, another five questions which could explore these possible factors were coined by the researcher based on the literature reviewed.

In addition, three questions were adapted from Abdinasir (2000) and used in Part IIIB of the same questionnaire. These questions (items 16, 21 &23) were used by Abdinasir (2000) in assessing the usefulness of a research course from the perspectives of senior undergraduate students of AAU. In using these questions to explore how TEFL PhD students evaluate their research skills, it became necessary to adapt the questions at a phrase level. Another seven questions which could help these subjects evaluate their research skills were included by the researcher based on the literature reviewed.

4.4.4.2. EFL Teacher Educators' Questionnaire

EFL teacher educators' questionnaire was designed for four purposes: 1) to elicit information about the research-related backgrounds of these EFL teacher educators of AAU, 2) to identify their beliefs about the purpose of doing EFL research in general, 3) to gather information on these subjects' views on previous EFL researches, 4) to examine how these subjects evaluate their current EFL research activity and the supervisory support they provide to PhD TEFL students.

The first three items in Part I were intended to check whether these educators have done EFL researches (action research or other) other than what they did for their degrees. For these questions, subjects were asked to put tick marks on their choices. In the next part, five items (items 4-8) explored beliefs of EFL teacher educators about the role of EFL researches in general. In answering these questions, respondents were asked to express their degree of agreement on a 5 point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The next four questions in section B of this Part were

about EFL teacher educators' views on previous EFL researches (their own and of others). In answering these questions, they were asked to express the extent to which they agree or disagree with the statements by using the same rating as the previous questions. In section C, items 13-15 were Yes/No questions. Items 16&18 were choice type; and items 17& 19-24 were open-ended questions. The questions in this section asked respondents about whether there are research strategies/policies at AAU and whether they have ever consulted them when doing EFL researches, what kind of researches they prefer to do and why, whether they have shared their EFL research outputs and how they have done it. The next ten items (25-34) required subjects to evaluate their own supervisory practices. In answering these questions they were asked to express the extent to which they do the activities represented by the statements on a 5 point Likert scale from 1 (Never) to 5 (Very Often). The last section consisted of five questions (items 35-39) which ask whether EFL teacher educators spend adequate time reading the works of their supervisees in terms of the number of students they were supervising, how the issue of disseminating EFL research outputs is seen by their supervisees and the university in general. In answering these questions, respondents were asked to put tick marks from the given alternatives.

How the Questionnaire was Developed

The EFL teacher educators' questionnaire was designed by the researcher based on the literature reviewed and using parallel questions taken from TEFL students' questionnaire. This was done especially in questions related to EFL teacher educators' beliefs about EFL researches in Parts IIA and questions related to the subjects' evaluation of their supervisory practices in Part IID (See Appendix C). This is because; the themes explored through these questions in the two questionnaires were similar. The remaining questions included in the questionnaire were coined by the researcher based on the literature reviewed.

4.5. Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Once these data collection instruments were developed in a manner discussed above, different procedures have been employed to get evidences of the validity and reliability of these instruments. In this section, evidences of these qualities obtained from the validation team of experts and the pilot study are discussed.

4.5.1. Validity and Reliability of Interviews

There doesn't seem to be hard and fast rules about how validity and reliability of qualitative data collection instruments like interviews can be checked. This seems to be the reason why Gray (2004:218) notes, "since interviews often come from a more qualitative perspective, it would be a mistake to apply these concepts (of validity and reliability) rigidly." Thus, the need for flexibility requires a researcher especially doing a mixed methods study to get evidences of validity and reliability right from the start by making justifiable decisions in the choice of methods for the mixed design, the selection of the subjects, data collection procedures, and the analysis (Dorneyi, 2007 & Creswell, 2009). However, it does not mean that the validity and reliability of interviews cannot be checked before and while the data collection is made.

Gray (2004:219) notes "in the case of structured and semi-structured interviews, the issue of validity can be directly addressed by attempting to ensure that content of the question directly concentrates on the research objectives." Hence in the attempt to get this form of validity, the interview items which had been developed on the basis of the literature reviewed and adaptation from Hiep (2006), were validated by four experts were:

- Two TEFL PhD holders currently teaching in the TEFL PhD program of Bahir Dar University,
- An associate professor of Educational Psychology from the same university and
- A research publications officer at OSSREA.

For this validation, the researcher used a validation form that Chen (2002) used in making a panel of experts evaluate the content and face validity of his questionnaires and interviews in a study (See Appendix A for the validation form adopted from Chen (2002) and used by these experts in validating interview schedules and questionnaires). The validation was made to get some evidence on whether the content of the items was relevant in helping to answer the research questions as well as to check the clarity of the questions. Accordingly, the researcher made some modifications on both interview schedules (See Appendix E & F for these validated interview schedules used in the pilot study for the two groups of subjects). Another means of strengthening the validity of interview items, according to Gray (2004), is constructing interview schedules with some respondents. In this regard, since the researcher had easy access to PhD TEFL students, he had the opportunity to make two subjects take part in the refinement of items.

Wiersma (2000) maintains that the reliability of interviews can be endangered by conscious or unconscious bias the interviewer may induce in the procedures. This can be reflected in differential treatments of subjects (for example, with respect to the length of time given and asking questions out of sequence). Gray (2004) suggests that the use of more than one interviewer and using the same protocol for different interviews can minimize this bias. While it was not possible to involve an interviewer other than the researcher himself, an attempt was made to use a written interview guide where questions were asked in the same sequence and enough time was given to different respondents to enable them express their views freely.

Before both interview schedules were used in the main study, they were also pilot tested. On the basis of insights gained from the study, some modifications were made to the procedures of conducting interviews (See Section 4.6.3).

When it comes to the Focus Group discussions (FGDs), two TEFL PhD students (members of the study population) commented on the relevance and clarity of the questions for addressing the research questions. Moreover

based on the insights gained from the pilot run of the FGD, some modifications were made to the questions (See Section 4.6.3 below).

4.5.2. Validity and Reliability of Questionnaires

The content and face validity of both questionnaires used to collect data from TEFL PhD students and EFL educators was ascertained by the four experts who validated the interview schedules. (See Appendix A).

The researcher gained useful insights from these experts, especially about the content validity and clarity of questions and instructions in both questionnaires. On the basis of their comments, the researcher revised the contents of the questionnaires before they were used in the pilot study (See Appendix B and C for the validated PhD TEFL students' and EFL educators' questionnaires used in the pilot study). While EFL educators' questionnaire originally consisted of a total of 43 items, it was reduced to 39 items after it was learnt from the validation team that five items (items 38-41 &43) were repetitive (See section IB of Appendix A).

According to Gray (2004), researchers can benefit much from ascertaining the face validity of questionnaires by using some participants of the study. Since the researcher was one of the students in this program, he had the chance to make two TEFL PhD students comment on these instruments while developing them.

In order to make questionnaire items generate the data needed for the study, it was also important to get some evidence of reliability. In this regard, the pilot study helped the researcher to check the internal consistency of close ended questions used both in TEFL students' and EFL educators' questionnaires. Hence, in the case of the student questionnaire, the internal consistency reliability of items coined in Likert scale format was checked and found to be 0.80 Cronbach's alpha whereas in the case of EFL educators' questionnaire the internal consistency reliability of Likert type items was computed and found to be 0.84 Cronbach's alpha.

4.6. The Pilot study

In this study, additional evidences about the appropriateness of instruments and procedures of data collection and analysis were gained from a pilot study conducted prior to the main study. It was conducted using some selected samples from the study population. This section is devoted to the discussion of the purpose of the pilot study, participants, procedures of data collection and analysis and methodological insights gained from the study.

4.6.1. Purpose of the Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted mainly to get insights for establishing appropriate design and procedures for the main study i.e., to check the appropriateness of instruments and overall procedures as well as to make the necessary revisions (if any) before they were used in the main study. This is because, in the pilot run "deficiencies may be uncovered that were not apparent by simply reviewing the items" (Wiersma, 2000:171). Accordingly, the pilot was conducted to check the appropriateness and clarity of items in the instruments used and if there is the need for additional items.

4.6.2. Participants

Participants of the pilot study were 10 TEFL PhD candidates enrolled in the TEFL PhD program of Addis Ababa University in the years 2007-2010 G.C or 1999-2002 E.C. and 6 EFL teacher educators of the university who are teaching in the graduate program and supervising these candidates.

Using these samples taken from the study population, questionnaires, interview schedules and Focus Group Discussions were pilot tested. Questionnaires were filled by 10 TEFL PhD candidates and 6 EFL educators. Whereas interviews were conducted with 3 candidates and 3 educators, the FGD was conducted with 4 candidates (See Appendices H, I and J respectively for transcriptions of TEFL PhD students' interviews, educators' interviews and students' FGD). From this data collection and analysis, some important insights pertaining to the quality of instruments and procedures

of the data collection were gained and used in the improvement of instruments and procedures in the main study.

4.6.3. Insights Gained from the Pilot Study

This pilot study and the results obtained helped the researcher to make a number of changes in the instruments and procedures of data collection for the main study. These include:

1) Inclusion and exclusion of some items from TEFL PhD students' questionnaire:

In Part II of this questionnaire (See Appendix B), three questions (6-8) were intended to explore whether TEFL PhD candidates have done EFL research other than what they did for their degrees. From these questions, Q6 contained only two options, 'Action Research' and 'Other Research'. It appeared that these options did not give room to respondents who did not do any EFL research. Hence, a third option, 'Not Any' was included to this question in the final version of this questionnaire. Moreover, four questions which inquire information on whether candidates did these researches solo or in collaboration were added to this part of the questionnaire. (See Appendix K for the last version of this questionnaire used in the main study).

The purpose of 7 questions in Part III of this questionnaire was to elicit information about the beliefs these subjects have on the purpose of their PhD research. However, questions 14&15 of this part were apparently found to have a different theme which has been treated in candidates' interviews. Hence, these items were omitted in the final questionnaire used in the main study. Instead, one question that has a direct relationship to candidates' belief about their PhD research was included. Likewise, from Part IVD of this questionnaire, which was intended to explore candidates' participation in seminar and defense sessions, Q50-54 were canceled for they were found to elicit information different from this theme- participation. The remaining 3 questions were also moved to Part IVA of the questionnaire since the theme they explore was much related to the one that is addressed in this part.

2) Inclusion, revision and exclusion of some items from EFL teacher educators' questionnaire:

In Part I of this questionnaire (See Appendix C), there were originally 3 questions (1-3) which had similar purpose and format to the three questions (6-8) of the students questionnaire discussed above. Hence, in the final version of this questionnaire used in the main study, a similar revision was made to these three questions. (See Part II of Appendix L). Moreover, in this questionnaire, questions which elicit demographic information about EFL educators were included before it was used in the main study (See Part I of Appendix L).

In Part II A of this questionnaire, which was intended to explore EFL educators' beliefs regarding EFL PhD researches, some parallel questions from students' questionnaire (those used to elicit information regarding students' beliefs on the purpose of PhD research) were included. (See Part IIIA of Appendix L).

In addition, questions 20 &23, which asked EFL teacher educators about sharing and publishing EFL research outputs, were found repetitive. Therefore, Q 20 was canceled from the last version of this questionnaire.

3) Improvement in some procedures of the interviews:

Some problems have been observed in the procedures of conducting the interviews with both groups of subjects. Although some questions were direct, some respondents were providing very general responses rather than direct answers (See the response given by PT3 to Q1 in Appendix I). It was felt that this happened due to lack of probing from the researcher in the course of the conversations. Hence, a decision was made to consciously use such probing when similar cases occur during interviews in the main study.

4) Exclusion of a question and decision to use more FGDs:

Q2 of the five questions used in the focus group discussions (See Appendix G) was originally intended to elicit information about participants' evaluation

of the contribution or otherwise of the actual research environment in their determination to do successful PhD research. However, it appeared that the question did not generate information much different from what candidates said about challenges in individual interviews. Therefore, this question was canceled in the main study focus group discussions. The researcher; however, realized that the FGD used in the pilot study could have been a richer source of information if it had included more participants. Hence, it was decided that two FGDs will be conducted with 6 participants each in the main study.

4.7. Data Collection Procedure

The main study data was collected during the first semester of 2011/2012 G.C. or 2004 E.C. Since the data required for this study was not a type where subjects provide it in a classroom at a certain season, the researcher had to look for a convenient time for the data collection. In other words, the data had to be collected at different phases. Hence, once the questionnaire and interview items were revised based on the insights gained from the pilot study, questionnaires were delivered to 40 TEFL PhD candidates and 16 EFL educators of the university. Of the 40 candidates, 35 returned the questionnaire giving a return rate of 87.5%. However, since 5 subjects did not answer some of the questions in the questionnaire, these questionnaires were discarded and hence the analysis of the quantitative information was made for 30 TEFL PhD candidates. Of the 16 questionnaires distributed to EFL educators, 14 were returned giving a return rate of 87.5%. Therefore, the quantitative data was analyzed for 14 EFL educators (supervisors).

A week after the questionnaires had been collected, the interviews were conducted with 5 TEFL PhD students and 5 EFL teacher educators. The interviews were conducted by the researcher himself. At the time of the interview, questions were first read from the written schedule one after another and reasonably enough time was given to respondents to freely express their opinions. Each interview lasted 34 minutes on average. All the interviews were audio-recorded with the consent of the interviewees.

Then two Focus Group Discussions were conducted with 6 TEFL PhD students each in two different days. The discussions were made in Amharic upon the participants' choice and the researcher's belief that it would allow them talk freely. The purpose of the study and the issues on which they would make the discussion were explained to the participants. To encourage free and active participation, participants were informed that their responses would be handled confidentially. The discussions lasted nearly an hour on average. In order to make the discussions more focused in relation to the purpose of the study, they were made semi-structured (Singh, 2008) where questions were asked from a prepared list and the other part is determined by the flow of the discussions. Both discussions were audio-recorded upon the participants' full consent.

After all the questionnaire, interview and FGD data were collected, the remaining data from document reviews was collected. The review followed the following procedures:

In collecting data regarding the research contexts (school levels) given frequent focus in the TEFL PhD researches in progress and those completed in the years 1993-2010 and documented in the university, a data collection frame was adapted from Amare (2000). In studying the state of Educational Research in Ethiopia, Amare (2000) examined the school levels given focus in educational researches in terms of seven categories: General, Tertiary, Secondary, Primary, Pre-Primary, Adult/Non-Formal and Others. These seven categories were revised so that they could fit the purpose of the analysis of the stated documents in the present study. Hence, a frame consisting of six main categories, i.e., Pre-Primary, Primary, Secondary (including junior and senior high schools), Tertiary level (Colleges, Universities and Post graduate levels), Adults/ Non-Formal, and Mixed levels of participants was prepared. Next, 48 topics of TEFL PhD candidates' current research and 20 topics of the completed EFL PhD works done in the years 1993-2010 were coded in terms of these six categories. (While there were originally 71 and 30 research topics respectively of TEFL PhD candidates' current research and the completed EFL PhD works, only 48 and

20 were respectively taken for this analysis (See Appendices P and Q) because it was not possible to categorize the rest topics in any of these classes).

On the other hand, in collecting data regarding the EFL issues given recurrent focus in the candidates' current PhD research and educators' completed EFL PhD works, a data collection frame was adapted from Lin and Cheng (2010). These authors used a frame consisting of 14 categories in studying research trends in selected M.A. TESOL programs in Taiwan. Since three of these categories relate to pure issues of linguistics and computer assisted learning, they were discarded and the remaining 11 categories were retained. These categories are: Affective factors (AF), Culture, Social, or Gender Issues (CSG), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Integrated Skills (IS), Learner Factors (LF), Language Skills (LS), Materials or Curriculum Design and Evaluation (MC), Testing and Evaluation (TEVAL), Teacher Factors (TF), Teaching Method (TM) and Teacher Professional Development (TPD). (See Appendix O for these categories and example content areas for the respective categories adapted from Lin and Cheng (2010)).

This time, all 71 topics of TEFL PhD researches in progress and all 30 topics of the completed EFL PhD works (See Appendices P and Q for the list of these topics) were coded in terms of the 11 categories.

4.8. Methods of Data Analyses

Regarding data analysis in mixed methods research, Dorneyi (2007: 245) notes "in many cases it may be better to keep the analyses separate and only mix the qualitative and quantitative results at a late stage to illuminate or corroborate each other." Creswell (2009) also states that this approach helps to achieve what is termed 'concurrent triangulation' in mixed methods design where comparison between different databases could be made for better effect. For him, mixing of the two types of data, qualitative and quantitative, is made at the interpretation or discussion "to actually merge the data (i.e., transform one type of data to the other type so that they can easily be compared) or integrate or compare the results of two databases side

by side in a discussion" (Creswell, 2009: 213). Hence by adopting this approach, the analysis of data in this study was first made separately for the quantitative and the qualitative information and mixing was made in the discussion and interpretation so that information gathered from different datasets could be integrated in answering the research questions of the study.

4.8.1. The Qualitative Data Analysis

The qualitative information for the study was collected through interviews with both groups of subjects- TEFL PhD candidates and EFL teacher educators of AAU-, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with candidates, teachers' questionnaire (through the open ended items) and the reviews of such official documents of the university as the University Legislation, PhD Guidelines and Governance etc.

Following guidelines in Dornyei (2007), the qualitative information gathered through open-ended questions of EFL teachers' questionnaires were systematically converted into numerical codes and analyzed using percentages. In doing this, first, each educator's response was taken and in turn marked for key themes, then based on the marked themes, the frequency scores of how many times the theme is mentioned in the individual responses were taken and analyzed using percentages.

The procedure used in analyzing the qualitative data from interviews and FGDs was as follows: First, all the audio-recorded interviews for both groups were transcribed verbatim. Next, transcripts of the students' interview and EFL teacher educators' interviews were categorized separately. The raw data from the focus group discussion was also transcribed, translated into English and prepared for analysis.

In this study, since the themes which can describe EFL research culture were identified from the literature, themes are not totally left to emerge from the data just like the approach in grounded theory. Hence, the analysis was done by approaching the data mainly with predetermined categories and

incorporating those which emerged in addition to the predetermined ones (Seliger and Shohamy, 1989, Given, 2008). Therefore, in the analysis, the transcribed information were coded according to the anticipated issues and those themes which emerged from the data, then the codes were grouped into categories and organized under major themes. Then the analysis was made thematically.

In the attempt to get an evidence of reliability regarding the analysis of this qualitative data, a PhD TEFL student was made to review a portion of the interview data and categorize themes in terms of the categories already identified by the researcher (as suggested by Seliger and Shohamy, 1989). In other words, first, the already identified categories were given to the student. Next, a transcription of one interview was given to the student so that he could determine the themes that should enter into the researcher's categories. Those categories on which agreements were observed were maintained. Nearly a 90% agreement was observed between the categories.

Next, the qualitative information taken from the review of official documents of the university was analyzed thematically.

4.8.2. The Quantitative Data Analysis

The data which were collected through questionnaires and the reviews of documents pertaining to the research trends were analyzed quantitatively. In preparing the questionnaire data for the analysis, the data for PhD TEFL students and EFL teacher educators was separately coded. First, students' responses to Likert type and other closed questions were categorized and coded in terms of the different themes pertinent to answering the research questions. And EFL teacher educators' responses to Likert scale type questions were categorized in different themes. Finally the data were analyzed using percentages. Moreover, the quantitative data collected from the review of TEFL PhD candidates' current research topics and of the topic and contents of the completed PhD works were analyzed using percentages.

Finally, as stated earlier, at the stage of the interpretation, findings from both qualitative and quantitative data were consolidated and discussed in terms of the main strands which describe the research culture observed at the TEFL PhD program of AAU; then based on the findings of the study, conclusions were drawn and recommendations were forwarded.

CHAPTER FIVE: DATA ANALYSES, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

5.1. Introduction

On conviction that EFL education in Ethiopia is not well informed by research outputs, and one possible explanation can be related to how EFL research is done at HEIs, this study aimed to investigate the EFL research culture of AAU paying particular attention to the TEFL PhD program. The study employed mixed methods design in which both qualitative and quantitative data were collected from the participants. The design of the study, the procedures employed in the development and validation of data collection instruments, lessons gained from the pilot study, procedures of data collection and analysis were discussed in the preceding chapter. Based on the lessons gained from the pilot study, necessary amendments have been made to the instruments and data has been collected for the main study. This chapter presents the analyses and findings of both the qualitative and quantitative data collected for the main study. It also discusses the results. Findings of interviews are discussed in the first section. This is followed by findings of focus group discussions and the analyses of relevant documents. Finally, the findings of both questionnaires are presented. The chapter ends with the discussion of the major findings of the study.

5.2. Analyses and Findings of Interviews

In this section, the analyses and findings of the data drawn from interviews with five TEFL PhD students and five EFL teacher educators are presented. In the presentation of the findings of these interviews, some information that had been gathered through the interviews made for the pilot study (Appendices H and I) is used when necessary. This is because, qualitative data gathered in the pilot run of such instruments as interviews should not be discarded and can be used in the final analysis (Richards, 2005 in Dornei, 2007:68). Therefore, in the analyses of the findings, the five TEFL

PhD students interviewed for the main study are coded as MS1-MS5, and the five EFL teacher educators (supervisors) interviewed for the main study are coded as MT1- MT5. On the other hand, the codes PS1–PS3 and PT1–PT3 which were given respectively to the three students and the three EFL educators interviewed in the pilot study remain the same in this analysis.

5.2.1. Findings Drawn through Interviews with TEFL PhD Students

The findings drawn from interviews with TEFL PhD candidates are discussed in terms of seven themes: 1) candidates' views on the purpose of their PhD research, 2) their essential considerations in identifying topics for the research, 3) their views about communicating research results, 4) their evaluation of feedbacks given by their supervisors, 5) the aspects of the PhD research on which they want more critical feedback from supervisors, 6) how they see their role in the process of supervision, and 7) their perceived challenges in doing the PhD research.

5.2.1.1 Candidates' Views on the Purpose of their PhD Research

Interviewees expressed that both the readings they are making as part of the research work and the research experience itself will have contributions in their future EFL teaching and research practices. What MS1 and MS3 disclosed during the interview indicates this assertion:

> I hope it [the PhD research] will help me to solve problems of teaching and learning in the actual situation ...although I have had an experience of doing these types of researches (action researches), this PhD work may help me to strengthen this knowledge. (MS1)

> I believe that the readings I am making as part of this research work will also help me to improve my teaching practice as well as to do more research alongside my teaching task. (MS3)

Moreover, noting the more scientific nature of PhD research in general, candidates expressed their belief that the experience will enable them to take part in more demanding professional development activities. MS2's response illustrates this:

> Since PhD research is very scientific and rigorous one, its experience will help me beyond doing action research. It will help me just to produce articles which can be published in standardized journals— local and international. Having passed through all the procedures of the PhD research, I think, I will be confident enough to do these things. (MS2)

Although the candidates again believe that the results of their PhD researches will have implications to policy, EFL teaching, material writing, further research and other related engagements, they invariably expressed their concern that they are doing their research with little hope that their researches will be considered for these purposes. One main reason for that was reported to be the absence of the culture of putting research results into any use. Commenting on this tradition, one respondent, MS5, attributed this failure to the tradition of the university.

> It [the research] has a good benefit for me as well as for others. But the problem is that, when we see the trend or the culture, it is difficult to say material designers and policy makers can use my research product. The trend is that they [the study findings] are just put in libraries as references. The University doesn't at least select some good results of PhD works and communicate to users. The same will be true for our PhD research. (MS5)

These responses indicate that, TEFL PhD candidates have recognized the contribution of their current PhD research in their future EFL teaching as well as their professional development. Candidates are found to have the belief that doing PhD research will have contributions for themselves and for others. They accept that the readings they are making as part of the research and the research practice itself will help them to be effective in their professional practices. Although they feel that the results of their research have practical implications, they resent that there is no system even in the university through which these works can be disseminated to users.

5.2.1.2. TEFL PhD Candidates' Essential Considerations in Choosing Topics for their PhD Research

When asked about what their essential considerations were when they first identified issues for their PhD research, some of the respondents reported that they have initiated issues from the problems they practically observed as EFL teachers. In this regard, MS2 expounded the following:

> Because I have been teaching in Teacher Education College for more than ten years, I have had the chance to see factors that go in teacher education. So, I was aware that some practice in the language classroom was not as productive as it should be. Hence I came to the decision that that issue in general has something to be explored.

Similarly, MS4 reported: "The whole work was motivated by the HDP (Higher Diploma Program) that I participated in. That gave me the opportunity to look into how I was transferring knowledge or skills to trainees because I am a teacher trainer."

However, there were also evidences from the interviewees that what was more important for many of them in their choice of research issues was the novelty of the issue to the local context. This seems to be evident from the tendency of such students to look for research topics from somewhere, e.g., the internet; do research on that and propose solutions for the problems they haven't themselves observed. The following responses from two informants indicate this trend:

> It was a difficult process. We don't have many materials in the libraries; the only reliable source is [the] internet. I've got only some books; therefore, it was difficult to select the research topic. But, after I have got this topic, it was very difficult to contextualize it in our situation (PS3).

> I have tried to browse the PhD dissertations written before and I have found no research done in Ethiopia on the issue I am raising (MS2).

Even some seem to believe that if the research issue is new and big to fit for a PhD work, the relevance of the research will follow suit. In other words, they seem to hold the belief that whether the research is initiated from an

observed problem or not, it will, in one way or another, be relevant to the local context. One interviewee, MS3, explained this as:

> I got the idea from my reading and I was quite sure that the area was not addressed by researchers or graduates of the department of English locally.... I think, it is what is expected from PhD works. Moreover, since the work will be original, I feel that it will be relevant in one way or another to the teaching learning process. (MS3)

This, of course, seems to be the reality for many of the candidates since they practically spend a year or more (after they join the program) looking for a research topic to work on rather than coming with a predetermined research idea.

This analysis revealed that while there are some candidates who claim that they are doing their PhD research on a problem they personally observed, many of them tend to look for research issues from somewhere like the internet and do research on that. Whether the issue to be addressed is or is not relevant to the local context doesn't seem to be taken into consideration.

5.2.1.3. TEFL PhD Students' Views about Communicating their Research Results

Concerning their views about communicating their research results, the candidates that participated in this study indicated that communication of research to potential users such as practitioners, policy and decision makers, and researchers is not part of the research process in the TEFL PhD program of AAU. This, in turn, is constraining students' ambition to produce high quality research works. Students expressed that the university's tradition itself makes them leave this side of the process aside. In this regard, PS2 and MS2 had the following views about communicating their research:

> PhD and MA students are not required to include in the proposal the means of communicating results and the budget for that. And this is an indication that even the institution is not expecting us to communicate our research results. (PS2)

> There is no official request from the university that allows PhD students to submit or to divide their dissertation and publish in journals; there is no way. So, the environment is not conducive in this regard. This will have an impact on our research endeavor. (MS2)

In their comments, candidates talked about the negative impact this tradition has on their determination to make their research serve beyond a fulfillment for securing their degree. MS3 explained: "Who do you think would care about laboring much day and night to produce an excellent research while he or/she knows that the research will work no more than completing the PhD? I know that I am doing it for the same purpose and it will be kept on the shelf." MS4 said: "When a researcher finalizes his work, then he will get a qualification and get gratified by what he has got and then he would be called with some title. And then he will forget everything. That is the problem I usually observe."

For them, the inclusion in dissertations of recommendations to policy makers, textbook writers, EFL teachers, and other supposed beneficiaries is no more than a requirement. One respondent, MS3, stated the prevailing culture associated with this as: "...so you do the research and at the end you will write some recommendations to the usual stakeholders such as for policy makers and curriculum writers any way. You know and even your examiners know that you do this simply as a requirement."

The analysis of this data showed that the absence of the tradition of disseminating results of PhD research in the university (e.g., through publications) is making students leave the idea of communicating research aside. And their understanding that their research will serve no more than a reference in library is making them produce works which help them simply to graduate.

5.2.1.4. Students' Evaluation of Feedbacks Given by Their Supervisors

Two main issues emerged concerning the supervisors' feedback to the candidates' research works. First, only some supervisors provide critical

feedback; second, follow up discussions are not given due attention by most supervisors.

A) Only Some Supervisors Provide Critical Feedback

It was learnt from the responses of the interviewees that some supervisors are providing critical and constructive feedback to their students and others are not. MS1 said, during the interview, that his supervisor had always been critical and supportive: "My supervisor is really critical in reading my paper from the beginning up to now. He has been reading my paper critically. I think, it was he who guided me in the right way." Sharing a related view, another interviewee, MS4, explained:

> The supervisor I am now referring to is a person who has had an impact on the work I am doing because he knows it to a certain extent that he himself has done a PhD work on the area I am working on. Therefore, starting from identifying the problem which I came with, he was so happy to even reshape the topic itself several times, commenting on the research problems.

However, the case is different for other students. They reported that their supervisors are not as critical and supportive as they expected them to be. In explaining how much his expectation was not met and the mistrust he developed on the feedback he was receiving from his supervisor, MS3 stated:

> I thought that as a supervisor he would look throughout my work....but he doesn't evaluate my work critically and hence I don't have trust on the feedbacks. Surprisingly, just to show me that he has read all the work, he underlines something on some pages, puts a number of question marks with no clue. ..What those questions mean is not clear for me... I can say clear, relevant and constructive comments are not received from the supervisor.

Another interviewee, MS5 who had two supervisors reported a similar experience he faced with one of his supervisors:

> My expectation was that they would help me a lot; for example, I expected that they would just arrange situations to discuss issues, just to be friendly and to see my papers critically. But these things were not met. The first supervisor was not helping me; his oral as well as written feedback was not helpful.

Although the interview with candidates did not provide any evidence about the reasons, some candidates expressed that some supervisors are less critical when reading their supervisees' works than when reading the works of other students as anonymous readers or examiners. For example, PS2 said: "You know most of the time I see that supervisors are more critical when they read research works as evaluators or examiners than when they see these works as advisors."

On the other hand, with one exception, all interviewees resented that their supervisors are not giving written feedback in time. Here is one candidate, MS5, stating how he was forced to leave his advisor due to this reason: "I gave him my research proposal. And he didn't return that document for two months. After two months when I asked him, he couldn't find it. I just reprinted another proposal and resubmitted. So I was so irritated and finally I was forced to leave him and be with only one advisor." There were evidences from interview responses that even students who get critical feedback from their supervisors are not free from this problem of delay of feedbacks as indicted by one of the respondents, MS4:

> His support at all times was very important but at times when he feels he is busy with something else which I can't tell, then I get discouraged to do the whole work, then months pass without again getting critical comment from the work you do. At the end of the day you would face a problem when it comes to examiners or people who come for the upgrading programs.

This seems to indicate that although some students get critical feedback, the long time it takes to get the feedback from supervisors is again creating other problems, such as waste of time and discouragement on the advisee.

B) Responses Regarding Whether Follow up Discussions are Given Due Attention by Many Supervisors or Not

It is obvious that the process of supervision normally involves face-to-face discussions between supervisors and students, especially after written feedback is given on the students' works. This enables both parties to reach common understanding about the research issues. However, the evidence from the interviews suggests that many supervisors do not give the required attention to this side of the supervision. One informant, MS3, explicitly explained this gap:

> There should be some time to have discussion with the supervisor. I can say that during my stay here, we didn't have any experience of discussing on my paper. We don't make discussions on his written feedback and the feedback I receive from reviewers and examiners. I need the supervisor to arrange sometime to discuss on my work. Because through the discussion, I expect that my ideas will be clear and his ideas will be made clear. He can have better insight about my work. But these things are missing.

There are also instances when students don't understand supervisors' comments. In such situations, since they are not given the chance for face-to-face discussions, they do not have opportunities to get clarifications on these comments and hence they find it difficult to use feedback for improving their work. Concerning this point, one of the interviewees, PS3 reported:

> You know, my supervisor wants to give me only written comments. He writes them on my paper. The problem is sometimes I don't understand what he wants to say in the comments. In such situations although I want him to invite me for face-to-face discussions and explain these comments, he doesn't do that. Therefore, if you don't understand comments, you don't make use of them. (PS3)

Overall, the results reported here reveal that there are some supervisors who give critical feedback on the students' works and assist students to shape their works. But, other supervisors are not critical in their feedback and hence students do not sometimes have trust on the relevance of such feedback. Moreover, many supervisors do not give students the chance for face-to-face discussions. Due to this, when students don't understand the

written feedback, they don't have the chance to get some clarification and hence they do not benefit from such feedback.

5.2.1.5. The Areas on which Students Need Critical Feedback from Supervisors

Interview results were enlightening about the types of gaps on which candidates need more critical feedback and support from their supervisors. Of the different parts of the research on which candidates want more critical feedback, frequent mention was made of methodology and the objective and research question parts of the introduction.

For the students, since the methodology section is central in the research and is easily exposed to questions e.g., by examiners, they want their supervisors to pay attention to this part in their feedback. MS1 explained: "I usually want his help on the methodological part because this part is the core part of the research. So not only my advisor, I think, other advisors should focus on that area. Because it is liable to questions; it can be easily exposed to others to raise questions." MS5 also stated that he has some deficiencies in these parts and hence he wants his supervisor to focus on these parts: "I want his special support in the methodological part because this is the main part of the research. We are not familiar with this part. Equally important is the introduction i.e., the statement of the problem, the objective part. I have some limitations in this part."

Language accuracy is something that candidates believe to be an aspect of the research they (candidates) have to take care of by themselves or with their colleagues. During the interviews, two candidates, MS3 and MS4, explicitly disclosed that they don't want their supervisors to worry about giving feedback on the language used:

> With regard to my language accuracy, I think the great responsibility lies on me. And then, I have to do every possible means to write, rewrite, read, reread and give it for some other colleagues so that they could do that aspect. ...Therefore, I think, this is the kind of thing that a supervisor should do. That is what I believe. (MS4)

> I don't expect him to give comments on the language whatever; whatever. (MS3)

Hence, from the analysis of this data it is evident that TEFL PhD candidates need feedback on the contents of their research works particularly the methodology and the objective and research questions. However, they have the belief that supervisors should not worry about the language in their feedback.

5.2.1.6. How Candidates See their Responsibility in the Process of Supervision

TEFL PhD candidates were asked whether they clearly know what their responsibilities should be in helping the supervision be successful and whether they believe they have discharged these responsibilities. They accepted that responsibility is shared one in the context of research supervision and hence they have a responsibility in making the process successful. For them, doing the research work according to a set plan, regular contact with supervisors and openly raising issues to supervisors are among the roles they should play.

Some candidates believe that they are discharging these responsibilities in the process. For such students, the openness of their supervisors has helped them to do these things. In indicating how this quality of his supervisor helped him in this regard, MS1 noted: "I want to talk to him personally because he is open to me. If I have any problem, I can ask him openly." Similarly, MS4 reported the openness with his supervisor as:

> Once he repeatedly was making question mark on a research question that was included in the initial stage. And I persisted on telling him that this should be kept as it is. So I didn't simply throw away the question. Once we sat down and had heated arguments whether to include and exclude it. So finally, I just brought a piece of work done on that and then when I read and he understood the way it was dealt with, he was so happy with my arguments. So, we were as much as possible open and there are other instances I could tell. It is not only about the subject matter but also about issues related to the research work indirectly. Like for example, family problems. (MS4)

On the other hand, other candidates admitted that they don't confidently say they have discharged these responsibilities to the level expected. They tended to attribute this failure more to lack of encouragement from supervisors. Some expressed their feeling that although they want to solve problems they face in the process of the research by openly dealing with their supervisors, supervisors tend not to welcome this: MS3 explained the situation as:

> Yes, a lot is expected from supervisees in this respect. I wanted to have very intimate or close relationship with him so that I can share with him whatever challenge I face in my work. I tried to do that but what I have experienced is that asking or approaching to get support from supervisors doesn't give you some freedom. I don't know what to say; the supervisor doesn't like that. My interest was to have regular contact and to share what I have done for the supervisor and to be always available for whatever comments the supervisor may want to give me. But the reality is different.

Another side of this problem was observed from the interview results in that some candidates do not believe that they have a responsibility to make things right but only the supervisor should. For this reason, they tend to accept whatever the supervisor says with fidelity. MS5's response shows this problem:

> I don't be desired to explain what I feel to my advisor and to deal with these issues. But the problem is not with me; it is with my advisor. I feel that my advisor is not voluntary to accept my idea and to take my idea as important; I don't feel relaxed to just explain my idea. I fear that if I say this, he may not feel happy. Regardless of the importance of open discussion, I have to accept whatever he says. Even the present advisor I am working with shares this quality. ...I don't think I can make him flexibly accept others' idea.

This analysis, thus, indicated that some candidates contribute something positive in the process of supervision for the openness and friendly treatment of their supervisors encourages them to do so. But others do not do the same and attribute this failure to the inability of supervisors to give them this opportunity.

5.2.1.7. Students' Perceived Challenges in Doing the PhD Research

Evidences from interviews with TEFL PhD candidates indicated that there are practical challenges which affect the research activities of candidates. In their responses students reported a range of challenges of which the following were frequently mentioned:

A) Financial Constraint

Informants expressed this as one of the most serious challenges affecting their activity at different stages of the research. In indicating how financial constraint directly affects the process of his research, MS3 noted:

> It is obvious that with 20 thousand Birr you cannot do PhD research. So the financial constraint is definitely affecting my work. ... To be frank, due to financial constraint, we are not collecting enough data required for our research. If you take my case, for example; I took a very small sample for the pilot study and I am doing the same for the main study because with that little money I couldn't travel to different places and address different participants.

They also admitted that they are not giving the research the required attention for they have to do other part time works to satisfy the financial needs. PS2 explained: "in order to meet the financial needs of the study and support your family, you have to find alternatives even to do some other private works and this in one way or another would affect the research work; that is really a very serious challenge I am facing right now."

B) Inadequacy of Support from the Department

Informants invariably expressed their concern that the department is not providing the required support to students in the research process. Some informants were explicit in their comments that the department is aggravating the financial problem that has already been there in the university. MS2 explained this as:

> When I came to this department, I thought I will be treated as the PhD candidates of other departments or fields in the same department. But I was very shocked to learn that the money allocated to TEFL PhD students went somewhere which I still don't know. .... I know that there are financial problems in the university, but on top of that, the department has created another financial problem on us by turning our budget somewhere. So that was really very disappointing.

Candidates also reflected on the lack of adequate control from the department on whether things are going smoothly between supervisors and students as well as between examiners and students. They expressed their resentment that instead of checking the problems they are facing in the research process and providing solutions, the department tends to write warning letters for their delay. MS3 reported: "I could say the department is not working well. ... It does not push supervisors, examiners and anonymous readers to give feedbacks timely and to handle their supervisees. But, you know, in order to make them free from the accountability, warning notices and letters are forwarded for candidates. So we candidates are under great trouble." Another candidate, MS5, also mentioned that lack of research-related information in the department is making some students to work on similar topics: "I observed that three students were working on the same topic. I think the department was the cause for this. It had to have some system of notifying who is working on what."

C) Challenges Related to Presentations

Students expressed their concern that seminars are given lesser attention these days and what is happening in defense presentations is not also encouraging. MS4 noted: "the seminars we conduct used to be Ok. But recently, I just sense that things are really atrophying, they are getting away for the reasons you don't know." He was also explicit in his comments that examiners are highly evaluative and do not motivate presenters to do better.

> It is very good to have anonymous readers; it is very good to sit for examinations. But the problem is sometimes people fail to come with appropriate suggestions advice and questions. But they come all with the stance of just picking out bits and pieces of problems and then magnify them like anything have gone wrong. They ought to tell you about the positive sides of your work, appreciate it so that you would be motivated to do better and then little by little come to issues that they feel you have really failed to attempt to. The whole thing I see in the upgrading programs and the kinds of comments they give you, there is no due respect for the work you do. But magnifying smaller mistakes and therefore demoralizing one not to go ahead with what he had in mind.

5.2.2. Findings Drawn through Interviews with EFL Teacher Educators of AAU

The findings obtained from the analysis of interviews held with EFL teacher educators' are presented in terms of four themes: 1) educators' views about the role of doing EFL research, 2)their motivation and current involvement in research activities, 3)their perceived challenges in doing and disseminating EFL researches at the university, 4)their supervisory practices in the TEFL PhD program.

5.2.2.1. EFL Educators' Views about the Role of Doing EFL Research

One of the EFL educators, MT1, explained the reason why they themselves should do research: "The academic staff should do research basically to maximize and enhance their understanding in the fields they are engaged in." The specific role of research engagement for effective language teaching is expressed by MT5 as: "Language teachers have the task of helping their learners to master skills in the communicative use of the target language; they can do this if and only if they are engaged in research."

The study revealed that EFL teacher educators of AAU strongly believe that doing research has a lot of contributions both for students and themselves. For them, involvement in research has an important role in their professional development and their EFL teaching.

5.2.2.2. EFL Educators' Motivation and Current Involvement in Research Activity

These EFL professionals were asked to reflect on their motivation in doing EFL researches at the university and on their current involvement in research activities. Informants gave the following responses:

> In the university legislation, it is clearly put that academic staff should not only do teaching; they should also do research...Again in your promotion one of the requirements is research. These might be factors in the external motivation, but in my case the internal motivation comes first to do research. (MT1)

> If I participate in research, it is because I want to be part of this journey of discovery. So I am here in a higher institution because of internal motivation that is to say I have the urge to know, to grasp, to find out, and to discover. (MT4)

> I do research with the view toward providing students with clear learning. (MT5)

The study, thus, indicated that when these EFL professionals do research, they do it due to some internal motivation rather than the demand from the university or for promotion.

Although these educators recognize the contribution of research in their professional practices and accepted that doing research is part of their professional responsibility, they admitted that they are not currently involved in research activity to the level expected. Their biggest challenge was found to be the huge amount of work around them especially in relation to teaching and advising students both in undergraduate and post graduate programs. In this connection, one informant, MT3, expounded:

> I don't know if it applies to other departments. But in our department there is very large number of MA and PhD students. And you have them as your advisees and added to that we also have 12 hours [per week] of expected teaching [load] in a semester. This, I think, will not make you have time for yourself and for professional development.... So the first and perhaps the biggest problem to stop us from getting involved in research is the number of advisees we have in the post graduate program.

Evidences from the study also indicated that although these educators are concerned that the number of students they advise is increasing from time to time, they don't seem to believe that this has a negative impact on the quality of the supervisory support they provide to individual students. For example, during the interview, MT2 said: "I don't think there is a very big difference between what I now do and what I used to do some five or six years ago when there were fewer advisees. So, it is not a question of as such compromising the way it is but it is a question of the fact that the task is requiring more of my time."

In the context of supervision, if tasks are requiring more time than they used to be due to the increasing number of students, it is likely that supervisors spend less than the required time reading students' works and this may have also an impact on the quality of the feedback given. But, this educator doesn't seem to accept this.

They still seem to believe that what they are doing in the supervision of graduate students is itself another side of their involvement in research activities and hence they are not far from research activities. For example, one supervisor, MT3, stated:

> I don't actually have any time set aside for doing research on my own. But, in one way or another, I am involved in it because I am supervising a number of MA and PhD students, which simply implies that I have to do the reading myself in any way and I have to have practical ideas in terms of what my students like me to contribute.

This may mean that since these educators have the feeling that they are already in the task of doing researches (though indirectly), they may not be that concerned about their failure to do EFL researches of their own. This may actually be one of the reasons why they were doubtful about whether or not the increase in the number of advisees from time to time has an impact on the quality of the support they give to research students.

Overall, these responses revealed that when EFL educators of AAU do EFL research, they do it not because of the demand from the university or for

promotion but to satisfy their professional needs. Although they admitted that they are not involved in research activities themselves, they believe that they are not that far from the activity for the fact that they are now supervising students' research activities.

5.2.2.3. Educators' Perceived Challenges in Doing and Disseminating EFL Research at the University

In addition to the already mentioned reason, work load, EFL educators talked about numerous challenges that are going counter to their practices of doing and disseminating EFL research at the university. The interview results indicated that inadequate reward, shortage of research fund and infrastructure, problems relating to publishing and poor culture of collaboration are the major challenges facing these educators.

A) Inadequate Reward

These educators mentioned one important reward they feel is missing in the country in general and this university in particular, i.e., the failure to see research results put into any use. For them, the inability to see research results (including those produced by graduate students) being used for solving problems in the country is what comes to the forefront of all other problems. What PT1 noted illustrates this:

> The most important reward should have been seeing the findings of your research solving some problems in the country. That doesn't happen unfortunately. If you take MA and PhD researches in this department, I haven't seen any of these research findings tried out in the field and used by professionals in the schools, colleges and universities. That is a pity. In many parts of the world, research contributes a lot to the development of the field of studies you are in. It doesn't happen here. If someone is serious at one time in this country, I think this is what is required to be considered.

Almost all educators commented that doing research doesn't bring them financial as well as material rewards and hence there is no point in laboring much to do more research at the university. For example, MT2 noted: "I can't think of any financial or material rewards that I know." Another educator,

MT4, was firm in his comments that doing research and teaching in general especially in the social sciences are not rewarding activities for what benefits more these days is not what one brings to the knowledge market:

> The material expectations of teaching and research especially in the social sciences are very much limited because the intellectual market is not perfect. What is more important than what you bring to the knowledge market through research is your connections. ... Look at the people who are making a lot of money. They are simply the most connected; they are not the most able.

As this respondent said, the value given to research and doers at the university is deteriorating from time to time and hence the university academics are not interested in doing individual as well as collaborative research.

B) Lack of Research Fund and Infrastructure

The scarcity of financial and material resources at the university is found to be another factor affecting the research activities of these educators. In this regard, one of the educators, MT1, explained,: "if you want to do research, then you don't always get appropriate fund. The university doesn't have the capacity to allocate sufficient fund. ... Space is also a constraint because facilities are not enough in the university to do research." It was also found that even when there are opportunities to get some research funds from the university, the bureaucracy at different levels creates another challenge. MT4 explained how this bureaucracy mostly forces some staff to give up and others to look for other funds from outside the university:

> Many people would go for personal funds for doing their own researches, because the troubles at the finance office, budget office, at every level of the bureaucracy in higher education, there are many impediments that send a message to you—don't try this; research is bad. If it is bad then, many people logically would give up.

While looking for alternative funds from outside the university is positive for curbing this financial problem of the university, this tendency may also force

the university staff to do research that satisfies the funding organizations rather than the university.

C) Problems Related to Publishing

It is true that getting published in reputable journals and getting subsequent promotions are the other important rewards which motivate university academics to do more research. However, interview results indicated that EFL educators of AAU are not encouraged in this line for there are basically no alternative reputable journals at the University. Educators resented that there are only one or two such journals and hence the competition is so fierce that they have to wait even for years to get published in these journals. For MT2, this is the main reason why he is not motivated to do research and disseminate findings: "the problem that I have personally faced is that when you send your articles for publication, they keep them for too long and you lose interest to do more research; this is the major problem."

In the educators' views, this is worsened by the fact that academic promotion in the university is now requiring more reputable publications than it used to be. In his interview response, one educator, MT4, explained how this decision of the university practically contradicts to its own claim to encourage the staff to do more research:

> When I was a graduate assistant, what was required for promotion was one reputable article published in a journal. At the same time the requirement for associate professorship was one article. The money then was important; the difference was important. Now, they have doubled the requirement at the time when the money is less important; the professorship is less important because if you put a market value on the professorship today, it means nothing. Look at the contradiction here. The realities on the ground and what we are doing in the university represent an antithesis and big contradictions.

While it is admitted by the staff members themselves that the university so far does not have a good culture of research publishing and dissemination; the new requirement for more reputable articles for promoting from one rank

to the other seems to foreshadow a less motivating future for these educators in terms of doing more EFL researches and disseminating findings.

D) Culture of Collaboration

Although these EFL educators have recognized the value of doing collaborative researches especially for their professional development, they admitted that this hasn't become a tradition at the faculty or the department. These educators rarely do EFL research in collaboration with their colleagues as well as their supervisees.

Some educators have expressed that they are not doing collaborative research not because other people are unwilling, but they themselves haven't taken personal initiatives, as such a tradition is not well developed. MT1 was explicit in his remark: "If I want to do any research with somebody else, I can do. There is no constraint actually. People don't say 'No, I don't want to work with you.' But the only thing is because it hasn't been in my culture to do together; that has got a very poor beginning."

Another educator, MT4, attributes this individualization to flawed attitudes of the staff towards collaboration. For him what is happening at this institution is contrary to the acclaimed Ethiopian culture of working together:

> The literature would tell you that this country is one of the countries with collectivist cultures— we work together; we eat together; etc. In higher education, this is fallacious. We are highly individualistic as this line up of articles would show you and many others. So, we have a totally flawed attitude towards doing research collectively although there are many advantages.

This informant added that rather than doing research as a team and publishing together, people go secretly to the office of the managing editor and submit articles solo and secretly. In stating the reason why they do this, he noted: "they want to publish one or two articles solo and get promoted and then sit or sleep after that. They don't want to worry about calculations

of shares by co-authoring articles. And you can see clearly that the motive is for promotion." (MT4)

Moreover, there doesn't seem to be a positive collegial relationship that encourages educators to help one another over research issues. Commenting on the absence of such a culture at different levels of the university and how that is specifically reflected in the research reviewing process of publications, PT1 explained:

> For some reason, the collegiality here, you know, the support we have for each other as academic staff, I don't think is really positive. ....People always want to see your efforts, would I say negatively? So it is not very encouraging as you know usually your paper may not get through as for some reason unless otherwise this by some chance went to somebody close to you. People are not very positive in encouraging others. Very honestly, I can't see the staff encouraging each other in this line.

Some educators seemed to be with the opinion that they do things (the teaching and advising) mostly with students and hence they don't have many things to do with other colleagues. That seems the reason why MT3 noted: "it is just that you do things with students most of the time. Other than that, may be you need to talk to colleagues only when you are teaching the same course, when you are using or sharing the same teaching materials between two or three or advising the same students in 2s or in 3s." These educators do not seem to have the belief that they have to purposely collaborate with their colleagues on such activities as research though their teaching and advising require their individual efforts.

Hence, from this data, it was learnt that EFL educators' activities of doing and disseminating EFL research are constrained by the absence of psychological, financial and material rewards for they don't see results of researches used in solving problems of the country and doers are not benefiting from the activity. Shortage of funds and research infrastructure as well as lack of alternative journals is also found to affect their determination to do these activities. Moreover, the under-developed culture of collaboration is contributing to this lack of collaborative research among these educators.

5.2.2.4. EFL Teacher Educators' Supervisory Practices

The findings of the study in relation to the supervisory practices of EFL educators are discussed in terms of three themes: 1) educators' views about their roles in supervising TEFL PhD students in the research process, 2) the aspects of the research (e.g., content, language etc.) they usually focus on in giving feedback to students, and 3) their perceived challenges in the process of supervision.

A) How EFL Educators See their Roles in the Supervision

During the interviews, supervisors disclosed that their role is instrumental in the students' research works. However, they seem to share the same sentiment that students should take more responsibility in the whole process. One main reason they mentioned was the assumption that as PhD students, these candidates have good theoretical background necessary to conduct research and hence they are expected to demonstrate that in the PhD research. In relation to this, one informant (PT1) noted: "they have to think, they know the principle, they have the theoretical knowledge and putting that into practice is up to them and I guide them and show them the way and doing it is up to them."

However in the actual practice of supervision, this seems to be an issue about which supervisors and students lack some clarity. Supervisors expressed their concern that they don't sometimes know how much they should contribute in the students' works and how much students should do by themselves. Here is a supervisor, MT3, explaining how much his expectation of his own role contradicts to his advisees' wants:

> If you want to do as much as anything, may be you are playing the role the student is expected to play and you are denying him the opportunity to become [an] autonomous thinking individual. But still there are a number of ideas where we (both students and supervisors) don't really have clear ideas about our roles. There are students who want you to do most of the job for them. It doesn't mean that they don't have the potential to do that; but it simply means they feel that that is what supervisors are there to do.

Sharing a related view, another supervisor, MT1, stated how the absence of some clear guideline about the roles of students and supervisors is a problem for him. He reported: "the problem is there is no clear advisor-advisee relationship guideline, for example; the roles of the advisee and the advisor...so there is role confusion. ...If you take other (foreign) universities, I think, they have clear guidelines. So whoever is engaged in the program has a very defined role that he/she operates in accordance with those things given in the guideline. But in our case that is quite missing." This concern has been implicated in another supervisor's (MT5) recommendation that "it [Addis Ababa University] should have clear policies on supervision and research, ensure that these are known to students and monitor them."

B) Aspects of the Research which Supervisors Pay More Attention to in Providing Feedback

Respondents indicated that there is some similarity in the types of gaps on which supervisors most frequently comment in giving feedbacks to research students. It was found that with some exceptions, supervisors frequently focus on the methodology, research designs, objectives and research questions. Supervisors mentioned two reasons for their recurrent focus on these aspects of the research. One is their belief that these parts are very decisive in the research and poor beginning in these parts would lead students to poor instruments and poor data. The second is their observation that students have serious limitations in these aspects of the research. MT1 explained:

> I usually spend time helping them to specify, limit, narrow their research objective, research questions whatever. Once they do that, I always take time to help them in identifying the proper research design type for their work. So once they do this, things get clearer later. So other issues like research instrument, format and language issues, to me, are secondary. These are things that the students can control by themselves or anybody can help them in editing. It is not a big deal.

Whereas this educator noted that language is one of the things that he does not want to pay attention to in his feedback, almost all educators disclosed

that language is another aspect of the research that they pay attention to in their feedback. The following responses from different educators indicate this trend:

> ...and language matters are there and you don't simply leave it to students and expect them to take care of that. (MT3)
>
> When I go through students' papers, I usually almost edit the work. So in that sense, I think I also try to check the language and also help the students write correctly. (MT2)
>
> Students need help in all areas such as language, method and theoretical position (MT5)

C) Supervisors' Perceived Challenges in the Process of the Supervision

It is true that the already mentioned challenges such as workload and lack of rewards will inevitably have considerable influence on the supervisory practices of EFL educators. However, during the interviews, these educators have also mentioned challenges specifically related to the process of supervision. Hence, as seen from the perspectives of these EFL educators, the process of supervision in the TEFL PhD program of AAU is found to have lots of problems in relation to students and the program itself.

I) Problems Related to Students

With one exception (MT2), all supervisors expressed their concern that the commitment of students in the research work is below what is required and their research performance is also relatively low. MT1 seriously commented: "A very outstanding problem with my advisees is many of them are not really committed. Some of them tended to depend on the advisor actually. ...So usually my problem is they don't have the commitment they got to do the work. So they don't read. I know that they don't read. You can see that from their work." The following responses from three supervisors reflect their concerns about the research performance of students:

> Some students do not have the skills and abilities of a PhD work.' (MT5),

> At the PhD, many don't know what the problem statement stands for. They don't know. So I don't even know what research courses they have really taken.' (MT4)
>
> Students usually have problems in specifying their objectives.... They don't know the relationship between their research objective and the kind of their research deigns. There are different research designs. You know, again they don't know that. So that is a problem. (MT1).

Moreover, some supervisors were explicit in their comments that many of their advisees do not have the required language competence to do the PhD. One supervisor, PT2, explained: "TEFL is teaching English as a foreign language, but I'm sorry to say this, a good number of students I advise do not have enough English themselves let alone teaching the language and doing a PhD in it."

II) Problems Related to the Program

With one exception, all educators expressed that since there are large number of students in the graduate program, they are forced to supervise students working in all areas. One supervisor, MT2, noted: "I would prefer to advise students on writing areas. But I am asked to advise students on all areas— grammar, vocabulary, reading, listening, speaking and other related areas. I think this is one problem." This may actually be due to the fact that the number of students in the graduate program is increasing from time to time and it has become practically difficult to assign supervisors only on their specialization and interest. But this seems to indicate that some students are not getting the appropriate expert support from their supervisors which may in turn have an impact on the quality of the research done.

Educators also expressed their concern that since there is no an organized system of control for the research activities of candidates in the program, they don't have a means of checking whether or not students are coming with original works. Even some supervisors explicitly commented that they are seeing a lot of duplication of research in the program these days and

hence they are losing interest to exert their full energy in supervising students. For example, MT2 stated the following:

> the problem is that there is, these days, a lot of duplication and repeating what has already been done. And some students lack the commitment and dedication to go deep into the pains of doing research and come up with new ideas. I sense that people want easy way out. I think, in that sense as an advisor I am losing interest.

Losing interest because of their observation of duplications in the students' researches may also mean that such supervisors' determination to provide critical feedbacks on the students' works is affected to some degree. This will again have a negative impact on the quality of the research.

One of the educators, MT4, reported that there is no an organized research database at the university and hence, supervisors don't have the opportunity to crosscheck whether students are repeating research topics knowingly or unknowingly: "We are heading towards a tragedy. Unless something is done, there is an impending scientific tragedy. Now we have 30 universities let us say. In principle, why would it be impossible for anyone to bring an MA thesis from Bahir Dar University, Gondar University and put it here? And tomorrow, why not even a PhD?"

Evidences from the interviews have also indicated that due to the absence of this controlling mechanism in the TEFL graduate program, there have even been some attempts of plagiarism. MT1 explained: "because we don't have that culture, then students sometimes attempted plagiarism. I know students who have been identified plagiarizing very significant portions of MA and PhD papers. The cases are very common but the problem is how that can be controlled."

These educators sadly expressed their concern that for one reason or another, the quality of research at the graduate program is deteriorating; and research ethics has become no concern for many these days. Based on his observation of what is going on in the M.A. program, MT4 expressed his fear as:

> Around the university there are now research machines. Give them a topic, they will identify the problem, they will write up, give them some money. So now where are we heading? This is being done for MA students and tomorrow you will see for PhD students. You can literally buy a degree now. It is capitalism. Ethics is not a big concern for many people in this country these days. So it is a big concern.

For MT1, many students in the graduate program (both MA and PhD) are graduating without doing quality research. He explained:

> Due to the reasons mentioned, many of the researches are under question now. Quality is really suffering at a large scale in this university. It is not something that you can only see with few graduates. ... If you take some works randomly, I could say 80-90% of the MA thesis do not really meet the standards if you like. You can see how many of them are graduating without maintaining quality. The same thing applies in the PhD program.

These concerns of the educators seem to indicate that although students have the responsibility to make an original contribution through their research, the lack of control in the TEFL program in general is paving the way for students not to be serious in their works, subsequently producing low quality research.

Hence, from this analysis, it was learnt that EFL educators of AAU accept that their role as a supervisor is instrumental in the students' research work, but students should take more responsibility for they are assumed to have possessed the basic research skills. However, the absence of a clear supervisor-supervisee relationship guideline in the program is creating uncertainty on both parties regarding what roles they should play in the process. In the feedbacks they provide to students, most of the supervisors are found to focus more on the methodology, design, objective, research questions and the language aspects of the research. From the perspectives of supervisors, students' lack of commitment, the relatively low research performance, absence of controlling mechanism on the originality of students' works are challenges they are facing in the process of the supervision. For them, these realities are contributing to the deterioration in the quality of the researches done in the TEFL program.



5.3. Findings Drawn via Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

For the purpose of getting supplementary insights about the research-related experiences of TEFL PhD candidates, two focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted with six candidates each. Hence this space is devoted to the presentation of the results of these FGDs. The results of these discussions are organized in terms of three main themes: 1) candidates' openness in dealing with research matters with other students, 2) their relationship with their supervisors, and 3) their PhD seminar and defense-related practices. For the ease of discussion, the six participants of the first FGD are given codes from MF1-6 and the other six participants of the second FGD are given codes from MF7-12.

5.3.1. Candidates' Openness in Dealing with Research Matters with Other Students

It was learnt from these discussions that TEFL PhD students have a strong belief that open exchange of ideas with other students has considerable contribution in doing their research effectively. In indicating why such discussions are important especially in this program, MF11 stated: "since there are no enough resources in libraries, one possible means of solving our research-related problems is having peer discussions, especially with senior friends." Some reported that their supervisors have advised them to use such discussions as alternative sources of inputs as one of the participants noted: "My advisor usually tells me that I should not expect everything from him and instead discuss issues with my friends." (MF6)

However, evidences from the discussions indicated that TEFL PhD students rarely exchange research-related information with other students. Participants attributed this failure to their cultural background and the actual environment where they are now doing the PhD research. The long-standing culture of competition that characterizes the educational systems of the country is admittedly contributing to this. Concerning this, one of the participants, MF4, commented: "as far as our educational background is concerned, the culture is you study secretly and beat others; you don't

cooperate with others. I think, this tradition is still with us. If you ask someone now about something, he/she will tell you that they have no idea even though they know it very well."

Perhaps a more serious extension of this problem that is blocking students' interest for open deliberations over research matters is reported by another participant (MF3), i.e., students' apprehension that their research topics may be snatched by others: "We observe that some students snatch ideas and even research topics from their friends and submit secretly. For this reason, I personally don't have the interest to talk about my research openly."

These days, the absence of thematic networks of candidates was found to contribute to the perpetuation of the tradition of not talking about one's own research. Participants were with the opinion that the institute is not making conscious efforts to help them get out of this tradition. In explaining what the department/faculty could have done in this line, one participant, MF8, commented:

> In the program we candidates are not organized in terms of our research themes and hence no one knows who is working on what. Due to this, it is difficult to find candidates who are working on related areas and make productive discussions, and exchange information about our research and even exchange literature. The institute is not doing that.

Discussants also commented that the opportunity to develop such important traditions such as free exchange of opinions and cooperative work, through open discussions with others is almost missing in the program. In their opinion, the weekly PhD seminars and defense sessions which were meant for students' open exchange of ideas are not helping them to the level expected for candidates are mostly passive observers when interactions happen between examiners and presenters or between facilitators and presenters (This is discussed in more detail below).

In the discussions, participants also reflected on the lack of such professional qualities even among the staff and noted that they are not benefiting in this line. MF12's statement illustrates this point:

> As a PhD student, I expect to learn many things in the program. I think, I have to learn not only about how I can do effective research, but how I can openly argue and freely exchange opinions with other minds. I expect to learn these important qualities from experienced professionals i.e., our teachers or supervisors. But we never see our teachers doing that through, for example, presentations of their works. So, who should be our models to teach us about free and open discussions on research matters?

In general, from this analysis, it was found that although TEFL PhD candidates could gain much lessons from other students in the program by openly discussing research matters together (Gardner, 2010), they are not doing it. While they are primarily influenced by their own cultural background, i.e., the tradition of competing one another, the environment where they are doing their PhD research now is not also helping them to change this tradition. There is no system by which students working on related areas sit together and exchange useful information. Moreover, these students do not seem to gain these lessons in presentation sessions since students are passive observers in these sessions and even they don't see models of open professional exchanges there.

5.3.2. Candidates' Relationship with Supervisors

Evidences from this study also indicated that although TEFL PhD candidates make comparatively more discussions with their supervisors than with other PhD students, there is mostly a unidirectional flow of ideas from supervisors in discussions. In other words, students' role in discussions is largely receptive for they don't have the courage to enter into open dialogue with supervisors. What one participant, MF4, noted illustrates this tendency:

> Comparatively, I make discussions more with my advisor than with other PhD students because my advisor has taken the responsibility and I acknowledged his responsibility too. Moreover, I believe that he can help me with my shortcomings. But in the discussions I do with him, I don't have the courage to openly say what I have in my mind. I simply take his comments and if I am asked to include or cancel something which I didn't think of, I try my best to consider that; otherwise I don't want to express my feelings and beliefs face-to-face.

For this respondent, entering into open discussions and arguments with supervisors and disclosing everything in front of them is against the accepted cultural norms that he has been accustomed to. He noted: "I grew up in a culture where we students should accept what the teacher gives us."

Implying how the 'traditional distance' between students and teachers is affecting the degree of openness of students to supervisors, another participant, MF5, expressed: "For me there is always a very formal relationship between we, students, and our teachers and this distance is always there whether we are in undergraduate or postgraduate (MA or PhD) level. Hence in the absence of a friendly relationship, I think, it is difficult to make free and open discussions with supervisors."

Some participants complain that they are sometimes forced to accept ideas no matter how what they (students) have read tells otherwise. MF1explained how his attempt to convince the supervisor through some evidence has ended up in a rift and how he decided not to enter into arguments with his supervisor thereof:

> Although the student usually needs more assistance from his advisor, he/she is the one who has read more on the research issue. But when the student goes to the advisor to get some assistance, there is the tendency to force the student to accept something. For instance, once when my advisor told me to change something in my work, I told him that what I did was on the basis of what is recommended in the recent literature. Rather than respecting my idea, he was offended and asked me whether I meant that he had had an outdated idea. How can you openly put forward your stand after your advisor says this?

There was a dominant opinion from the discussions that the tradition of assigning supervisors without mutual agreement between supervisors and students is contributing to this lack of open dealings with supervisors. MF6's note indicates this instance:

> As research is a matter of answering questions, it always involves dilemmas that students should make clear through discussions with supervisors. And, I think, openness with supervisors can be there when the assignment of supervisors is made on the basis of mutual agreement between the two parties. But that is not happening here and hence whenever I go to my supervisor I don't have the confidence to express my feeling freely.

However, discussants have acknowledged that the difficult situation in which supervisors are working is also affecting their relationship with supervisors. One participant (MF8) commented: "since supervisors practically have a lot of responsibilities here, they will not have enough time to sit and listen to individual candidates. You sometimes see that from the way they treat you. So, I think, it is difficult to establish the required type of intimacy and relationship." Another participant, MF2, noted: "I don't think the department staff is enough to hold this number of students and the teaching and advising load. One supervisor is forced to supervise six or more students. Other than this, there are MA as well as undergraduate students and their advising and teaching. Due to these burdens, I don't think they can have time for such discussions."

Therefore, this data revealed that although TEFL PhD candidates make comparatively more discussions with their supervisors than with other students, their role in discussions is dominantly receptive. Even when they have an opinion different from their supervisors', they don't feel confident to put forward their ideas. The traditional distance between teachers and students as well as the inability to choose supervisors upon mutual agreement between the two parties are found to be the reasons for the lack of a collegial relationship between supervisors and students.

5.3.3. TEFL PhD Students' Seminar and Defense-related Practices

As evidences from both focus group discussions indicate, TEFL PhD candidates have recognized that PhD seminar and defense sessions are important sources of inputs for their research. Two participants noted what they practically benefited from these sessions as:

> I couldn't have produced my proposal if I had not attended such sessions. (MF11)
>
> There are lessons we learn from such sessions; we take something from what examiners raise as well as from how the presenter answers questions. (MF1)

Candidates also commented that there are some examiners who give genuine professional support to presenters in defense sessions. In explaining how such examiners assist presenters, MF8 noted: "they give constructive feedback and suggest important directions and tell presenters decide by themselves to or not to consider the comments."

In contrast to this, there has been a dominant opinion from discussions that candidates are not getting the required lessons to the level expected. Seminar and defense sessions as officially known are scenarios where PhD candidates are expected to actively interact with their peers and experienced professionals (their teachers) and develop high level reasoning and critical thinking skills. However, evidences from both focus group discussions indicated that the participation of TEFL PhD candidates in these sessions is minimal and they are not benefiting much from these sessions. Responses on these related issues are captured below:

A) Participation of Candidates

In their discussions, participants reported that although they know that participation in these sessions is beneficial, they admitted that they are not doing it. They disclosed that personal reasons, shortage of time and the less friendly atmosphere are contributing to this.

I) Personal Reasons

One reason for this failure especially in defense presentations seemed to be candidates' suspicion that doing this may expose presenters to some harm. Rather than forwarding their questions and/or comments and contributing something to discussions, they want to protect the presenter by withholding their questions and comments. One participant's, MF1, revelation indicates this tradition:

> Especially in defense sessions, I don't ask the presenter any question. Because, for example, I feel that asking a question that has not been forwarded by examiners may lead them (examiners) to another shortcoming that had not been noticed and that may expose the presenter and reduce the value of the work.

Rather than giving comments and asking questions publicly in presentation sessions, they prefer doing it in private and secretly as noted by one of the participants MF12: "If I have questions or comments that the presenter has to consider, I write them and secretly give him/her after the session is over."

There are also evidences that the lack of knowledge about the issues presented is sometimes contributing to candidates' silence in these sessions. Moreover, students do not seem to be concerned and confident to say something in presentations if the issues presented are not directly related to their own works. MF3 commented: "I may be interested to say something about the issue if it is related in some way to my area of research. ....Since the areas we are working on are different, we may not be familiar with the issues presented."

II) Lack of Time

There has been a dominant opinion from the discussions that the time given for students' questions and comments especially in defense sessions is not enough. They invariably expressed their resentment that examiners and facilitators invite students to ask questions or give comments just to say they have given the chance. Two participants explained how it is done:

> Simply to say we have given the audience the chance for interaction, examiners say "One or two questions" after everything is over (MF5)

> Examiners and chair persons give you the chance to ask questions while they have already started collecting their belongings and leaving. How can you ask a question while they are telling you that they are going? (MF7)

III) The Less Friendly Atmosphere

In relation to this, participants expressed that the somber mood that predominates especially in defense sessions greatly affects their interest to participate in discussions. Participants stated that since the words examiners throw are suggestive of the presenters' sitting for a very serious exam, they are frightened to say anything even when there are chances. Rather than contributing something to presentations through active participation, they sit silent and imagine how much they will be challenged when the day comes for their defense. One participant, MF6, explained this as:

> Some examiners do not use words of encouragement when they open sessions; rather they throw words which tell the audience that the presenter is going to be challenged. That really creates a threatening mood and in that case no one will be willing to add to that tense situation by asking questions.... I always frustrate after defense sessions. More than what I learn from the presenter, I only think what my fate will be when the day comes for my defense.'

It was also learnt that since presenters themselves share the sentiment that they are sitting for a very serious exam, they don't want other students ask questions as noted by MF1: "even you see the presenter him/herself not welcoming questions from other students." This may mean that questions and comments from students are likely to be taken (by the presenter) as hostile deeds rather than inputs to improve the work.

Comparing this tradition with what he observed in another department, MF1 disclosed:

> In the defense session I attended in another department, I saw that defense is really a learning opportunity; not an exam. Examiners raised issues; the presenter said something and the supervisor also contributed something. Questions and comments which were freely forwarded by the students (the audience) were given more time. Students were commenting and asking questions this much for the environment was healthy and smooth. The case is different in our department.

For this candidate, the fear of expressing oneself that is observed in the TEFL PhD defense sessions is also affecting seminar sessions to some extent. He noted: "Although the case is not that serious in seminars, I think, this fear of expressing ideas freely is not still a tradition. I think, there is something that has been extended from defense sessions."

This analysis, thus, revealed that TEFL PhD candidates are not playing active roles in seminar and defense sessions due to personal as well as contextual reasons. They are found not to have the interest to ask questions and give comments due to the fear that they may expose the presenter to some harm. Moreover, lack of knowledge regarding the issue presented is also found to be another reason for the lack of interaction by these candidates. In terms of the context, examiners' or facilitators' failure to allot enough time for such chances and the less friendly atmosphere that prevails as a result of the highly evaluative approach of examiners are found to affect students' participation in these sessions.

B) Candidates' Inability to Meet Their Expectations

During discussions, participants seemed to be with the opinion that although they usually get some lessons from these sessions, they sometimes lose confidence to make use of the comments given by examiners. There was a dominant opinion in both discussions that since comments given by different examiners differ and sometimes contradict one another, they find it difficult to take dependable lessons about doing their research right. MF5 explained this as: "since what is said by different examiners is different, we don't have one correct way to follow in doing our individual research work." One participant, MF2, explained what happened in one of the defense sessions he attended as:

> There was a fierce debate on where 'framework of a study' should be put. One said that its right position should be at the end of the statement of the problem, another said that its place will be after the literature review and still another said after the methodology. ... If there is no one right answer for such questions as 'what should be included and where?' and if the experienced people themselves don't have an agreement on

such issues, what can we benefit from attending these sessions?

Sharing a similar view, another participant (MF12) reflected on the lack of consistency in the comments given on what the research should and/or should not involve: "In one of the defense sessions I attended I heard from one of the examiners that the methodology section of the research should not include literature; in another session when another examiner asked a student why he did not justify his selection of the method through some literature, we got very confused."

In short, although students admit that they are getting some lessons from attending seminar and defense presentations, their expectation to take dependable lessons especially about correct formats is not sometimes met for contradictory comments are given by different examiners.

5.4. Findings of the Document Analyses

In this section, the findings of the analysis of relevant documents are discussed. This analysis was made for two purposes: 1) to identify the place given to graduate research and research by academics in different official documents of the university, and 2) to look into the trends of research in the TEFL PhD program of the university. To identify the formal position of research by graduate students and the academics, such documents as the Higher Education Proclamation, the University Legislation, the AAU Research Handbook and PhD guidelines and Governance were analyzed. On the other hand, to examine the research trends observed in the TEFL PhD program, topics of the EFL PhD researches currently in progress and topics and some contents of the EFL PhD works done in the years 1993–2010 and documented in the ILS library of AAU were reviewed.

5.4.1. The Formal Position of Research by Graduate Students and the Academics at Addis Ababa University

In its attempt to enhance the quality and relevance of teaching and research and integrate it to the national needs, AAU specified that research is one of

the key duties of instructors. For example, the AAU Senate Legislation (Article 26.2.8) stipulates that: "Academic staff shall conduct research work for the advancement of knowledge in [his] area of specialization having regard to the development and democratization needs of the country." Moreover, the Higher Education Proclamation No. 351/2003 (FDRE, 2003) states that the academic staffs have the responsibility to undertake problem-solving research that benefits the society.

The increasing importance given to research by the academics is also implicated in the university Research Handbook. In this document, it is stated that "research at AAU will be a requirement to continue employment and implement 'publish or perish' principle." (The Research Handbook, 2011:30). This is to mean that research activity is not 'in principle' an optional extra for the academic staffs of the university but a means of securing their employment at the university.

Similarly, graduate research in the university at large is expected to be problem-solving. For example; the AAU Research Handbook (2011) specifies the role graduate students should play through their research as: "In their endeavor to collect degrees that qualify them as better professionals in the job market, graduate students should trigger the research process by developing research protocols that are meant to solve some societal problems" (2011, 12). This implies that in the university, graduate students are expected to develop the skills of solving societal problems through research and should demonstrate that through their graduate research experience.

The importance given to graduate research seems also to be seen in the Senate stipulations which state the possibility of publishing theses and dissertations and communicating their results. In the duties and responsibilities it has given to the Research and Publications Committee (RPC), the University Senate Legislation stipulates that: "Research and Publications Committee (RPC) shall promote the publication of outstanding theses and dissertations." This indicates that the university has recognized

the possible role of graduate research in solving practical problems upon the communication of their results.

Although research both by the academics and graduate students is given such recognitions in the university official documents, the management of research processes, evaluation, dissemination and reward has not been given similar attention for there has not been an organized research policy at the university until recently (Research Policy, 2011).

The recent introduction of this research policy, however, can be taken as a step towards the development of a good research culture at the university since in the document standards are set up for research processes, evaluation, dissemination and rewards. Although the place given to graduate research is still blurred in the policy, attention seems to be given to academics and students working together in research activities. The policy stated that "the university shall provide supportive environment for the staff and students to work together in the creation, accumulation and dissemination of knowledge" (Research Policy, 2010:47). Moreover, in the document it is stated that two of the considerations in the review of proposals submitted by the academics are –"the inter-disciplinary nature of the research and the participation of other colleagues and students in the research" (Research Policy, 2010: 30). This seems to indicate that in the policy the academic staffs are encouraged to do collaborative research with students.

Another document that directly connects to graduate research in the TEFL PhD program of the university is the PhD guidelines and Governance of TEFL, Applied Linguistics and Literature (prepared by the English Department Graduate Committee). In this guideline, the admission requirements for candidates include having a preliminary research proposal, entrance exam and interview (optional). This indicates that in the guideline there was an intention to recruit candidates on the basis of their performance and worth of their proposed research.

Moreover, in the section of the document that stated the 'assignment of supervisors' in the program, it is stated that a PhD student "will have to work under the guidance of two assigned supervisors ... subject to approval by the DGC, each PhD student will be given the chance to nominate one supervisor of his/here preference. The other will be assigned by the DGC. Nomination and assignment will be on the basis of area of interest and specialization as well as the consent of the proposed supervisors." (No date: page 2). However, in the revised version of this guideline which is in effect after March (2009), the rules about the assignment of supervisors in the department are changed, may be due to the fact that there are recently large number of candidates in the program. In this guideline a PhD student will have to work with only one supervisor and the assignment will be made by the DGC.

In the document, attention has also been given to students' ongoing learning as posited under 6.4 of the guideline (2009:6): each PhD student has to "be a member of at least one research group from among the various graduate research groups formed in the department...for exchanging of ideas on graduate research and specialization-specific issues. Regular attendance and active participation in at least one of such research groups is mandatory."

In general, the analysis of these documents revealed that the university has given recognition to research both by academics and graduate students. However, similar attention doesn't seem to have been paid to the actual research processes, evaluation, and dissemination and rewards, probably for there has not been an organized research policy at the university until recently. When it comes to the guideline that governs the research processes at the TEFL PhD program, it seems that, in principle, attention has been given to the recruitment of competent candidates for the study, the assignment of supervisors on their specializations and mutual agreement with candidates, and the students' learning through their involvement in research groups.

5.4.2. Trends of Research in the TEFL PhD Program of AAU

The findings of this study regarding the research trends observed in the TEFL PhD program are presented in terms of the research contexts and topics which are given frequent focus in the EFL PhD works currently in progress and those done in the years 1993–2010 by EFL educators of AAU. Moreover, in the case of these completed EFL PhD works of educators, the analysis includes the data collection instruments, the type of data used as well as the types of recommendations forwarded in these works.

A) Common Research Contexts Being Investigated by TEFL PhD Candidates of AAU

Table 5.1 presents both the numbers and percentages for each research context (school level) given focus in the PhD researches currently undertaken by TEFL PhD candidates of AAU.

Table 5.1 The Target Research Contexts of TEFL PhD Ongoing Researches at AAU (N=48)

No	School level	Frequency	%
1	Pre-primary	0	0
2	primary	5	10.4
3	Secondary including junior and senior high schools	17	35.4
4	Tertiary level (colleges, universities and post graduate levels)	26	54.2
5	Adults/Non- formal	0	0
6	Mixed levels of participants	0	0
	Total	**48**	**100**

The analysis indicated that the most common context given focus in these researches is tertiary level education (including colleges, universities and post-graduate levels) (54.2%) followed by secondary education (including junior and senior high schools) (35.4%). One of the explanations for this much focus on tertiary education could be that these candidates are coming from universities and they prefer doing their PhD research on contexts to which they have better access. An alternative explanation could also be the insufficiency of the material and financial resources to do research in contexts which are outside their immediate control.

B) Prevalent Research Topics Being Investigated by TEFL PhD Students of AAU

To explore what EFL research topics are given much focus in the currently ongoing PhD researches, all 71 PhD research topics are classified into 11 categories. (See Appendix O for these categories and examples of content areas in different categories). The analysis of research topics examined is shown in Table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2: Numbers and Percentages of Research Topics being Investigated by TEFL PhD Students (N=71)

No	Research topic categories	Frequency	%
1	Affective Factors (AF)	5	7
2	Culture, Social, or Gender Issues(CSG)	3	4.2
3	English for Specific Purposes (ESP)	1	1.4
4	Integrated Skills (IS)	2	2.8
5	Learner Factors(LF)	11	15.5
6	Language Skills (LS)	15	21.1
7	Materials or Curriculum Design and Evaluation (MC)	6	8.5
8	Testing and Evaluation (TEVAL)	3	4.2
9	Teacher Factors (TF)	4	5.6
10	Teaching Method (TM)	15	21.1
11	Teacher Professional Development (TPD)	6	8.5
	Total	**71**	**100**

As presented in Table 5.2, the two most frequently focused EFL research issues in TEFL PhD students' researches are language skills and teaching methods with 21.1% each. Topics related to learner factors ranked second with 15.5% followed by materials or curriculum design and teacher professional development each with 8.5%. Although there is diversity in the EFL research issues addressed in TEFL PhD researches, some areas like English for specific purpose, integrated skills, culture, social and gender issues seem to be almost neglected in these researches.

Hence, in the case of the currently ongoing PhD EFL researches, there seems to be the tendency to give recurrent focus to tertiary and secondary level education. While primary education is given far lesser attention in these

researches, pre-primary and adult/non-formal education are totally neglected. When it comes to the research areas, much attention is given to language skills and teaching methods followed by learner factors. This seems to indicate that although there are numerous issues which have direct or indirect bearing to EFL education in Ethiopia, candidates tend to give frequent attention (in their research) to the teaching learning process.

C) Common Research Contexts Investigated in PhD Researches of EFL Educators of AAU

Table 5.3 presents both the numbers and percentages for each research context (school level) given focus in dissertation researches documented at ILS library of AAU.

Table 5.3 Numbers and Percentages of School Levels Given Focus in EFL PhD Researches Conducted by EFL Educators of AAU from 1993-2010 (N=28)

No	School level	Frequency	%
1	Pre-primary	0	0
2	Primary	2	7.1
3	Secondary including junior and senior high schools	9	32.1
4	Tertiary level (colleges, universities and post graduate levels)	17	60.8
5	Adults/Non- formal	0	0
6	Mixed levels of participants	0	0
	Total	**28**	**100**

The analysis of these contexts indicated that the most common context given focus in these researches is tertiary level education (including colleges, universities and post-graduate levels) (60.8%). Whereas 32.1% of these researches addressed secondary education as their research context, 7.1% of the dissertations addressed primary school context. In these dissertations, tertiary level EFL education issues have had better chance to be investigated, which may imply that these educators tended to give attention to issues which are closer to their everyday practices, i.e., teaching at the university.

D) Prevalent EFL Issues Investigated in PhD Researches of EFL Educators of AAU

As indicated in the methodology section of this dissertation, a search from the ILS Library shows that there are 30 dissertations done by EFL educators of AAU. All 30 documented dissertations were examined in terms of the issues they have addressed. The same categories of research topics used for the analysis of TEFL PhD candidates' current researches are used here. Table 5.4 presents this data.

Table 5.4 Numbers and Percentages of Research Topics Investigated in the PhD Researches of EFL Educators of AAU (N=30)

No	Research topic categories	Frequency	%
1	Affective Factors (AF)	o	0
2	Culture, Social, or Gender Issues(CSG)	1	3.3
3	English for Specific Purposes (ESP)	1	3.3
4	Integrated Skills (IS)	0	0.0
5	Learner Factors(LF)	6	20.0
6	Language Skills (LS)	4	13.3
7	Materials or Curriculum Design and Evaluation (MC):	2	6.7
8	Testing and Evaluation (TEVAL)	2	6.7
9	Teacher Factors (TF)	2	6.7
10	Teaching Method (TM)	12	40.0
11	Teacher Professional Development (TPD)	0	0
	Total	**30**	**100**

As presented in Table 5.4, the most frequently focused EFL research issue in the completed dissertations of EFL teacher educators of AAU is teaching method with 40%. The second EFL issue given frequent focus is learner factor with 20% followed by language skills (13.3%). Although the distribution shows some diversity in the issues addressed in dissertations, affective factors, integrated skills and the issue of teacher professional development appear to be totally neglected.

E) Research Methods Used in the Completed EFL PhD Works of EFL Educators of AAU

Tables 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7 respectively present data pertaining to the type of data collection instruments, the type of data used and the types of recommendations indicated in the documented dissertations.

Table 5.5 Data Collection Instruments Employed in Completed EFL PhD Researches (N=29)

No	Instruments	Frequency	%
1	Questionnaire	25	86.2
2	Interview	22	75.9
3	Direct observation	20	68.9
4	Tests	11	37.9
5	Secondary data	8	27.6

As shown in Table 5.5, questionnaire has been used as the major data collection instrument in the majority (86.2%) of the completed EFL PhD researches. Of the total 29 EFL PhD researches, 75.9% also employed interviews and 68.9% employed direct observation as their data collection instrument.

Table 5.6 The Types of Data used in the Completed EFL PhD Researches (N=29)

No	Type of data	Frequency	%
1	Quantitative	2	6.9
2	Qualitative	3	10.3
3	Both	24	82.8
	Total	**29**	**100**

A Quantitative-qualitative analysis of the data in Table 5.6 shows that while only 6.9% of the dissertations are purely quantitative and 10.3% of the dissertations are purely qualitative, the great majority (82.8%) of them combined both type of data. Results in Tables 5.5 and 5.6 seem to indicate that although the majority of the educators wanted to mix different methods and different data types—quantitative and qualitative—in their works, they tended to frequently use questionnaires, interviews and direct observation as their data collection instruments.

Table 5.7 Type of Recommendations Suggested in Completed EFL PhD Works (N=29)

No	Action recommended	Frequency	%
1	For policy formulations, changes etc. (E.g., change in education or training policy)	5	17.2
2	For teaching-learning (e.g., improvement of classroom practice, change in course content etc)	22	75.9
3	Direct use not clear	2	6.9
	Total	**29**	**100**

As presented in Table 5.7, the majority (75.9%) of the dissertations recommended action in relation to the teaching-learning (e.g. improving teachers' classroom practice, change in course offerings etc.). This could be interpreted as the tendency of EFL educators to explore their own practices for effective EFL teaching. However, there seems to be a lesser tendency to do EFL PhD researches that have direct implications to policy for it was only 17.2% of the 29 dissertations which have recommended action in relation to policy.

To sum up, the analysis of research contexts, research topics, research methods employed, data type and recommendations forwarded in the EFL PhD researches done in the years 1993-2010 indicated that tertiary and secondary level education were the most frequently studied contexts and teaching methods are the research areas given much attention in these studies. While questionnaires, interviews and direct observations were the most common data collection instruments used in these studies, most of these studies used both types of data (qualitative and quantitative). What is more, the majority of these PhD works recommended action directly to the improvement of teaching-learning and there were limited studies which recommended action in relation to policy.

5.5. Analyses and Findings of Data Collected Using Questionnaires

In this section, the findings of TEFL PhD students' and EFL teacher educators' questionnaires are discussed.

5.5.1. Analyses and Findings of Data Collected from TEFL PhD Students Using Questionnaire

5.5.1.1. Characteristics of Participants

A total of 30 TEFL PhD students participated in the survey for the main study. Whereas all the participants were male and had an academic rank of lecturer, they differ in other characteristics. While half (50%) of them were in the age range of 41-50 years and 10% were above 50, the remaining 40% were in the range below forties. The number of years they have taught EFL at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) ranges from less than 5 years (13.3%), 5 to 10 years (70%), 11 to 16 years (6.7%), and more than 16 years (10%). Of these subjects, 70% attended Higher Diploma Program (HDP) in their host universities. This may mean that the majority of the participants have had the opportunity to study the principles and roles of reflective practice and collaborative action research in EFL teaching and Continuous Professional Development (CPD). This exposure would give them the chance to do collaborative action research as part of their EFL teaching and solve practical problems by themselves.

5.5.1.2. TEFL PhD Candidates' Research Experience

The sample TEFL PhD students were asked to indicate whether they have done EFL research (action research or conventional) other than what they did for their degrees, and to indicate whether they have done the research solo or jointly. Table 5.8 presents the results of their responses.

Table 5.8 TEFL PhD Students' Responses about the Number and Type of EFL Researches they did other than what they did for their Degrees (N=30)

Items	In collaboration	Individually	F	%
Action research	8 have done 1 AR each	1 has done 1 AR	13	43.3
	3* have done 1 AR each	3* have done 1 AR each		
		1 has done 3 ARs		
Other (Conventional) research)		3 have done 1 CR each	6	20
		3 have done 2 CRs each		
Both		2 have done I AR + 1 CR	3	10
	1* has done 1 AR + 1 CR	1* has done 1 AR + 1 CR		
Not any	-	-	8	26.7
Total			30	100%
	Total= 13 researches	**Total= 23 researches**		

*Note: * refers to the same subjects in the same row;*

AR=Action Research; CR= Conventional Research

As presented in Table 5.8, although the majority of the subject TEFL PhD students, i.e., 22 (73.3 %) have done some EFL research, either action research or conventional research or both, it is not possible to say that they have much research experience. This is because, while 12 (54.5%) of these have done only one EFL research each, 1(4.5%), another 1(4.5%) and 8(36.4%) of the 22 subjects have respectively done 4, 3 and 2 researches each. The lack of this EFL research experience is also evidenced in the table as 26.7% of the subjects haven't been involved in any type of EFL research other than what they did for their BA and MA degrees. A closer look at the table shows that the number of subjects who have done action research is comparatively higher than the number of those who have done conventional EFL research. This may be because in the questionnaire subjects have reported the action research they have done as part of the training in the HDP program.

Questionnaire results also revealed that the majority of candidates' researches have been done on an individual basis. As can be observed in the table, many of the researches fall under the column of 'individually'. While 13 EFL researches have been done in collaboration, 23 researches have been

done individually. This may indicate that the sample TEFL PhD students have limited experience of doing collaborative researches.

Overall, this data suggests that the subject TEFL PhD candidates have limited research background and limited experience of doing collaborative researches.

5.5.1.3. Candidates' Beliefs about the Role of Their Current PhD Research

Candidates were asked to express their beliefs about the role the current PhD research can have for themselves and the wider EFL educational context. It was learnt that these candidates acknowledge the contribution of current PhD research especially, in their future EFL teaching and research practices. Table 5.9 illustrates the results of their responses.

Table 5. 9. TEFL PhD Students' Beliefs Regarding the Role of their PhD Research (N=30)

No	Questionnaire Items	Responses (%)				
		SD	D	U	A	SA
1	The results of PhD research in EFL should be used to solve an educational problem in EFL context	0	6.7	10	43.3	40
2	Whatever quality my PhD research will have, there is no chance for it to be used in decision making (e.g. in policy, syllabus design, material preparation etc.)	3.3	13.3	13.3	53.3	16.7
3	This PhD research has an important role in my future capacity to do practice related research/s	3.3	0	13.3	40	43.3
4	This PhD research will help me to improve my teaching effectiveness	6.7	3.3	20	33.3	36.7
5	My PhD research is addressing an identified problem relevant to the Ethiopian EFL education	3.3	0	3.3	43.3	50

Note: *SD = Strongly disagree, D=Disagree, U=Undecided, A=Agree, SA=Strongly agree*

As Table 5.9 suggests, the majority of the candidates believe that the PhD research they are doing now will help them in improving their EFL teaching

practice and solving practical problems through action research. However, the fact that 10% of the subjects have disagreed and another 20% have expressed their indecision to statement 4 seems to show that there are some students who doubt that this research will help them in improving their teaching practice. Moreover, the majority (83.3%) of these TEFL PhD students hold the belief that PhD researches should go beyond individual benefits and their results should serve to solve educational problems in the wider EFL context.

Although candidates believe that their research has the potential to solve educational problems in EFL, they admitted that the results of their research have little chance of being considered for these purposes. Because the majorities (70%) have expressed their agreement that whatever quality their PhD research may have, there is no chance for it to be used in decision making, i.e., in matters such as policy direction, syllabus design, and material writing. However, this sentiment does not seem to stop TEFL PhD students from identifying and working on problems relevant to the Ethiopian EFL education. This is evident from their responses that a great majority (93.3%) of the candidates stated their agreement that their PhD research is addressing a problem relevant to the local EFL context.

In general, this data revealed that these candidates attach value to the PhD research they were doing at the time of this study. They believe that it will boost their future effectiveness in teaching the language as well as in making research part of their teaching activity. Moreover, they have a strong belief that the results of their PhD researches can solve practical EFL-related problems of the country. However, they are doing the research with little hope that its results will be used in solving EFL problems of the country.

5.5.1.4. TEFL PhD Students' Evaluation of Their Own Research Skills

For the purpose of checking whether or not TEFL PhD candidates believe they have the basic research skills required to do successful PhD research, they were given a list of these skills in the questionnaire. Table 5.10 summarizes the subjects' evaluation of their own research skills.

Table 5.10 TEFL PhD Students' Evaluation of Their Current Research Skills (N=30)

No	Questionnaire items	Responses (%)				
		VU	Un	U	S	VS
6	Identifying (sorting out) researchable topic	0	10	3.3	63.3	23.4
7	Contextualizing the research problem	0	0	13.3	53.3	33.3
8	Grounding the research problem in an appropriate conceptual framework	3.3	13.3	36.7	40	6.7
9	Locating relevant literature	3.3	0	10	53.3	33.3
10	Using appropriate referencing of different sources (e.g. electronic sources, journal articles, books etc.)	0	0	6.7	53.3	40
11	Developing appropriate data collection instruments	0	0	30	50	20
12	Employing appropriate data collection procedures	0	0	26.7	53.3	20
13	Analyzing and interpreting the research data	0	13.3	23.3	43.3	20
14	Using appropriate statistical tools (e.g. SPSS and others)	23.3	26.7	13.3	26.7	10
15	Writing the research report appropriately	0	3.3	33.3	30	33.3

Note: *VU=Very Unsatisfactory, Un=Unsatisfactory, U=Undecided, S=Satisfactory VS=Very Satisfactory*

As presented in Table 5.10, for most of the statements, responses of the majority of the students are on the 'satisfactory' side, which implies that the majority of candidates evaluate themselves as possessing most of the skills necessary to do effective EFL research, including the PhD research. These candidates contend that they have satisfactory skills of identifying researchable topic, contextualizing research problems and locating relevant literature, using appropriate referencing of different sources such as electronic sources, journal articles and books. Moreover, they evaluated themselves as having satisfactory skills of developing appropriate data collection instruments, employing appropriate data collection procedures and analyzing and interpreting the research data and writing appropriate research report. However, the appearance of significant neutral answers in the candidates' responses to items 11, 12, 13 and 15 implies that there are some candidates who doubt whether or not they have adequate skills of designing appropriate data collection instruments, procedures, analyzing and interpreting data and writing sound research reports.

However, in their responses to statements 8 and 14, candidates admitted that they have limitations in their skills of grounding research problems in an appropriate conceptual framework and using appropriate statistical tools of data analysis such as SPSS. Because, while 50% of them reported that they have unsatisfactory skill of using such statistical tools in analyzing research data, 13.3% couldn't decide the level of their skill. On the other hand, while 16.6 % of these subjects said they have unsatisfactory skills of grounding the research problem in an appropriate conceptual framework, 36.7% were undecided. This inadequacy may be due to the reason that in the previous training programs, e.g., in the graduate MA program, these subjects studied general research methodology courses in which issues of conceptual framework as well as such statistical procedures as SPSS might not have been explicitly treated. An alternative explanation for this could be that the researches they have done so far including what they did for their degrees were not as rigorous as the current PhD research, and hence they did not have the required background and practice. Whatever the reason, if TEFL PhD students have inadequacies in using appropriate statistical tools in analyzing data, they may be forced to do what is only easier rather than what is desired in answering the research questions they want to answer in their research. This will inevitably have an impact on the quality of the research and the subsequent contribution it is expected to bring about.

5.5.1.5. TEFL PhD Students' Current Research-related Practices

For the purpose of assessing what candidates do individually and with others in the process of doing their research, they were provided with a set of statements which represent these activities. Table 5.11 presents subjects' ratings of the extent to which they do these practices in the process of doing the PhD research.

Table 5.11 TEFL PhD Students' Ratings of their Current Research-related Practices (N=30)

No	Questionnaire items	Responses (%)				
		N	R	S	O	VO
16	I openly accept comments (about my research) from other PhD students	0	3.3	30	46.7	20
17	I am free to comment on my friends' research works	3.3	60	6.7	20	10
18	I deliberately make discussions with other PhD students working in related areas	3.3	30	26.7	23.3	16.7
19	I feel anxious to reveal my research capacity to other PhD students	0	23.3	10	36.7	30
20	When research-related problems arise, I openly ask for assistance from other PhD students	10	23.3	30	26.7	10
21	When research related problems arise, I am free to tell my advisor	0	16.7	30	36.7	16.7
22	I attend PhD seminar sessions	0	6.7	16.7	63.3	13.3
23	I attend PhD defense sessions	0	0	23.3	60	16.7
24	I ask questions when there are any in these sessions	33.3	23.3	30	13.3	0
25	I freely comment on what is presented in seminars (when there is the need)	13.3	50	20	13.3	3.3

Note: *N=Never, R=Rarely, S=Sometimes, O=Often, VO=Very Often*

Analysis of responses revealed that candidates are more willing to take comments (about their PhD research) from other candidates than doing the same to other students. This tendency is shown in their responses to items 16 and 17, where 66.7% of them reported that they are open to accept comments about their research and over half (63.3%) of them said they are rarely free to comment on their friends' research works. On the other hand, the culture of making deliberate discussions with students working on related research areas and openly asking assistance in cases of research-related problems doesn't seem to have grown among TEFL PhD students. That seems the reason why only 40% of them reported that they often make such discussions with candidates working in related areas and only 36.7% of them said they often ask for some assistance when they face problems related to their research. One of the reasons for this low level of openness in interactions with other TEFL PhD students seems to be feeling anxiety to

reveal their research capacity to others. Because, 66.7% of the respondents expressed that they feel anxious in revealing their research capacity to others. However, these subjects seem comparatively free to consult their supervisors in cases of research-related difficulties for 53.4% of them reported that they are free to see their supervisors and 30% are sometimes free to do that.

Items 22 through 25 were intended to explore what seminar and defense-related experiences of students look like as part of the research culture in the TEFL PhD program. Their responses to these questions suggest that the majority of the candidates attend PhD seminars and defense sessions. However, they do not seem to have active roles in discussions for they are passive observers of what happens between presenters and examiners or facilitators. This is because, while 76.7% of them reported that they attend the weekly PhD seminars and defense sessions, 56.6% and 63.3% of them respectively said they rarely ask questions and rarely give comments on what is presented. This implies that although these candidates are expected to practice open exchange of opinions through discussions and resolve their research-related dilemmas, they are practically not doing these things, and hence they are not taking the required lessons from these sessions.

Thus, from this analysis, it was learnt that cooperative work is not a common practice among TEFL PhD candidates. Even those students working on related areas do not seem to have the culture of resolving research-related problems together. Their feeling of anxiety to reveal their research capacity is contributing to this tradition of individualization in their research activities. On the other hand, although these candidates attend PhD seminar and defense presentations, they have very limited role in discussions.

5.5.1.6. TEFL PhD Students' Evaluation of the System of Supervision

Candidates were made to evaluate the support they are receiving from their research supervisors. Table 5.12 presents the results of the students' responses.

Table 5.12 TEFL PhD Students' Evaluation of the Supervisory Practices (N=30)

No	Questionnaire items My supervisor:	Responses (%)				
		N	R	S	O	VO
26	Is accessible to me	6.7	3.3	30	33.3	26.7
27	encourages me to do more	3.3	13.3	30	36.7	16.7
28	Controls the originality of my research	6.7	10	53.3	20	10
29	controls the overall quality of my work	13.3	6.7	53.3	16.7	10
30	gives me enough time for discussions before written comments	13.3	10	43.3	33.3	0
31	gives me written feedback (on the papers I submit) on time	10	16.7	36.7	16.7	20
32	gives me enough time for follow up discussions on his/her written comments	20	40	13.3	16.7	10
33	gives me constructive feedback	10	6.7	40	20	23.3
34	assists me in locating materials and references relevant to my study	36.7	30	16.7	13.3	3.3
35	Respects my own opinions when I present them from a different perspective	20	33.3	16.7	13.3	16.7
36	Encourages me to consult other researchers/ advisors who can be of some help in my work	16.7	16.7	40	13.3	13.3

Note: *N=Never, R=Rarely, S=Sometimes, O=Often, VO=Very Often*

As presented in Table 5.12, candidates evaluate their supervisors positively in terms of their accessibility and the encouragement they give to students, because 60% and 53.4% of them respectively reported that their supervisors are accessible to them and encourage them to do more. However, students' responses to items 28 and 29 indicate that supervisors are not that serious in controlling the originality and overall quality of the students' works because over half (53.3%) of the subjects disclosed that supervisors do these things only sometimes.

Written feedback is one of the most important sources of input supervisors provide to research students in helping them produce academically sound research works (Bitchener and Basturkmen, 2010). For these authors, since written feedback is short version of what supervisors want to say about the work, the feedback need to be developed and clarified through follow up face-to-face discussions between supervisors and students. But, questionnaire results revealed that the sample TEFL PhD students are not getting this chance to the level they expect. Because, 60% of them reported that their

supervisors rarely give them enough time for such discussions. This failure may be because supervisors are overburdened with advising and teaching responsibilities and find it difficult to set aside time for such discussions with individual students.

However, candidates seem to have an average evaluation about the constructiveness of the feedback for 43.3% of them said feedback by supervisors is very often constructive, and 40% said they are sometimes constructive. From their responses to statement 35, it was found that supervisors are not that much willing to accept students' opinions when they are presented from a different perspective. This is because, over half (53.3%) of the candidates reported that their supervisors rarely and never want to do this and 16.7% of them said supervisors do this sometimes.

Bitchener and Basturkmen (2010) note that since supervisors are by definition experts in the area their advisees are working on, they can lead them (advisees) to appropriate references. However, TEFL PhD students' response to item 34 seems to imply that their supervisors do not have this tradition for 66.7% of the respondents reported that their supervisors rarely assist them in locating relevant references.

Finally, when asked whether their supervisors encourage them to consult other people (colleagues or other professionals) who can be of some help in the research, 26.6% said supervisors do this often and another 40% said they do this sometimes.

Therefore, from this assessment of candidates' evaluation of the supports they receive from advisors, it was found that supervisors encourage students to do more and sometimes control the overall quality of the work including originality. Although supervisors are found to give more or less constructive feedback, many of them don't set aside time for face-to-face discussions with students. Still, the majority of the candidates evaluated supervisors as not having the habit of accepting students' opinions when presented from a different perspective and encouraging students to consult other people who can be of help in the research process.

5.5.1.7. Factors Affecting the Research Activity of TEFL PhD Candidates in the Program

Table 5.13 presents the percentages of TEFL PhD students' responses to the questions on the factors that affect their PhD research undertakings and the degree of recurrence of these impediments at different stages of the PhD research process.

Table 5.13 TEFL PhD students' Responses about Factors Affecting their PhD Research Activity (N=30)

No	Questionnaire items	Responses (%)				
		N	R	S	O	VO
39	Lack of knowledge and experience about doing research	20	40	13.3	23.3	3.3
40	Lack of determination in making the research fruitful	23.3	33.3	20	20	3.3
41	The belief that my research findings will not be put to any use	10	16.7	53.3	3.3	16.7
42	Absence of collegial support from other PhD students in doing the research	6.7	40	23.3	23.3	6.7
43	Lack of up-to-date reference materials (eg. journals, books etc.)	0	6.7	40	26.7	26.7
44	Shortage of financial resource	0	3.3	3.3	36.7	56.7
45	Inadequacy of support from supervisors	3.3	13.3	26.7	30	26.7
46	Lack of control from the department/ faculty	0	30	26.7	26.7	16.7
47	Inadequacy of support from the department/ faculty	0	6.7	23.3	50	20
48	Absence of research related information which show, for example; the right format to follow, information about research priorities, work in progress etc. in the department	0	10	30	50	10

Note: *N=Never, R=Rarely, S=Sometimes, O=Often, VO=Very Often*

Most TEFL PhD students seem to believe that internal factors do not have significant negative impact on their current PhD research works and reported that most challenges that affect their activity at different stages of

the research are from outside. Their responses to items 39 and 40 in Table 5.13 indicate this finding. While 40% of the students reported that lack of knowledge and experience about doing research rarely affects their current research work, the other 20% expressed that this never affects them at all. This seems to go with TEFL PhD students' evaluation of themselves as possessing most of the skills necessary to do successful researches including PhD research in EFL (See Table 5.10). Moreover, 33.3% of them said that lack of determination in making the research fruitful rarely affects them in the process and 23.3% said it never affects them in doing the PhD research.

However, the results revealed that, of the external factors, shortage of finance, inadequacy of support from the department/faculty and absence of research related information are the three factors that have recurrent influence (in their descending order) on the students research practice. This is because, the great majority (93.4%) of the students reported that shortage of finance is often affects their PhD research work. Still, 70% and 60% respectively stated inadequacy of support from the department/faculty and absence of research-related information (e.g., the format to follow, research priorities, and work in progress) as other factors which often affect their research practice.

In their responses to items 43 and 45, over half, i.e., 56.7% and 53.4% of the subjects respectively reported inadequacy of supervisory support and lack of up-to-date reference materials such as journals and books as the other factors affecting their research practices.

Still over half (53.3%) of them mentioned another factor as sometimes affecting their determination in doing fruitful EFL research, i.e., the belief that their research findings will not be put to any use.

Analysis of this data revealed that the current research activities of TEFL PhD candidates are affected by financial constraints, inadequacy of support from the department, supervisors as well as lack of research-related information and material resources. But, of these challenges, financial

shortage and inadequacy of support from the department are reported to be the most serious challenges affecting their research practices.

5.5.1.8. TEFL PhD Candidates' Choice of Research Approach for their PhD Research

Candidates were asked about the type of research approach (qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods) they are using for their PhD research and about the reasons for their choice. The findings revealed that most of the sample TEFL PhD students employ mixed-methods approach in their research and they specified different reasons for their choice. Tables 5.14 and 5.15 present this data.

Table 5.14 TEFL PhD Candidates' Choice of Research Approach for their PhD Research (N=30)

No	Types of Approaches	Frequency	%
1	Qualitative	2	6.7
2	Quantitative	1	3.3
3	Mixed-Methods	27	90
	Total	**30**	**100**

Table 5.15 TEFL PhD Students' Reasons for the Choice of their Research Approaches (N=30)

No	Reasons for the Choice	Frequency	%
1	The research problem is best done using this design	20.0	66.7
2	I have the skill of employing this design	0.0	0.0
3	The faculty and examiners tend to accept this as legitimate form of research	10.0	33.3
4	Other	0.0	0.0
	Total	**30.0**	**100**

Of the sample TEFL PhD students, 90% reported that they use mixed-methods approach in their PhD research but only 6.7% and 3.3% of them respectively reported that they employ purely qualitative and purely quantitative approaches for their research. The choice of research design and methods in such situations as dissertation research is basically determined by the nature of the research question (Gray, 2004). Moreover,

Seliger and Shohamy (1989) suggest that when researchers embark on some research, they should make sure whether they have the prerequisite skill and the design is accepted by supervisors. However, as can be seen from Table 5.15, while 66.7% of the subjects chose the research approach owing to their belief that the research problem requires this approach and the remaining 33.3% chose their research approach because examiners tend to accept this as legitimate form of research, none of them mentioned having the skill of employing the approach as their reason for their choice. Therefore, the results from the two tables indicated that mixed-methods approach is the most preferred design by the majority of TEFL PhD candidates but it doesn't seem to be chosen on the basis of the students' prerequisite skill.

In questions 41–43 of the questionnaire, these TEFL PhD candidates were also asked to state the number of supervisor/s they have and whether they themselves chose their supervisors. While only one of these 30 PhD students (3.3%) has two supervisors, the remaining 29 students (96.7%) have one supervisor each. The majority, 25 (83.3%), of the sample TEFL PhD students did not choose their research supervisors. When asked who made the choice and on what criteria, they responded that the department has chosen their supervisors and they don't know the criteria for the assignment of supervisors.

To sum up, this analysis revealed that currently TEFL PhD candidates of AAU do not have the chance to choose supervisors and the assignment of supervisors is made without mutual agreement between supervisors and students. Moreover, the earlier tradition of making students work under two supervisors is changed and students are made to work with only one supervisor, may be due to the fact that there are now many TEFL PhD candidates in the program while there are only few supervisors.

5.5.2. Analyses and Findings of Data Collected from EFL Teacher Educators' Using Questionnaire

5.5.2.1. Characteristics of Participants

Of the 14 EFL teacher educators (supervisors) who participated in the main study, 12 (85.7%) were male and the remaining 2 (14.3%) were female. As regards their academic rank, 78.6% have now the rank of assistant professor and the other 21.4% have the rank of associate professor. Their EFL teaching experiences at HEIs ranged 5–10 years (7.1%), 11–16 years (21.4%), 17–22 years (35.7%) to more than 22 years (35.7%). Of these educators, 35.7% did their PhD in a fully local program; another 28.6% did the PhD in a sandwich program with a foreign University and 21.4% did it in a foreign University. The remaining 14.3% haven't done their PhD. The above profile seems to indicate that the majority of these EFL educators have many years of teaching experience at HEIs. Moreover, since these professionals have done their PhDs on different basis (local, sandwich and foreign), their exposure possibly to different research traditions can give them the opportunity to exchange their experiences so that it will contribute to their professional development as well as their EFL teaching and supervisory practices at the university. However, the fact that the great majority (78.6%) of these educators having an academic rank of assistant professor seems to imply that for one reason or another they haven't published much research. This may be explained by the fact that these educators are burdened with teaching and advising loads and hence spend little time for research activity.

5.5.2.2. EFL Teacher Educators' EFL Research Experience

In the questionnaire, these educators were asked to indicate the kinds of research (action research or conventional research) they have done other than what they did for their degrees and whether they have done the research individually or in collaboration. Table 5.16 illustrates the results of their responses:

Table 5.16 The EFL Research Background of EFL Teacher Educators of AAU (N=14)

Items	In collaboration	Individually	F	%
Action research	1 has done 1 AR		1	7.1
Other (Conventional research)	1* has done 1 CR	1* has done 1 CR	7	50
		3 have done 3 CRs each		
		2 have done 4 CRs each		
	1*has done 8 CRs	1* has done 18 CRs		
Both	1* has done 20 ARs (**)	1* has done 6 ARs+ 1CR (**)	5	35.7
		1 has done 3 ARs + 1 CR		
		1 has done 3 ARs + 2 CRs		
	1* has done 1 AR	1* has done 2 ARs + 5 CRs		
	1* has done 1 AR	1* has done 2 ARs + 6 CRs		
Not any	-	-	1	7.1
Total			14	100%
	Total = 12 researches	**Total= 60 researches**		

Note: *AR = Action Research; CR= Conventional Research,*

** = refers to the same subjects in the same row,*

*** = refers to research done by a foreign national; (Since they may not represent research done at AAU, they were not added to other researches in the table.*

As presented in Table 5.16, while half (50%) of these educators have done conventional research, 35.7% have done both types of research (conventional and action research) in EFL. Another 7.1% have done only action research and the remaining 7.1% haven't done any research in EFL other than their degrees. A closer look at the table shows that the number of conventional researches done by seven EFL educators varies from as low as 2 to as high as 26. Of these, 1 educator (14.3%) has done 2 conventional researches, 3 (42.9%) educators have done 3 each, 2 (28.6%) have done 4 each and another educator (14.3%) has done 26 conventional researches in EFL. This seems to indicate that these EFL educators prefer doing conventional researches to action researches. However, it is possible to say that their involvement in such EFL researches is still limited for it is only 1 educator who has done 26 EFL researches while others have done 4 and less than 4 conventional EFL researches each.

On the other hand, of the 5 educators who have done both types of EFL research, 4 (80%) have done 3 action researches each and have respectively done 1, 2, 5 and 6 conventional researches. The 5th educator has done 26 action researches and 1 conventional research. This seems to imply that some of the subject EFL educators have valued both types of researches-action research and conventional EFL researches. (Since the educator who is reported to have done 26 action research is a foreign national, these pieces of research may not represent researches done at AAU and hence may not be taken as an evidence to say much action research is being done by EFL educators of AAU).

Questionnaire results also revealed that the majority of the researches have been done on an individual basis. As can be observed in the table, (excluding the researches done by the foreign national mentioned earlier), while a total of 60 EFL researches are done individually, only a fifth of this number, 12 EFL researches were done in collaboration. This is an indication that research is mostly an individual enterprise among the EFL teacher educators of AAU.

In short, the analysis of this data revealed that although EFL educators give value both to action research and conventional research in EFL, their actual involvement in doing research is not that pronounced. Moreover, whenever they do EFL research, they tend to do it individually.

5.5.2.3. EFL Educators' Beliefs about PhD Researches in EFL

As important stakeholders of research in the TEFL PhD program and members of the group contributing to the creation of the research culture in the program, these EFL educators were asked to indicate their beliefs related to PhD researches in EFL. Table 5.17a illustrates the results of educators' responses:

Table 5.17a EFL Educators' Beliefs about Purposes of PhD Researches in EFL (N=14)

No	Questionnaire items	Responses (%)				
		SD	D	U	A	SA
1	The results of local PhD researches in EFL will be used to solve EFL-related problems in Ethiopia	0	7.1	35.7	28.6	28.6
2	Whatever quality a PhD research has, there is no chance for it to be used in decision making (e.g. in policy, syllabus design, material preparation etc.)	0	14.3	35.7	28.6	21.4
3	Doing PhD research enables TEFL PhD students to do practice-related research (action research) in the future	7.1	0	14.3	57.1	21.4
4	Doing PhD research enables TEFL PhD students to improve their future EFL teaching practice	7.1	0	14.3	42.9	35.7

Note: *SD= Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, U= Undecided, A= Agree, SA=Strongly Agree*

Table 5.17a reveals that EFL teacher educators of AAU have recognized the role of the current PhD research to TEFL PhD candidates' future professional practices. Because, in their responses to questions 3 and 4, the majority (78.5%) of the subjects have expressed their agreement that this PhD research exposure will enable candidates to improve their EFL teaching practice and to get involved in practice related research (action research) in the future.

When we look specifically at their responses to the first item, these educators seem to hold the belief that EFL PhD researches should serve more than securing PhD degrees and their results should be used in solving EFL related problems of the country. However, the fact that 35.7% of these educators were neutral to this question implies that there is still some uncertainty on the side of some EFL educators of AAU on whether PhD researches should or should not serve more than fulfillment of a degree. Moreover, in their responses to item 2, these educators also seem to believe that in practical terms, the results of PhD research have little chance to be used in policy decision, syllabus design, material preparation etc. for half (50%) of the responses were on the 'agree' side. Still, 35.7% of these

educators were neutral in their responses to this question. This seems to indicate that some educators are not sure whether there are absolutely no chances of use if very relevant EFL researches are done in the PhD program.

Table 5.17b EFL Educators' Beliefs about PhD Researches in EFL (N=14)

No	Questionnaire items	Responses (%)				
		SD	D	U	A	SA
5	In order to do successful PhD research, TEFL PhD students require further research course/training	0	0	14.3	28.6	57.1
6	TEFL PhD students will be guided at all the stages of their research	0	14.3	28.6	42.9	14.3
7	Doing EFL research helps me to provide effective supervisory support to students	0	7.1	14.3	42.9	35.7
8	I have a clear understanding about the roles I should play in supervising PhD students	0	7.1	7.1	35.7	50
9	The research skill I have so far is enough to provide the required supervisory support to TEFL PhD students	0	0	14.3	57.1	28.6
10	The provision of effective supervision requires more than having good research skill	0	7.1	0	42.9	50

Note: *SD= Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, U= Undecided, A= Agree, SA=Strongly Agree*

Table 5.17b suggests that the great majority (78.6%) of EFL educators agree that their doing EFL research helps them to provide appropriate supervisory supports to TEFL PhD students in the program but 85.7% of them believe that the research skill they have so far is enough to make this possible. Still, they seem to accept that effective supervision is not only a matter of having full control over research skills and it requires more than that. This is depicted in their response to item 10 in that 92.9% of them agreed to the statement. What is more, most (85.7%) of the subject educators expressed that they have a clear understanding about the roles they should play in supervising these candidates in the research process.

With respect to conditions necessary for students to do effective PhD researches, educators were found to have the belief that students need

further research courses or trainings and they should be guided at all stages of their research. A closer look at their responses to item 6; however, indicates that 28.6% of them were neutral and another 14.3% disagreed to the statement. Although these percentages are low, they seem to imply that there are some educators who believe that students should also do the research independently and supervisors should help students only at some stages of the research.

Thus, the analysis of data in Tables 5.17a and b indicated that supervisors have the belief that PhD EFL researches have contributions both to doers and others. For them, doing the research will enable candidates improve their future teaching and research capacity. They also believe that results of these researches have the potential to solve practical EFL problems of the country. But, over half of them believe that whatever quality EFL PhD researches can have, they have little chance to be put to any use. Supervisors were found to have the belief that the research skill they have so far is enough to provide appropriate support to students and they know what roles they should play in the students' works. But, many of them still believe that students need some more training to do the research successfully.

5.5.2.4. How EFL Teacher Educators See Their Own Supervisory and Related Practices

In the attempt to explore what the process of research supervision looks like in the TEFL PhD program from the perspectives of educators, educators were given a list of supervision-related activities and asked to indicate the extent to which they do these activities to candidates. Table 5.18 presents the summary of educators' responses.

Table 5.18 EFL Teacher Educators' Evaluation of their own Supervisory and Related Practices (N=14)

No	Questionnaire items	Responses (%)				
		N	R	S	O	VO
11	I am accessible to my supervisees	0	0	0	42.9	57.1
12	I give my supervisees the written feedbacks on time	0	0	0	57.1	42.9
13	I give enough time to my supervisee/s for follow up discussions on my written comments	0	0	14.3	21.4	64.3
14	I respect my supervisees' opinions when they are presented from a different perspective	0	0	0	35.7	64.3
15	I encourage my supervisee/s to make their work original	0	0	14.3	42.9	42.9
16	I control the overall quality of their work	0	14.3	7.1	42.9	35.7
17	I assist my supervisee/s in locating materials and references relevant to their studies	0	0	57.1	7.1	35.7
18	I encourage my supervisees to consult other people who can be of some help in their works	0	0	0	21.4	78.6
19	I attend seminars when my supervisees present their works	7.1	0	21.4	35.7	35.7
20	When my supervisees defend their works, I intercept examiners' criticism when I feel they are not acceptable	14.3	14.3	35.7	14.3	21.4

Note: *N = Never, R = Rarely, S = Sometimes, O = Often, VO = Very Often*

It is very vivid in Table 5.18 that with the exception to items 17 and 20, all the responses are either on the 'Often' or 'Very Often' side, which means that the subject EFL teacher educators have evaluated themselves as doing almost all the stated activities in supervising the research activities of TEFL PhD students. They reported that they are often accessible to their supervisees, control the overall quality of the students' works and encourage students to produce an original work. Although comparatively lower in percentage, some educators (14.3%) and (7.1%) respectively reported that they 'rarely' and 'sometimes' control the overall quality of the students' research works. Supervisors also contend that they provide written feedbacks on time and take enough time for face-to-face discussions with

students. This is evident in their responses to items 12 and 13. Furthermore, their response to item 14 indicates that all educators evaluated themselves as often giving freedom to students to see things from a different perspective. These educators seem to have the belief that in their attempt to do successful research, students should not depend only on the support of supervisors. That seems to be the reason why all educators reported that they often encourage their supervisees to consult other people who can be of some help in their research work.

A different finding captured from this table is what educators responded to items 17 and 20. It is revealed from these responses that the subject EFL educators are not feeling that they are assisting candidates in locating relevant materials to the level expected. Because, only 42.9 % of them reported that they often do this to students and over half (57.1%) of them said they do it only sometimes. Moreover, although the majority (71.4%) of these educators reported that they often attend seminars when their supervisees present their works, they seem to admit that their role in assisting students especially in defense presentations is limited. This is because, while only 35.7% of them said they often intercept unacceptable criticisms from examiners in defense sessions, another 35.7% reported that they do this sometimes. Still, the remaining 28.6% reported that they rarely and never do that.

Hence, the results of the analysis of supervisors' self evaluation indicated educators' belief that they are providing as much professional support as they can to students in the process of the PhD research. They reported that they are accessible to students, give feedbacks on time and provide the chance for face-to-face discussions and also control the overall quality of the research. However, they admitted that their role in leading students to materials and intercepting unacceptable criticism against students in defense presentations is minimal.

5.5.2.5. Educators' Own EFL Research and-Related Practices

A) Their Views on Research Policy/Strategy

EFL educators were asked whether there is an institutional research policy/strategy at AAU and whether they have consulted it for research purposes.

Regarding the presence or absence of a research policy/strategy at Addis Ababa University, some of the educators (28.6%) reported that there is an institutional research strategy/policy at AAU, (7.1%) said 'no' to this question and the majority (64.3%) reported they don't know whether there is one. Moreover, in a follow-up question to this, only one of the four educators who said "there is an institutional research strategy/policy" reported that he consulted it and found it useful. This seems to show that the majority of the educators have had little concern on whether there is a policy or strategy and even those who know that there is one tend not to consult it when they initiate EFL researches.

B) EFL Educators' Preferred Types of EFL Researches

Educators were asked to state the kind of EFL research (action research or conventional research) they want to do at the university and the reasons for their preference. Table 5.19 presents the summary of their responses.

Table 5.19 Educators' Responses about the type of EFL Research they prefer to do at the University

Questions	Responses		Summary of Responses for follow up question	Respondents who share the same reason	
	N	%		N	%
Action Research (AR)	1	7.1	-		
Conventional Research (CR)	6	42.9	Action research cannot be published	1	16.7
			I think beyond the classroom	1	16.7
			CR Helps me grow better	1	16.7
			CR is more convenient	3	50
Both types	7	50	Important for professional development	2	28.6
			Both better than only one of them	1	14.3
			Both should be encouraged at AAU	4	57.1

As presented in Table 5.19, half (50%) of these EFL educators want to do both conventional and action researches in the university and 42.9% of them want to do only conventional research and still 7.1% want to do only action research in EFL. While those educators who prefer doing both types of research mentioned different reasons for their preference, the majority (57.1%) stated that they want to do both types of researches for they believe that both should be encouraged at the university. On the other hand, while those who prefer doing conventional EFL researches at the university mentioned different reasons for their choice, half (50%) of them mentioned similar reason, i.e., convenience.

C) Educators' Preference to Do Individual and/or Collaborative Research

Table 5.20 summarizes educators' responses on whether they want to do EFL researches solo or in collaboration at the university and their reasons.

Table 5.20 Educators' Preference to Individual and/or Collaborative EFL Research

Questions	Response		Summary of Responses for follow up question	Respondents who share the same reason	
	n	%		n	%
Individually	4	28.6	Convenience	2	50
			People may not be interested	1	25
			Absence of the tradition	1	25
In collaboration	1	7.1	I like working with others		
In both	9	64.3	The need to benefit from both	1	11.1
			Both are important for professional development	4	44.4
			Both should be encouraged at AAU	4	44.4

The majority (64.3%) reported that they want to do both collaborative and individual research at the university; 28.6% of the subjects reported their preference only to doing researches individually. Those who prefer doing both types of research mentioned different reasons of which importance for professional development and the belief that both should be encouraged at the university are shared by 44.4% of them. On the other hand, those educators who preferred to do EFL researches individually mentioned the difficulty to find interested people, absence of collaborative culture at the university and the convenience of action research as the reasons for their preference.

D) Dissemination of EFL Research by EFL Educators

EFL educators were asked to state whether they have communicated research results to some audience and the kind of channels they used. Tables 5.21 and 5.22 indicate the summary of their responses.

Table 5.21 Educators Responses on whether they have Communicated EFL Research Results

Question	Response			
Did you communicate EFL research outputs to some audience?	Yes		No	
	n	%	n	%
	10	76.9	3	23.1

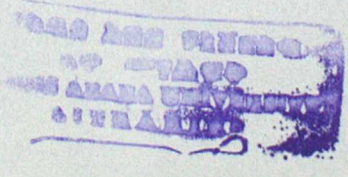
Table 5.22 Research Communication Channels Used by EFL Educators

No	Communication channels	Yes		No		Not mentioned	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
1	Publications in journals and proceedings	8	61.5	3	23.1	2	15.4
2	Presentations in conferences and annual seminars	7	53.8	5	38.5	1	7.7

Note: *In the analysis of data in Tables 5.21 & 5.22, the total number of respondents is 13 since one educator reported not to have done research and instead has written teaching materials*

As can be seen from the Tables 5.21 and 5.22, while the majorities (76.9%) of EFL educators have communicated EFL research results to some audience, the remaining 23.1% haven't communicated results. Moreover, the summary of their response in Table 5.22 indicate that the majority of educators used both channels of communicating results of research.

In general, the analysis of data in Tables 5.19-5.22 revealed that the majority of EFL educators do not either know whether there is a research policy/strategy at the university or attempt to consult it for research purposes. They claim that they have the interest to do both action and conventional EFL researches individually and in collaboration at the



university. In terms of research dissemination mechanisms, these educators seem to use both publications and conferences to disseminate results of their researches. But still others have done EFL researches but did not publish. This may be because of the fierce competition to get published in the existing limited journals.

In another four questions, educators were asked about the number of students (M.A. and PhD) they are currently supervising in the TEFL graduate program, how they are assigned to supervise these students and the time they are spending to read students' research works. Table 5.23 displays the numbers of students educators were supervising in the graduate program by the time when they (educators) filled this questionnaire.

Table 5.23 The Numbers of Students (MA and PhD) EFL Educators are Supervising in the Graduate Program

Number of students supervised	**Frequency (of supervisors)**	**Percent (%)**
4	1	7.1
5	1	7.1
8	3	21.4
9	4	28.6
10	2	14.3
11	1	7.1
12	1	7.1
13	1	7.1
Total	**14**	**100**

As presented in this table, EFL educators are now supervising large number of students in the graduate program (both MA and PhD). This may indicate that these educators do not have enough time to critically follow individual students and to involve in such professional development activities as doing their own EFL research. This is because, the majorities (64.3%) of these EFL educators are supervising from 8 to 10 TEFL students each and still another 21.3% of these educators are supervising from 11 to 13 students in the graduate program.

When asked how they were assigned to supervise these students, 85.7% of the educators reported that the department entrusted this to them whereas the remaining 14.3% said they were given this number of students up on their interest. It also seems that the increasing number of students in the program is making some supervisors to advise students working on areas which may not directly related to their (supervisors') specialization and interest. This is because, while only 21.4% of the educators reported that all the students were given to them on the basis of their specialization, another 21.4% and 35.7% respectively said the majority and some of the their supervisees are assigned to them on the basis of their specialization. The remaining 21.4% did not mention anything. However, supervisors don't seem to believe that the increasing number of advisees is affecting the way they provide the academic support to these students for the great majority (85.7%) said they are spending adequate time for reading the works of their supervisees.

Hence, the analysis of EFL educators' advising load revealed that while these educators have other teaching loads both in the undergraduate and graduate programs, they are also burdened with advising MA and PhD students. Since the number of students is far greater than that of supervisors', these educators are made to supervise even students who are working in areas different from their (supervisors') specializations. But supervisors claim that they are spending adequate time reading the works of all students.

5.6. Interpretation and Discussion of Findings

The findings presented in the foregoing sections of this chapter revealed some significant aspects of the research culture prevalent in the TEFL PhD program of Addis Ababa University and the factors contributing to this culture. This section presents interpretation and discussion of the major findings of the study.

5.6.1. Belief of TEFL PhD students and EFL educators of Addis Ababa University about the purposes of EFL research in general

The findings of this study revealed that both groups of respondents have a very positive belief towards EFL research including the PhD research. Findings from candidates' questionnaire (Table 5.9) reveal candidates' belief that the exposure to PhD research practice will help them in terms of improving their future EFL teaching and action research practices. The results of the interviews also indicate candidates' belief that the readings they are making as part of the research activity and the research exercise itself will add to their effectiveness in teaching EFL and solving problems through action research. They were also found to hold the belief that PhD research is a highly scientific and rigorous inquiry and hence the exposure to this kind of research will enable them to get involved in more demanding professional activities such as producing publishable articles.

Similarly, findings from educators' questionnaires (Table 5.17a) indicate that EFL educators of AAU share this belief regarding the contribution of PhD researches. In addition, findings of interviews with these educators reveal their belief that problems related to EFL in the country can be solved through research. They also expressed their belief that they have the responsibility to do EFL research in parallel to their teaching. For them, doing EFL research helps to teach the language effectively, to provide effective supervisory support to candidates and to improve their professional capacity.

Along the same line, findings deduced from the data drawn using questionnaires (Table 5.9 and 5.17a) and interviews also revealed that both TEFL PhD candidates and EFL educators hold the belief that EFL PhD researches should not be limited to giving students a research training opportunity. They believe that the results of these researches should reach users and be utilized in solving EFL education-related problems in the country.

Although both parties have such a conviction that results of PhD research in EFL can and should solve EFL problems of the country, they resent that the results of EFL research in general and of PhD research in particular are not practically considered for informing teaching-learning processes, policy direction, and materials and curriculum preparation. The findings of the interview with both groups of participants indicate that this belief affects their determination to produce high quality research. For example, in the case of TEFL PhD candidates, their knowledge that the results of PhD researches of whatever quality will serve no more than as references for similar studies is making them aim for doing research that serves only for completing their study. This tradition of doing 'research for the research's sake', according to Sunder (2008), only serves to produce researchers who will get promoted and do more such research which will not add to practice.

In general, both groups of participants of this study—TEFL PhD candidates and EFL educators of the university— have positive belief about the contribution of EFL research including the PhD in their professional practice and solving EFL problems of the country. However, both parties have the belief that the results of EFL researches particularly of the PhD have little chance to come to any practical use in the country. This seems to imply that the determination to produce usable and problem-solving PhD EFL researches in the program is minimal. As such the research activity in the TEFL PhD program tends more towards doing research that serves mainly to secure the degree rather than to doing useful researches that inform the teaching-learning, materials and curriculum design, and policy and further research which can yield to improvements in the quality of EFL education at large. This problem is in line with Sawyeer's (2004) observation of what he described as the vicious circle of problems in the development of research culture at HEIs. For him, when results of research are not used in solving practical problems, doers will not be motivated to do relevant and quality researches. This will again reduce the possibility for such researches to be considered in such matters as decision-making.

5.6.2. How TEFL PhD students and EFL educators initiate and conduct EFL researches

Analysis of data in Table 5.9 revealed that 93.3% of the candidates claimed that they identified a locally relevant EFL issue for their PhD research. However, findings drawn from interviews with candidates indicate that they identified PhD research topics by taking into account mostly the newness of the research issue to the local context. Rather than doing research on practically observed problems of EFL, they tend to look for one from somewhere like the internet and do research on that. One reason for this was found to be candidates' belief that if the research is new to the local context, it will be relevant which, according to Sawyerr (2004), is not necessarily true. For this writer, if research issues are brought from somewhere, there is the possibility that local issues which need urgent attention are overlooked and hence the results of such researches will have little relevance to the actual context.

The findings of questionnaires in Tables 5.14 and 5.15 also indicate that the great majority (90%) of these candidates use mixed-methods design in their PhD research. Although 66.3% of them reported that they chose this design because their research problem requires this design, the rest said they did this for a purely qualitative or purely quantitative research is not preferred by examiners and the faculty. This implies that students tend to be more cliental to the interests of examiners and the faculty than to considering relevance and appropriateness of designs and approaches to effectively investigate the subject of study. If one does 'research' just to please others and thereby win their blessing, the focus will shift from pursuing what the research needs or requires to analyzing and satisfying what those people want the research to be.

When it comes to the actual process of doing their PhD research, candidates are found not to have the culture of cooperating with other students. Current literature (e.g., Gray, 2004; Fullan, 2001b cited in Yates, 2008 etc.) suggests that peer discussion on research matters is a useful source of

relevant information for research students. However, the findings of questionnaires (Table 5.11) revealed that in the TEFL PhD program of AAU, even students who work on related areas do not even know each other's topics let alone discuss about their researches and resolve their research-related dilemmas together. One major reason mentioned is absence of networks of thematic study groups. Also, the anxiety to reveal their research capacity to others was reported by the majority (66.7%) of candidates to be one of the reasons for this individualization. This finding appears to refute the candidates' claim that they have the knowledge and skills required for a PhD research. In addition, findings from the focus group discussions (FGDs) reveal that cultural backgrounds of students also work behind their individualistic attitude for research. Candidates admitted that the competitive educational culture they have passed through has left them with little chance to enjoy cooperative work and to be open to other candidates over research matters. This finding agrees with the findings of a study by Tsegaye (2000). In the study, it was concluded that "secrecy has been a predominant feature of Ethiopian culture; ...instead of sharing ideas openly, there is a tendency of guarding one's own knowledge jealously. Perhaps due to this some instructors who aspire to launch new research project scarcely talk of their intentions to colleagues"(Tsegaye, 2000:210).

Moreover, while graduate students are, in principle, expected to enter into effective learning through open and genuine professional deliberations in PhD seminars and defense sessions (Rubdy, 2005), PhD candidates who participated in this study were found to rarely put this into practice. This study found that candidates assume passive roles in discussions at seminars and defense sessions where others present. Their participation in asking questions and giving comments on what is presented especially in defense sessions is minimal.

The data presented here points to different factors that contribute to this situation. Findings of the study also indicate that one reason for this is candidates' inadequate conceptualization of what social learning involves in such contexts as seminar and defense sessions. Whereas these candidates

are expected to resolve their dilemmas by asking questions and giving comments and learn from the process, they tend to withhold their questions and comments. They believe that asking a question may expose the presenter to additional challenges from examiners. The second factor is time shortage. Findings from FGDs indicate that since defense sessions are customarily taken as serious exam sessions, almost all the time is taken up by questions and comments of examiners while candidates remain passive observers. Due to this, candidates are invited to say something after everything is over simply to say they have been given the chance. What is more, findings of the FGDs show that the less friendly atmosphere that prevails as a result of the highly evaluative approach of examiners prevents candidates to freely ask questions and resolve their own research–related dilemmas especially in defense sessions. This finding agrees with Wosenu's (2009) study which found that in MA theses examinations at the College of Education of AAU, much of the time is taken by questions from examiners, and examiners are unfair in evaluating presenters; they condemn presenters in front of the audience. Although the case is not as serious as it is in defense sessions, this tradition of silence of students is also found to extend to seminar presentation sessions.

This means students that conduct seminars and defend their work do not get the required level of comments and reflections that would otherwise be desperately needed for improving the quality of the research work. The silence forming part of the research culture would contribute to low quality research works.

It was also found that EFL educators of the university initiate and conduct EFL researches owing to their internal drive to satisfy their professional needs rather than due to external pressure from the university or for promotion. However, they admitted their inability to get involved in doing EFL research of their own to the level expected. Evidences from interviews also indicate that educators hold the belief that they are not far from the research activity for they are currently supervising graduate students.

The majority of these educators want to do both action research and conventional EFL research. For them, both are important for professional development and both kinds of research should be encouraged at the university. Moreover, they are also found to have the interest to do individual as well as collaborative EFL research at the university. The reasons they mentioned for their preferences include that both types of research have their own merits and they want to benefit from both.

While these motives and attitudes of educators seem to hold promises for improving EFL education, the disdain is that these are mostly reflections of educators' wishes. They themselves admitted that they are currently not involved in EFL researches of their own to the expected level; and that most of the already conducted EFL researches are conventional researches that are done individually. There seems to be some gap between what these educators believe should be done and their actual practice.

We can deduce the implications of this to the quality of advisory and guidance that would go from such busy advisors to advisees. It would suggest questions regarding the depth and breadth of coaching, which would have direct bearings on the quality of researches to be conducted by the advisees.

Findings from interviews with educators reveal that there is a poor culture towards collaborative research at the department/faculty and even in the university at large. According to the finding, educators usually do not do collaborative research, not because people 'say no to it', but because engaging in collaborative research hasn't become a tradition at the Department. This finding does not go in line with what has been established in current literature such as Hill (1999) and Rubdy (2005), which indicate that another important indicator for the cultivation of a strong research culture at HEIs is the predominance of collaborative researches. In the case of AAU, however; this collaborative culture doesn't seem to have taken root.

Two pertinent reasons were found to contribute to this. One is that as one of the motives to do research in the university is for promotion, people want to

do researches solo and publish secretly for this will relieve them from calculations of shares from team authoring. Moreover, one important condition for such collaboration—collegiality— doesn't also seem to be at educators' service as one of the EFL educators commented: "For some reason, the collegiality here ... the support we have for each other as academic staff, I don't think, is really positive." Also another enticing finding, which appears to be a point of concern, is what some of the educators noted that "connections, not research and publications, matter most for promotions." What these tell about the research culture at the department and even beyond is far and wide.

In general, although both TEFL PhD candidates and EFL educators recognize the importance of cooperative work in doing research, they do not seem to have this culture. In the process of doing the PhD research, candidates do not collaborate with other students. Moreover, in PhD seminar and defense sessions, candidates do not exchange research-related information with other students as well as examiners and facilitators. It is also disheartening that EFL educators of AAU do not usually involve in research activities to the level expected. Moreover, whenever they do EFL research, they don't seem to have the culture of doing research collaboratively. This finding partly agrees with Amare's (2009) observations that Ethiopian researchers rarely write collaboratively and seem reluctant even to listen to each others' presentations at conferences or seminars. And if research is not a lived reality, we can deduce that advisory could go off target; and such a practice forming part of a research culture would evidently have devastating effects on the relevance, quality, and usability of researches by supervisees.

5.6.3. Trends of research observed at the TEFL PhD program in terms of research contexts, topics and methodologies

Findings from the research context (school level) analysis, shown in Table 5.1, reveal that in the currently ongoing PhD researches at the TEFL PhD program of AAU, recurrent focus is given to tertiary and secondary school

level education. While primary education is given far lesser attention in these researches, pre-primary education is totally neglected. Regarding the EFL issues being investigated in these researches, the findings, shown in Table 5.2, indicate that much attention is given to language skills and teaching methods followed by learner factors. Such possible issues of EFL as English for Specific Purpose, integrated skills, culture, social and gender issues appear to be almost neglected in these researches.

A similar tendency seems to be seen in the case of the completed EFL PhD research works. Findings of the analyses of these dissertations (Tables 5.3 and 5.4) reveal that tertiary and secondary school levels are given more precedence as compared to other levels. Of the different EFL issues (stated above), educators gave much focus to teaching methods. This is followed by learner factors and language skills with far lesser percentages.

Moreover, the analysis of the data collection instruments, data type used as well as the type of recommendations suggested in these dissertations (Tables 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7) indicate that questionnaires, interviews and direct observations are the most common instruments used in these completed works and most of these works (82.8%) used both qualitative and quantitative data. Moreover, the majority (75.9%) of these works recommended action directly to the improvement of teaching and learning, very few (17.2%) of these studies recommended action in relation to policy.

Overall the findings of the research trend analyses indicate that although there is some diversity in the research contexts (school levels) and EFL issues studied and being studied in the TEFL PhD program of AAU, much frequent attention is given to tertiary and secondary level education. EFL issues related to teaching methods, language skills and learner factors were found to be the most frequently addressed issues in these researches. Moreover, only few of the completed works recommended action directly to policy. This is echoed in other studies. Amare (2000), for example, found that educational researches in Ethiopia have more coverage of tertiary and secondary levels than primary and pre-primary and most of them

recommend action directly to teaching –learning practices. Lin and Cheng (2010) also found that in the examined MA EFL research works the two most common contexts studied were secondary education and universities and the three most frequently investigated topics were those related to language skills, teaching methods and material/curriculum.

Such concentration of dissertations toward certain themes, similar contexts and methods suggests that instead of taking innovative and problem-solving researches in less researched areas, many prefer 'driving through the asphalt' to 'walking on the gravel road' which takes to desperately needed solutions and of course other problems. The finding also revealed that this has been a reality less attended and less controlled by the department. What transpired here are altogether suggestive of the kind of the prevailing research culture.

5.6.4. Dissemination of EFL research results

All participants of this study disclosed that they want to do EFL research primarily to solve EFL related problems and to improve their professional practice. This calls for the need to share the results of their researches to others. However, both TEFL PhD candidates and EFL staff of AAU feel discouraged knowing that there are only limited opportunities to disseminate research results in the university.

In this regard, results of this study indicate that communication of research findings is not part of the research process in the TEFL PhD program. It has not been embedded with the researches from the outset, and remains a less considered but most important component. While encouraging candidates to publish their works in journals and present in conferences is one legitimate form of fostering research culture in graduate programs (Rubdy, 2005), there is no such a system at the TEFL PhD program of AAU. The fact that candidates are not made to plan ways of disseminating their research results right at the proposal stage is making them ignore the idea of communicating results of their research. Except at seminars and defense sessions where students as a requirement present their research progress to their peers and

team of examiners, there is no other formal avenue for these candidates to communicate findings of their researches. Journals to publish in are still scarce. This is to mean that, due to the lack of research dissemination mechanism at the university, the results of EFL PhD research of whatever quality are not reaching users outside the university. For example, Befekadu (2000) found that the results of MA theses in education did not reach users outside AAU because of inefficient channels of dissemination. This tradition of leaving results of researches to gather dust in libraries appears to be the same both for MA and PhD works.

This study also revealed that candidates also know that the final destination of these PhD researches is library book shelves; and knowledge of this is affecting their endeavor to purposely exert their full effort to make relevant contributions. This is consistent with Hiep's (2006) findings that one reason that was found to hamper researchers' engagement in genuine investigations at HEIs was their knowledge that whatever quality research they do, the results of their researches will not be put to any practical use.

Almost the same finding transpired regarding dissemination of EFL researches by EFL academics of the university, who happen to use both publications and conferences to disseminate their research results, but yet their current attempt to publish EFL researches is greatly constrained by fierce competitions to get published for there are no alternative journals. This finding is in line with (Rainey, 2000). "While one important solution to bridge the gap between researchers and practitioners and create a healthy climate for research is the dissemination of research findings" (Rainey, 2000), this doesn't seem to be given due attention in the university.

5.6.5. The practice of supervision at the TEFL PhD program of AAU

The findings from students' and educators' questionnaires, respectively shown in Tables 5.12 and 5.18, as well as interviews reveal that there is a divide in how the two parties see what is happening in the process of supervision. Whereas supervisors reported that they provide as much professional support as they can (Table 5.18) to research students, students

qualify that their supervisors are effective in providing some of the stated supports but not in others.

It was found that supervisors are accessible to students and encourage them to do more and sometimes control the originality of the students' works. While supervisors reported that they give feedback on time and they set aside enough time for face-to-face discussions with students, attend seminar presentations when their advisees present their works etc., almost all candidates reported that their supervisors do these things only sometimes. According to Kumar and Stracke (2007) cited in Can and Walker (2010), feedback given in the form of open dialogues are more helpful for they give both parties the chance to reach common understanding on the research issues. However, findings of interviews with candidates reveal that since most of the time supervisors provide only written feedbacks and rarely invite students for face-to-face discussions, students do not get the chance to put forward their research-related concerns and get some clarifications on supervisors' written comments. Due to this, sometimes students find it difficult to consider supervisor written comments in the improvement of their works.

As experts of the area being investigated by research students, supervisors are expected to lead students to some relevant literature (Bitchener and Basturkmen, 2010) and encourage appropriate questions from examiners and intercept lines of questioning that appear to be irrelevant (Barger and Mayo-Chamberlain, 1983). However, the present study found that supervisors do not often do these things to their advisees. This finding partly agrees with the findings of a study by Wosenu's (2009) which indicated that thesis advisors of MA students in the College of Education of AAU assume the role of a passive listener in defense presentations.

In the present study, TEFL PhD candidates and their supervisors revealed that there is some similarity in the research areas and/or aspects students want more critical feedbacks and what supervisors normally focus on in their feedbacks. While students need critical feedbacks on methodology,

objectives and research questions, supervisors focus more on these aspects in providing feedbacks. However, differences were observed regarding feedbacks on candidates' language. While all candidates reported that they don't want their supervisors to worry about the language for they can edit and rewrite the language by themselves, supervisors take language as one of those aspects on which they focus in giving feedbacks to students.

It was learnt that students' feeling that their supervisors are not giving critical feedbacks on the submitted works is making some students suspect the relevance of feedbacks and fail to make use of these feedbacks. This finding is consistent with Kumar and Stracke's (2007) study which found that doctoral students who did not perceive that their supervisors were providing genuine feedbacks did not trust feedbacks and were reluctant to use them in making revisions to their works. Discussions with supervisors work well when there is a bidirectional flow of ideas between the two parties (Macdonald, 2004). The study also affirmed that the traditionally established distance between teachers and students is still evident in the relationship between supervisors and students; and hence they tend to accept whatever is said by the supervisor. The assignment of supervisors without mutual agreement between supervisors and students is also found to affect the collegial relationship that is expected to be established between the two parties.

Finally, the findings from this study reveal that there is a disparity between the beliefs held by TEFL PhD students and their supervisors about the students' research skills, and also about the adequacy of advisory and support supervisors give to their advisees, as well as the discussion and interaction between them. This divide between students' perceptions of their research skill and expectations from advisors on the one hand and educators/supervisors perceptions of students' skills and the amount of support appear to implicate absence of or in adherence to standard guidelines that clearly delineate the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved in the research process, and which thereby could signify a good research culture.

5.6.6. Gaps between what is stipulated about researches by graduate research and academics on the one hand and the actual practice on the other

The findings of this study reveal that there are discrepancies between what is stipulated in different official documents of the university about researches in general and the actual practice of research by TEFL PhD candidates and EFL educators of AAU. Findings of the document analysis indicate that in the PhD guideline that governs the research processes at the TEFL PhD program, one of the criteria for admission of candidates is having a preliminary proposal. However, this is not practically implemented and now supervisors are complaining that this is leading to the admission of less capable students to the program. In addition, whereas it is stated in the guideline that the assignment of supervisors will be made on the basis of interest and specialization of supervisors, only 14.3% of the supervisors that participated in this study reported that they are advising this number of students up on their interest. Moreover, while 21.4% of the supervisors said all advisees are assigned to them on the basis of their specialization, 21.4% and 35.7% respectively reported the majority and some of their advisees are assigned to them on the basis of their specialization. What is more, while the University Legislation stipulates that the Research and Publications Committee (RPC) shall promote the publication of outstanding theses and dissertations, practically EFL PhD researches of whatever quality are not published in the university.

Similar gaps are also seen in what is stated about researches by the university academics and the reality on the ground. Findings of the document analysis indicate that academics have the responsibility to undertake problem solving research in parallel to their teaching and they are expected to use a third of their time for research activity. However, findings from educators' interview indicate that these professionals are made to teach and advise large number of students both in undergraduate and graduate programs and hence have little time meant for doing research. Moreover, whereas academics are encouraged to do researches in collaboration with

their colleagues and students, they rarely do this as indicated in the findings from interviews with EFL educators.

In sum, there are visible gaps between policy stipulations and provisions of the university on the one hand and the prevailing research culture, as explained by practices and attitudes, on the other hand.

5.6.7. Factors contributing to the prevailing research culture at the TEFL PhD program of AAU

This study found that some significant factors (both personal and contextual) contribute to the observed research culture at the TEFL PhD program of AAU. Factors related to students' background, the actual research environment, are found contributing to TEFL PhD students' individualization in doing their research. The fact that these candidates have long been accustomed to a competitive educational culture which doesn't encourage cooperative work is still affecting students' readiness to learn from one another and exchange important ideas about their research (Gray, 2004).

According to the student respondents, the current research activity of TEFL PhD candidates is seriously affected by constraints of finance even for collecting enough data, to the extent that students opt to do other part time works to meet their finance needs for the study, and also inadequacy of the support from the department, which also fails to control what goes on in the process of the research and pays more attention only to the final outcome. Advisor-advisee assignments not based on specialization, and lack of research-related information in the department were also found to be among the factors that contribute to the prevailing research culture. And the factors recognized mainly by the educators include: teaching and advising load, lack of resources (both financial and material), lack of reputable journals, inadequate rewards, administrative problems and the less conducive collegial atmosphere in the department and faculty. This finding agrees with Adane (2000); Amera (2000); Derebssa (2000) and Firdissa (2009), except for less collegial atmosphere. Still another set of factors constitute supervisor-

supervisee interactions, absence of clear supervisor-supervisee relationship guideline—creating 'role confusion' on the side of both students and supervisors, workload on educators (as they advise many advisees), absence of an organized system of control in the department on the originality and relevance of students' works.

CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Introduction

This study aimed to investigate the EFL research culture of Addis Ababa University, by employing mixed methods design and collecting data using interviews, focus group discussions, questionnaires, and document analysis. It came up with a number of insights presented, interpreted and discussed in Chapter five. This last chapter summarizes the major findings that emerged from the analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data collected for the study. Finally, based on the findings, it draws conclusions, implications of the findings, and recommendations.

6.2. Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate the research culture of the TEFL PhD program of Addis Ababa University and to identify the factors that contribute to this culture. The study was conducted by taking samples from candidates who are currently studying in the TEFL PhD program of AAU and EFL educators of the university who are supervising these candidates.

In order to collect the relevant data for the study, a mixed methods design that constituted both qualitative and quantitative methods was employed. The qualitative instruments consisted of interviews with TEFL PhD students and educators, focus group discussions of students, and reviews of official documents of the university—i.e. Senate Legislation, Research Policy of the University, and PhD Research Guideline. The quantitative data were collected using two types of questionnaires— one set for EFL educators and the other set for TEFL PhD candidates. Furthermore, content analysis of research issues and context focuses of candidates' current PhD research and the completed EFL PhD works of EFL educators of AAU.

Before the data for the main study was collected, questionnaires, interview guides and FGDs guides were pilot tested. Based on the lessons gained from

the pilot study, some amendments were made to these instruments before the data was collected for the main study (See Section 4.6.3 of Chapter 4).

In the data collection for the main study, the questionnaire data was collected from 30 TEFL PhD candidates and 14 EFL educators (supervisors). While interviews were conducted with 5 EFL educators and 5 TEFL PhD candidates, two FGDs were made with six TEFL PhD candidates each. In the document analyses the Higher Education Proclamation, the AAU Senate Legislation, the AAU Research Handbook and PhD Guidelines and Governance, topics of PhD researches currently in progress in the TEFL PhD program and the EFL PhD works done in the years 1993 - 2010 and documented in the ILS library of AAU were reviewed.

In analyzing the data, both quantitative and qualitative analyses were made. The data collected through questionnaires and reviews of documents (PhD researches in progress and documented PhD dissertations of EFL educators of AAU) were analyzed quantitatively. Whereas, the qualitative information gathered through interviews, FGDs and official documents of the university were analyzed qualitatively. Following this, the findings of the analyses were discussed in terms of the research questions the study was intended to answer. The major findings which portray the prevailing research culture at the TEFL PhD program of Addis Ababa University are summarized as follows:

- The study found that respondents have a strong belief that doing EFL research in general helps both students and educators in the improvement of their EFL teaching, research skills and related professional practices. They also believe that rather than serving as fulfillments of a degree, the results of EFL researches done in the TEFL PhD program should be disseminated and used in solving EFL-related problems of the country. However, both groups of respondents hold the belief that there is practically no system in the university by which research results are communicated and utilized in matters such as policy decisions, and material and curriculum writing.

- TEFL PhD candidates claim that they are addressing locally relevant EFL issues in their PhD research; whereas it was also found that many look for research topics from somewhere like the internet, giving priority to the newness of the issue to the local context. In the process of doing the research, these candidates do not have the culture of open exchange of ideas with candidates working on related areas. In addition, the participation of candidates in PhD seminar and defense discussions is found to be minimal.

  When it comes to EFL educators of AAU, although they claim that they do EFL research for professional reasons, they also admit that they are currently not involved in individual as well as collaborative EFL research to the level expected. And when they do EFL research, they rarely do them in collaboration with their colleagues as well as their students.

- It was found that most candidates employ mixed-methods approach in their PhD research. Their choice was made primarily on the consideration that this design is the most preferred by examiners and on their belief that the research problem requires this design. But none of them chose the design owing to their having the skill of employing it. Similarly, it was found that this mixed methods approach is the most commonly employed design in the PhD dissertations conducted by EFL educators of the university in the years 1993–2010. However, it appears that the concept 'research design' is understood to mean different things in the different dissertations.

  There is some diversity in the research contexts (school levels) and EFL issues investigated and being investigated in PhD researches of the TEFL PhD program of AAU. However, much frequent attention is given to tertiary and secondary level education and issues related to teaching methods, language skills and learner factors. While most of the completed EFL PhD dissertations recommended action directly to

the improvement of teaching and learning, only few made recommendations in relation to policy.

- Dissemination of research findings is not part of the research process in the TEFL PhD program of AAU. Except the required seminars where students report their progresses to the professional community and writing up the dissertation, there are no other avenues by which candidates communicate the results of their research. Candidates are not encouraged to publish the research results in journals, as there are no alternatives. They are not encouraged to embed the means of disseminating their research results when they write the proposal.

  Also EFL educators of the university appear to have limited opportunities (publications and conferences) for ready dissemination of their EFL research results. The absence of alternative reputable journals in the university has so far been a challenge for these educators to disseminate the results of their researches and one of the reasons for educators' limited engagement in individual as well as collaborative EFL researches. The university's new requirement of more publications for promoting from one rank of professoriate to another is also considered by many as a new challenge against educators' interest to do and disseminate EFL researches in the university.

- There are disparities in how TEFL PhD candidates and EFL educators see what happens in the system of supervision. Supervisors believe that they are providing critical feedback on the students' works, give the feedback on time, allocate enough time for face-to-face discussions, attend seminar presentations when their advisees present their works etc. However, candidates reported that since most of the time supervisors provide only written feedbacks and rarely invite them for face-to-face discussions, they do not get the chance to put forward their research-related concerns. Moreover when there are discussions, the students' role is largely receptive for there is a less collegial relationship between students and supervisors. While students have

the belief that they have most of the skills necessary to do successful PhD research, their supervisors do not seem to see these skills applied in the students' research works. Most supervisors reported their concern that the research performance and the language skills of most of their supervisees are relatively low and affecting the quality of the research.

- There are gaps between what such official documents of the university as AAU Legislation and the PhD guidelines say about research by graduate students and academics and the actual research practices of these professionals. With the intention to maintain quality in the TEFL PhD program, the guideline has stated that recruitment should be made based on preliminary proposal; supervisors will be assigned based on their specializations and interest. But these things are not enacted in the program. In the legislation and other documents, the academic staffs are given the responsibility to do research in collaboration with their colleagues as well as their students, but collaborative research is not a common practice for these educators. Moreover since they are overburdened by teaching and advising loads, they rarely have time for research activities.
- Some pertinent factors (both personal and contextual) contribute to the observed culture of research in the TEFL PhD program of AAU. The competitive educational background and feeling of anxiety to reveal their research capacity are found contributing to TEFL PhD candidates' individualization and lack of openness in doing their PhD research. This again is given the chance to continue in the social learning scenarios—PhD seminar and defense sessions. Because, students are not given enough time to ask questions and give comments on what is presented, the environment is less friendly and students also withhold questions and comments on fear that they may expose presenters to further challenges from examiners.

  Moreover, the current research practice of TEFL PhD candidates is affected by financial constraints and inadequacy of the support from

the department. From the perspectives of candidates, rather than assisting them in the research process by closely inspecting the process, the department pays more attention to the final outcome. The absence of research-related information (e.g., about the right formats of writing different parts of the research, information on who is working on what etc.) affects students' research activity especially in the process of identifying research topics and in writing different parts of the research.

- Such factors as the teaching and advising load, lack of resources (both financial and material), lack of reputable journals, inadequate rewards and less collegial atmosphere in the department and faculty are found to be factors affecting the research activities of EFL educators of AAU.

- In the process of supervision, lack of clear supervisor-supervisee relationship guideline in the program is found to create 'role confusion' on the side of both students and supervisors. Another factor is the huge number of students in the TEFL graduate program. Due to the ever increasing number of TEFL candidates in the program, supervisors are forced to advise large number of students including those working in areas that are not in the specializations of supervisors. This is found to affect the quality of the supervisory support they provide to candidates and leaves them with little time meant for doing EFL researches. The absence of an organized system of control in the department on the originality and relevance of students' works is found to pave the way for duplication of researches in the program. This suspicion of supervisors that even very original and relevant researches are not being done in the program is making them be less serious in the feedback they provide on the students' works.

6.3. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions were drawn:

Both groups of the study participants—TEFL PhD candidates and EFL educators of AAU—share the belief that doing EFL research in general helps them in the improvement of their EFL teaching, research skills and related professional practices. They also hold the belief that though the results of EFL research including the PhD can solve EFL problems of the country, they are rarely considered for these purposes. This is also found to discourage educators and students. From this, we may conclude that one important precondition for the development of a good research culture—value to research— (Marchant, 2009) is already in place in the TEFL PhD program of AAU. However, this is being affected by the tradition of the non-use of research results in the university and in the country at large.

In identifying topics for their PhD research, TEFL PhD candidates give much attention to the newness of the issue to the local context and hence tend to look for research issues from somewhere, do research on that and finally recommend action to local stakeholders whose actual problems may be different from the ones entertained in these researches. Thus, it is possible to conclude that in the TEFL PhD program of AAU, research is done mostly as an academic exercise performed to secure the terminal degree; there is little concern on whether researches address locally existing EFL problems.

In the researches done in the TEFL PhD program, frequent focus is given to tertiary and secondary level education. Moreover, among the various possible issues of EFL, more attention is given to teaching methods, language skills and learner factors. Still, most of the completed EFL PhD works recommended action directly to improvement of the process of teaching and learning and few recommended action to policy. From this, we can draw a conclusion that researches done in the TEFL PhD program of AAU concentrate around certain themes, contexts and methods. This suggests lack of innovativeness and problem-solving qualities.

In the process of doing the research, TEFL PhD students lack the inclination to work together. Rather than sharing information with other students and getting better insights about their research works, they tend to guard their knowledge and even keep secret their research ideas. The interaction of many of these candidates even with their supervisors is limited and is not open. Besides, they do not freely and openly discuss issues with other students, facilitators, and examiners in such social learning contexts as PhD seminars. This suggests that collegiality, openness and professional conversation which are the fundamental characteristics of a progressive research culture (Bridges, 2009) are at scarce among TEFL PhD candidates of AAU and these candidates are not picking up this quality from the actual research environment.

EFL educators of the university have an intrinsic drive to do both individual and collaborative EFL research and believe that doing this is part of their professional responsibility. However, it was found that educators are not currently involved in EFL researches to the level expected. The study also indicated that when these educators sometimes do EFL research, they tend to do it individually. Hence, from this it may be possible to conclude that EFL educators of the university have positive perception towards doing researches in collaboration, but they rarely put it into practice. This may also indicate that team working spirit and collegiality— important manifestations of a strong research culture— haven't developed yet among EFL educators of AAU.

Most TEFL PhD candidates expressed their belief that they have most of the skills necessary to do successful PhD research in EFL. However, most of their supervisors reflected concern that these candidates have relatively low research performance and language skills. Besides, educators claimed that they usually give critical feedback in different aspects of the students' submitted works including the language used for they see that students have inadequacies in all these aspects. Most candidates; however, expressed that they were not receiving adequate feedbacks and were rarely invited for face-to face discussions. The conclusion is that PhD candidates and

educators have contrasting views regarding the skills and knowledge of students for a PhD study, the role of supervisors and adequacy of supervision, and nurturing the research process with constructive discussions.

When supervisors provide feedbacks, they give more attention to written feedback on the students' works and do not allot enough time for face-to-face discussions with students. This is also evidenced by the fact that these educators are advising large number of students in the program and hence are spending much of their time reading students' works. Moreover, when there are some face-to-face discussions, students' role is largely receptive and mostly unidirectional decisions are made on the issues. From this it may be possible to conclude that the ideas students bring from their readings and the professional expertise of supervisors are not mostly put together, discussed and negotiated in a way they add to the quality of the PhD research as well as students' learning to ultimately become independent.

The competitive educational background and feeling of anxiety to reveal their research capacity are found to be contributing to TEFL PhD candidates' individualization in the research work and lack of openness in the process of doing their PhD research. This again is given the chance to continue in the social learning scenarios— PhD seminar and defense sessions— for students are not given enough time to ask questions and give comments on what is presented and the environment is also less friendly. From this it is possible to conclude that the students' opportunity to develop such important qualities of a problem-solving EFL professional—open exchange of ideas, cooperative working, critical thinking and reasoning skills— in the process of doing the research is affected by both personal and contextual factors.

The study found that EFL educators of AAU are not currently doing and disseminating EFL research of their own to the level expected due to their teaching and advising loads, lack of resources, lack of reputable journals to publish in, inadequate rewards and the less collegial relationship among the

staff. It is possible to conclude from this that contextual factors which were found to constrain the research practices of AAU and indicated in studies done more than a decade ago (e.g., Derebssa, 2000; Firdissa, 2000 and Tsegaye, 2000) are still there and are affecting the research practices of EFL educators of the university. Moreover, the supervisory practice of these educators is also affected by lack of clear supervisor-supervisee relationship guideline in the program, the huge number of students they advise and the absence of an organized system of control in the department on the originality and relevance of students' works. Thus, the way the TEFL PhD program is managed itself affects EFL educators' endeavor to provide appropriate expert support to graduate students in the TEFL PhD program and help students produce quality research as well as develop advanced research skills.

Overall, taking all the findings together, we can deduce that the EFL research culture of Addis Ababa University appears weak.

6.4. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it appears to be reasonable to make the following suggestions as agenda for action:

The TEFL PhD program of AAU should design mechanisms of reinstating a strong research culture. These include: following the stipulations and provisions in the AAU Policy documents, effectuating advisory functions, establishing an organized system of disseminating the results of researches by the academics and students. The university has to establish alternative reputable journals as well as professional conferences where the academics can disseminate the results of their works. Moreover, there will be journals where students can publish the results of their works; the results of some outstanding PhD works will be disseminated to users.

In the current thinking, effective EFL teaching requires professionals who solve practical problems by engaging in collaborative action research. To make this possible, these professionals should practice cooperative working

skills, open exchange of ideas and solving problems together while they are studying in the graduate programs. Therefore, the department has to strengthen PhD seminar sessions and encouraging students to play active roles in these sessions so that they can practice such professional qualities.

The department should have periodic face-to-face meetings with students and the staff so that problems in the process of the research are identified and measures are taken. Moreover, information regarding works in progress as well as the areas which have already been investigated should be available to supervisors and students so that they can stop repetitions of research issues.

It is recommended that the university should revise the fixed research grant it gives to TEFL PhD students and provide the fund based on the nature of proposed researches. Moreover, in encouraging the academic staffs do research in parallel to their teaching, the university should make funds available to these professionals. It should also devise a mechanism by which those doing research are rewarded and given appropriate recognition.

It is recommended that the number of candidates a supervisor advises shall be reduced to some manageable size and on relevance to the specialization of the supervisor. In the situation where these professionals are not normally getting the appropriate rewards from doing research and teaching, they may bear holding this number of advisees in the graduate program. Thus, the university should not only reduce the number of advisees these educators have but provide appropriate incentives to the works they do with these manageable number of advisees.

As supervision is both an academic and a social enterprise, it requires a healthy collegial relationship between students and supervisors as well as mutual understanding between two parties (Bitchener and Basturkmen, 2010). This relationship can be established and can assist the process when the assignment of supervisors is made upon the interest of both parties. Thus, the department should take this into consideration and give the

chance for students to choose supervisors and make the staff to supervise students upon their interest and specializations.

The tradition of making PhD candidates get collective feedback from reviewers (anonymous readers) has been counting much to the quality of research done in the TEFL PhD program. However, this has recently been halted for reviewers who read bulks of candidates' works are not remunerated. Therefore, it is recommended that the university should reconsider this and help this tradition continue in the program by fixing appropriate remuneration to these educators.

The university recognizes the role of research by the academics and graduate students in its overall mission and encourages both the academics and students to do problem-solving researches that benefit the society. Moreover, in its new research policy it has stated that it will create a research environment where the university academics and students work together in discovering and disseminating knowledge. However, the university doesn't seem to clearly state the role graduate researches should play in its overall directions and in solving problems of the society. This reality is making these researches be seen only as fulfillments of degrees. Therefore, it is recommended that the university should clearly state what role PhD researches will play in the overall missions of the university and how these researches should be managed so that they can contribute in solving problems of the society.

6.5. Implications

6.5.1. Implications for Practice

- While the University has policy documents such as the Senate Legislation, the Research Policy, and PhD Guideline with reasonable provisions and guidelines, the study found out that these have not been pursued. This implies the need to enact those provisions and guidelines so as to give immediate solutions to some of the problems that transpired in the study.

- The finding that educators and candidates maintain divergent views about the nature, extent and overall process of advising a PhD student implies the need for the Department Graduate Committee to look for mechanisms of improving advisor-advisee relationships toward a more fruitful environment. Measures could include developing a clear guide on the roles and responsibilities of supervisors and supervisees and the extent the one is expected to go advising.

- The concentration of PhD research titles around certain themes, contexts, and employing almost similar methods of study suggest that follow up and monitoring by the Department is loose. Furthermore, it has also been found that the Department needs to create network of thematic research groups so that people working on a related area can nurture their works through open and genuine discussions.

- Also PhD students should be clear with their roles and responsibilities as they join the program. At the same time, focusing on relevant problem-solving researches and striving to produce good quality researches should be a norm rather than going for research themes that suffer study fatigues.

6.5.2. Implications for Policy

Knowing that results of studies are not disseminated and thus not being used for solving practical problems is really disdainful. So bad for a poor country to afford dumping resources onto shelves! This seriously calls for appropriate and immediate policy measures that demand embedding dissemination function with the research right from initiation of the study to point of use of the results.

6.5.3. Implications for Further Study

The results of this study highlight some points worthy of further investigation.

- Although one of the important focuses of this study was what TEFL PhD candidates and educators do in the process of supervision, the

contradictions about supervision of PhD researches need to be further pursued. Additional evidences on, for example, the type of written feedbacks supervisors give to students may provide a more vivid insight into the process.

- This study revealed that one of the factors affecting the participation of TEFL PhD candidates in such important social learning avenues as PhD seminars is what goes on in these presentations. Hence one recommendation to be made is that a closer investigation of the behaviors of advisors, examiners and students in these sessions. Observation-based information may provide further studies a deeper insight.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Instrument Validation Form Used by Experts (adapted from Chen, 2002)

Dear Colleague,

I am currently in the process of ascertaining the face and content validity of a survey and interview instruments I am going to use for collecting data for my doctoral dissertation. My research topic is "An Investigation into the EFL Research Culture of AAU: the case of the PhD program." I really appreciate your serving on my panel of experts to help determine the face and content validity of my data collection instruments.

The questionnaire and interview questions will be administered to PhD TEFL students currently studying at AAU and EFL professionals working at the same institution. The purpose of the study is to investigate how these subjects are doing EFL researches. More specifically the study will explore the culture in terms of how PhD TEFL students are doing their research, how the EFL staff are doing EFL researches in their own right and what their supervisory practice looks like and the factors behind this overall culture.

I have developed a special form for your use in commenting on the items I have developed for the instruments. As you review the proposed items, please feel free to comment based on the following criteria:

Face validity: Does the instrument "look like" it is measuring what it is supposed to measure?
Content validity: Are the items representative of concepts related to the dissertation topic?
Clarity: is each item in the instruments clear?
Format: Logical flow? Suggestions ?
Other: Please make any additional suggestions as warranted.

Sincerely,
Zewdu Emiru
TEFL PhD student

Thesis title: An Investigation into the EFL Research Culture of Addis Ababa University: The Case of the TEFL PhD Program

Research questions:

1. What do TEFL PhD students and EFL educators of AAU believe to be the purposes of EFL research including the PhD research?
2. Do they think that the researches thus far are serving those ends?
3. How do these EFL professionals conduct EFL researches right from initiation to presentation?
4. How do these EFL professionals disseminate, if they do, their research results?
5. How is supervision practiced at the TEFL PhD program?
6. Are there gaps between what is stipulated about graduate research and research by the university academics and the actual practice?
7. What are the factors contributing to the prevailing culture of EFL research at the TEFL PhD program of AAU?

Section I: Survey Questionnaire Item Content Validation Form

Direction: On the following pages are listed 59 and 43 items intended to investigate the research culture of PhD TEFL students and EFL teacher educators of AAU respectively. Please rate each item based on two criteria: 1) the appropriateness of the item in representing the topic, and 2) the clarity of the meaning of the item. Please circle your response.

1. Is the item appropriate?	**YES**	**NO**
2. Is the item clear?	**YES**	**NO**

If the item is appropriate but unclear, please **reword** the item on the space provided below the item. If the item is not appropriate and not clear, please indicate the item should be deleted from the questionnaire by writing the word "**Delete**" on the blank lines.

A) A Questionnaire for PhD TEFL students

Part I. Questions on the background of PhD TEFL students

1. What EFL research experience do you have other than what you are doing for your PhD and the previous degrees?

Action research	☐ Yes	☐ No
Other research	☐ Yes	☐ No

Are the choices listed appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

2. If yes to action research, how many? ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 if more, write here...
☐ Individually ☐ In collaboration ☐ Both

Are the choices listed appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

3. If yes to other research, how many? ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 if more, write here...
☐ Individually ☐ In collaboration ☐ Both

Are the choices listed appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

Part II. General questions on PhD TEFL students' research culture
For the questions under A, respondents are required to express their degree of Agreement / disagreement
KEY: 1= Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly Agree

A) Beliefs	**Appropriate?**		**Clear?**	
4. It is the results of researches other than the PhD that should be used to solve an educational problem in EFL context	Yes	No	Yes	No
5. Whatever quality my PhD research will have, it will not be used in decision making (e.g. in policy, syllabus design, material preparation etc.)	Yes	No	Yes	No
6. This PhD research has an important role in my future capacity to do practice related research/s	Yes	No	Yes	No
7. This PhD research will help me to improve my teaching effectiveness	Yes	No	Yes	No
8. Discussion with colleagues can contribute a lot for the effectiveness of PhD research work	Yes	No	Yes	No
9. My supervisor(s) should guide me in the processes of doing the PhD research	Yes	No	Yes	No
10. It is also my responsibility to make the PhD research supervision successful	Yes	No	Yes	No

B) Questions relating to TEFL PhD students' research skills
For the questions under section B, respondents are required to express the satisfactory level of their research skills (from 1=Very Unsatisfactory to 5=Very Satisfactory)

	Appropriate?		**Clear?**	
11. Identifying (sorting out) researchable topic	Yes	No	Yes	No
12. Contextualizing the research problem	Yes	No	Yes	No
13. Grounding the research problem in an appropriate conceptual framework	Yes	No	Yes	No
14. Locating relevant literature	Yes	No	Yes	No
15. Using appropriate referencing of different				

sources (e.g. electronic sources, journal articles, books etc.).....	Yes	No	Yes	No
16. Developing appropriate data collection Instruments	Yes	No	Yes	No
17. Employing appropriate data collection Procedures	Yes	No	Yes	No
18. Analyzing and interpreting the research data				
19. Using appropriate statistical tools (e.g. SPSS and others).....	Yes	No	Yes	No
20. Writing the research report appropriately	Yes	No	Yes	No

Part III: Questions relating to Candidates PhD research and related practices

For the questions under section-A, respondents are required to indicate the degree to which they practice the following

Key: VO= Very Often, O= Often, S= Sometimes, R= Rarely, N= Never

A) PhD TEFL students' research and related practices	**Appropriate?**		**Clear?**	
21. I openly accept comments (about my research) from other PhD students	Yes	No	Yes	No
22. I deliberately make discussions with other PhD students working in related area	Yes	No	Yes	No
23. I feel anxious to reveal my research capacity to other PhD students	Yes	No	Yes	No
24. When research related problems arise, I openly ask for assistance from other PhD Student	Yes	No	Yes	No
25. I'm free to comment on my friends' research works	Yes	No	Yes	No
26. When research related problems arise, I am free to tell my advisor	Yes	No	Yes	No
27. I notify my supervisor my time plan of the research work	Yes	No	Yes	No

B) Multiple choice questions

28. Which of the following designs of research are you using or intend to use for your PhD research? Put a tick mark (√) in the appropriate box.

☐ Quantitative ☐ Qualitative ☐ Mixed-methods

Are the choices listed appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

29. Which of the following is the reason for your choice? Put a tick mark (√) in the box.
- ☐ The research problem is best done using this design
- ☐ I have the skill of employing this design
- ☐ The faculty and examiners tend to accept this as legitimate form of research

If any other, please specify.....

Are the choices listed appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

Questions related to the system of supervision

30. Did you choose your supervisor/s? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Are the choices listed appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

Short answer questions

31. How many supervisor/s do you have? Write the number here .....

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

32. Who did choose the supervisor/s and on what criteria?.....

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

C) For the following questions, respondents are required to express the extent to which supervisors do the stated activities in the process of the supervision

Key: 1 Never, 2=rarely, 3= Sometimes, 4= Often, 5= very Often

My supervisor:	**Appropriate?**		**Clear?**	
33. encourages me to do more	Yes	No	Yes	No
34. gives me enough time for discussions before written comments	Yes	No	Yes	No
35. gives me enough time for follow up discussions on his/her written comments	Yes	No	Yes	No
36. assists me in locating materials and references relevant to my study	Yes	No	Yes	No
37. encourages me to make my research work original	Yes	No	Yes	No
38. controls the overall quality of my work	Yes	No	Yes	No

39. Gives me written feedbacks on time	Yes	No	Yes	No
40. is willing to see me consult other professionals who can be of some help in my work.....	Yes	No	Yes	No
41. gives me constructive feedbacks	Yes	No	Yes	No

D) For the questions under section D, students are required to indicate their answer in a five point scale from 1= Never to 5= Very often.

	Appropriate?		Clear?	
42. I attend PhD seminars and defense sessions	Yes	No	Yes	No
43. I ask questions when there are any in these sessions	Yes	No	Yes	No
44. I am free to comment on what is presented in seminars	Yes	No	Yes	No
45. Questions raised by the audience during seminars are relevant	Yes	No	Yes	No
46. Questions raised by examiners during defense sessions are relevant	Yes	No	Yes	No
47. Comments given by the audience during seminars are relevant	Yes	No	Yes	No
48. Comments given by examiners during defense sessions are relevant	Yes	No	Yes	No
49. Comments given by the audience during defense sessions are relevant	Yes	No	Yes	No

Part IV: Questions relating to factors
In this part students are required to indicate the extent to which the stated factors are affecting their research practice. They are given scales from 1=Never to 5=Very often.

	Appropriate?		Clear?	
50. Lack of knowledge and experience about doing research	Yes	No	Yes	No
51. Lack of determination in making the research fruitful	Yes	No	Yes	No
52. The belief that my research findings will not be put to any use	Yes	No	Yes	No
53. Absence of the collegial support from other PhD students in doing the research	Yes	No	Yes	No
54. Lack of up-to-date reference materials				

(eg. journals, books etc.)	Yes	No	Yes	No
55. Shortage of financial resource	Yes	No	Yes	No
56. Inadequacy of support from supervisors	Yes	No	Yes	No
57. Lack of control from the department/ faculty	Yes	No	Yes	No
58. Inadequacy of support from the department/ Faculty	Yes	No	Yes	No
59. Absence of research related information (e.g. which shows research priorities , work in progress) in the department	Yes	No	Yes	No

B) A Questionnaire for EFL teacher educators of AAU)

Part I. Questions relating to background

1. Do you have EFL research experience other than what you did for your degrees?

Action research ☐ Yes ☐ No
Basic research ☐ Yes ☐ No
Are the choices listed appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

2. If yes to action research, how many? ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 if more, write here.....
☐ Individually ☐ In collaboration ☐ Both

Are the choices listed appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

3. If yes to basic research, how many? ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 if more, write here.....
☐ Individually ☐ In collaboration ☐ Both

Are the choices listed appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

Part II. General questions on research culture

For the questions under A &B respondents are required to express their degree of agreement/ disagreement

KEY:SD= Strongly Disagree, D= Disagree, U= Undecided, A= Agree, SA= Strongly Agree

A) Beliefs	**Appropriate?**		**Clear?**	
4. More than the training opportunity it gives to students, PhD research will solve EFL problems in the country	Yes	No	Yes	No
5. This PhD research has an important role in students' future capacity to do practice related research/s	Yes	No	Yes	No

.....

6. My research experience assists me to do practice- related research in EFL — Yes No — Yes No

.....

7. My research experience is assisting me to provide effective supervisory support to TEFL PhD students in their researches — Yes No — Yes No

.....

Short answer questions

B) Views on Previous EFL researches

	Appropriate?		**Clear?**	
8. I have access to outputs of previous EFL researches when I need them	Yes	No	Yes	No
9. Results of previous EFL researches are helpful to improve the teaching-learning in classrooms	Yes	No	Yes	No
10. They serve me as springboard to design new research	Yes	No	Yes	No
11. They help to add up to my knowledge of EFL Education	Yes	No	Yes	No

.....

C. Questions relating to EFL educators' research-related practices

12. Is there an institutional research policy/strategy at AAU? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

13. If yes, did you consult it when you initiated your research/s? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

14. If yes, was it helpful? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

15. What kind of EFL research do you prefer to conduct?

☐ Basic research ☐ Action research ☐ Both

Are the choices listed appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

16. What is the reason for your choice?

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

17. How do you want to do it? ☐ Individually ☐ In collaboration ☐ Both

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

18. What is the reason for your choice?

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

19. Did you share your EFL research outputs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

20. If yes, how and to whom?
21. If no, why?

Are questions no. 20 &21 appropriate? Yes No
Are they clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

22. Did you publish EFL research output/s? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

23. How many and in what publications?.....

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

D) Questions relating to the supervisory practices of EFL educators
For these questions, respondents are required to express the degree to which they practice the following
Key: VO= Very Often, **O**= Often, **S**= Sometimes, **R**= Rarely, **N**= Never

C) As a supervisor, I:	**Appropriate?**		**Clear?**	
24. I attend seminars when my supervisees present their works	Yes	No	Yes	No
25. I attend defense sessions when my supervisees present their works	Yes	No	Yes	No
26. I give enough time to my supervisee for discussions before my written comments	Yes	No	Yes	No
27. I give enough time to my supervisee for follow up discussions on my written comments	Yes	No	Yes	No
28. I share materials to my advisee	Yes	No	Yes	No
29. I control the originality of my supervisees' work	Yes	No	Yes	No

30. I control the overall quality of their work Yes No Yes No
.....
31. I encourage him/her to consult also other supervisors Yes No Yes No
.....
32. My supervisees are ready to accept comments and guidance about the research work ..... Yes No Yes No
33. I take enough time to read and comment on my advisees' work Yes No Yes No
.....

II) Short answer questions

34. Do your supervisees discuss with you on the need to disseminate their research outputs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

35. If yes, at what stage of the research?
☐Proposal ☐Design (methodology aspect) ☐mpletion
If any other, please specify.....

Are the choices listed appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

36. How many MA and PhD TEFL students are you advising now? MA.....& PhD.....

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

37. Considering your teaching load and number of M.A. and PhD students you advise, do you spend adequate time reading the works of your advisees who are in the TEFL PhD program? ☐Yes ☐o

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

38. How do you think this will impact on the quality and usability of those dissertations?

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

39. Do you think questions and comments during seminars & defense sessions critical & relevant to improve the worth of research? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

40. If yes, how?
41. If no, why?

Are questions 41&42 appropriate? Yes No
Are they clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

42. How does the university view the need for dissemination of research results to different audiences, including to the subject population?
Integral to the research itself ☐ Secondary to the research process ☐
As sideline issue ☐ No need for dissemination ☐

Are the choices listed appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

43. What do you think is/are the reason/s behind?
Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

Section II: Interview Item Content validation Form

Direction: On the following pages are listed 11 open-ended questions intended to obtain information both from TEFL PhD students and EFL staff of AAU regarding their research culture. Please rate each item based on two criteria: 1) the appropriateness of the question in representing the stated dissertation topic & 2) the clarity of the meaning of the question. Please circle your response

1) Is the question appropriate? **YES**= Appropriate, **NO**= Not Appropriate
2) Is the question clear? **YES**= Meaning Clear, **NO**= Meaning Unclear

If the question is appropriate but unclear, please **reword** the question on the space provided below the item. If the question is not appropriate and not clear, please indicate the item should be deleted from the questionnaire by writing the word "**Delete**" on the blank spaces.

A) Interview questions for PhD TEFL students of AAU

1. How do you describe the role of your PhD research to you and others? (Probing questions: particularly 1) in your professional development, 2) in your future EFL teaching and research practice)

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

2. How did you identify the topic of your PhD research? (Probing questions: 1) was it easy? 2) Who participated in evaluating its relevance to EFL education, policy, curriculum etc., 3) what about checking its originality?)

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

3. Is there an institutional research policy/strategy at AAU? (Probing questions: If yes, 1) did you consult it when you initiated your research?, 2) was it helpful?)

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

4. Who do you think are potential users of your research? (Probing questions: 1)how are you going to communicate your findings to these people?, 2)what strategies have you proposed to disseminate your research results?

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

5. How do you evaluate the criticality and supportiveness of the supervision provided by your supervisor? (Probing question: What is your impression of the feedback or comments?)

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

6. How do you think you can contribute in making your relationship to your advisor? (Probing question: in taking responsibility for your work)

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

7. How do you see your readiness to openly and freely deal with your advisor on matters related to your research? (Probing questions: 1) discussions, 2) debating)

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

8. What problems have you faced in different stages of the research so far (Probing question: in relation to1) material and financial matters, 2) supervisors, examiners, reviewers)

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

9. How do you evaluate the contribution of the current research practice in making you do more problem-solving researches in the future?

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

10. How do you evaluate the questions and comments given during seminars & defense sessions in terms of their criticality and relevance in improving the worth of research?

Is the question appropriate Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

11. What will the improvements be in research situations in your faculty?

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

B) Interview questions for EFL teacher educators of AAU

1. How do you describe the role of EFL researches to you and others? (Probing question: 1) in your professional development, 2) in your EFL teaching and supervisory practice)

   Is the question appropriate? Yes No
   Is the question clear? Yes No
   Suggestion for improvement.....

2. How did the university reward you for the EFL research project/s you have done?

   Is the question appropriate? Yes No
   Is the question clear? Yes No
   Suggestion for improvement.....

3. What problems have you faced in doing EFL research/s so far? (Probing question: in relation to 1) material, 2) financial matters, 3) peer and/or collegial support, 4) institutional support)

   Is the question appropriate? Yes No
   Is the question clear? Yes No
   Suggestion for improvement.....

4. How do you disseminate your researches? Have you faced problems?

   Is the question appropriate? Yes No
   Is the question clear? Yes No
   Suggestion for improvement.....

5. How do you describe your role in advising PhD graduate students?

   Is the question appropriate? Yes No
   Is the question clear? Yes No
   Suggestion for improvement.....

6. What problems have you experienced in advising PhD students? (probing question: in relation to your assignment as to your specialization/ your relationship/ discussions)

   Is the question appropriate? Yes No
   Is the question clear? Yes No
   Suggestion for improvement.....

7. What form of support do you provide to your advisee? (probing question: what mechanisms do you use to make it facilitate critical thinking and enquiry)

   Is the question appropriate? Yes No
   Is the question clear? Yes No
   Suggestion for improvement.....

8. Do you check the originality and relevance of their researches? (Probing question: 1)what mechanisms do you use to do that, 2)how do you evaluate the system as supporting you to do this?)

   Is the question appropriate? Yes No
   Is the question clear? Yes No
   Suggestion for improvement.....

9. How do you evaluate the performance of your advisees? (probing question: 1)the research knowledge, skills ; 2) their commitment)

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

10. How do you describe the overall research environment in the faculty?

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

11. What will the changes be in research situations in your faculty for the future?

Is the question appropriate? Yes No
Is the question clear? Yes No
Suggestion for improvement.....

Appendix B: Validated Questionnaire for PhD TEFL Students (Pilot Study)

Dear respondent,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information that will be used for a PhD research entitled "**An Investigation into the EFL Research Culture of Addis Ababa University: The case of the PhD program.**" Hence your genuine response to the different questions counts much to the success of this project.

In the questionnaire, there are questions which require background information, general purpose questions relating to your current as well as previous research activities. There are multiple choice, short answer and Likert scale questions divided into different themes describing EFL research culture. Hence, you are kindly requested to read the instructions under each section carefully and answer the questions accordingly.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Part I: Background information (please mark your answer in the appropriate box)

1. Sex: ☐ Female ☐ Male
2. Age: ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ above 50
3. Academic rank:
   ☐ Lecturer ☐ Assistant professor ☐ Associate professor

4. Have you attended Higher Diploma Program? ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Your EFL teaching Experience at Higher Education Institution:
   ☐ Under 5 years ☐ 5-10 years ☐ 11-16 years ☐ Above 16 years

Part II: Previous research related experience (please mark your answer by putting a tick mark (√) in the boxes.)

6. What EFL research experience do you have other than what you are doing for your PhD and the previous degrees?
   Action research ☐ Yes ☐ No
   Other research ☐ Yes ☐ No
7. If yes to action research, how many? ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 if more, write here...
   ☐ Individually ☐ In collaboration ☐ Both
8. If yes to other research, how many? ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 if more, write here...
   ☐ Individually ☐ In collaboration ☐ Both

Part III: Questions related to beliefs

A) Instruction: Read each item and use the rating scale 1-5 to express your agreement or disagreement by putting a tick mark (√) in the table.

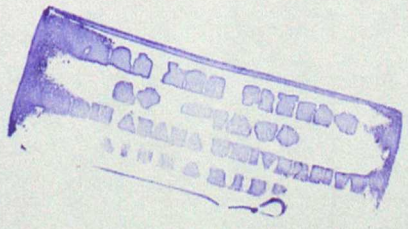
Key: **1**= Strongly Disagree, **2**= Disagree, **3**= Undecided, **4**= Agree, **5**= Strongly Agree

No	Items	rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
	Beliefs					
9	It is the results of researches other than the PhD that should be used to solve an educational problem in EFL context					
10	Whatever quality my PhD research will have, it will not be used in decision making (e.g. in policy, syllabus design, material preparation etc.)					
11	This PhD research has an important role in my future capacity to do practice related research/s					
12	This PhD research will help me to improve my teaching effectiveness					
13	Discussion with colleagues can contribute a lot for the effectiveness of PhD research work					
14	My supervisor(s) should guide me in the processes of doing the PhD research					
15	It is also my responsibility to make the PhD research supervision successful					

B) Instruction: Using the rating scale 1-5 evaluate your skill in performing the different aspects of doing any successful research

Key: **1**= Very Unsatisfactory, **2**= Unsatisfactory, **3**= Undecided, **4**= Satisfactory, **5**= Very Satisfactory

No	Items	rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
16	Identifying (sorting out) researchable topic					
17	Contextualizing the research problem					
18	Grounding the research problem in an appropriate conceptual framework					
19	Locating relevant literature					
20	Using appropriate referencing of different sources (e.g. electronic sources, journal articles, books etc.)					
21	Developing appropriate data collection instruments					
22	Employing appropriate data collection procedures					
23	Analyzing and interpreting the research data					
24	Using appropriate statistical tools (e.g. SPSS and others)					
25	Writing the research report appropriately					



Part IV: Questions relating to your PhD research and related practices

A) Instruction: Read each item and use the rating scale 1-5 to express how often you do the following as part of your PhD research by putting a tick mark (√) in the table

Key: **1**= Never **2**= Rarely, **3**=Sometimes, **4**= Often **5**= Very Often,

No	Items	rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
26	I openly accept comments (about my research) from other PhD students					
27	I deliberately make discussions with other PhD students working in related area					
28	I feel anxious to reveal my research capacity to other PhD students					
29	When research related problems arise, I openly ask for assistance from other PhD students					
30	I'm free to comment on my friends' research works					
31	When research related problems arise, I am free to tell my advisor					
32	I notify my supervisor my time plan of the research work					

33. Which of the following designs of research are you using or intend to use for your PhD research? Put a tick mark (√) in the appropriate box.

☐ Quantitative ☐ Qualitative ☐ Mixed-methods

34. Which of the following is the reason for your choice? Put a tick mark (√) in the box.

☐ The research problem is best done using this design
☐ I have the skill of employing this design
☐ The faculty and examiners tend to accept this as legitimate form of research
If any other, please specify.....

B) Instruction: Read each question and provide proper response

35. Did you choose your supervisor/s? ☐ Yes ☐ No
36. How many supervisor/s do you have? Write the number here .....
37. Who did choose the supervisor/s and on what criteria?.....

C) Instruction: The following are points that can be used to describe what your thesis Supervisor does to you in your PhD research work. Read each item and use the rating scale 1-5 to express the extent to which he/she does the following by putting a tick mark (√) in the table.

Key: **1**= Never **2**= Rarely, **3**=Sometimes, **4**= Often **5**= Very Often

No	Items	rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
	My supervisor:					
38	encourages me to do more					
39	gives me enough time for discussions before written comments					
40	gives me enough time for follow up discussions on his/her written comments					
41	assists me in locating materials and references relevant to my study					
42	encourages me to make my research work original					
43	controls the overall quality of my work					
44	gives me written feedback (on the papers I submit) on time					
45	is willing to see me consult other professionals who can be of some help in my work					
46	gives me constructive feedback					

D) Instruction: Using a tick mark (√), rate your attendance of seminar and defense sessions and the degree of relevance of questions and comments raised in these sessions in improving the quality of research

Key: **1**= Never, 2= Rarely , 3= Sometimes, 4= Often 5= Very often

No	Items	rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
47	I attend PhD seminars and defense sessions					
48	I ask questions when there are any in these sessions					
49	I am free to comment on what is presented in seminars					
50	Questions raised by the audience during seminars are relevant					
51	Questions raised by examiners during defense sessions are relevant					
52	Comments given by the audience during seminars are relevant					
53	Comments given by examiners during defense sessions are relevant					
54	Comments given by the audience during defense sessions are relevant					

Part V: Questions relating to factors

Instruction: Using the rating scale 1-5 decide the extent to which these factors are affecting your current PhD research practice.

Key: **1**= Never, **2**= Rarely, **3**= Sometimes, **4**= Often, **5**=Very Often

No	Items	rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
55	Lack of knowledge and experience about doing research					
56	Lack of determination in making the research fruitful					
57	The belief that my research findings will not be put to any use					
58	Absence of the collegial support from other PhD students in doing the research					
59	Lack of up-to-date reference materials (eg. journals, books etc.)					
60	Shortage of financial resource					
61	Inadequacy of support from supervisors					
62	Lack of control from the department/ faculty					
63	Inadequacy of support from the department/ faculty					
64	Absence of research related information (e.g. which shows research priorities , work in progress) in the department					

Thank you for your cooperation!

Appendix C: Validated Questionnaire for EFL Teacher Educators of AAU (Pilot Study)

Dear respondent,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information that will be used for a PhD research entitled "**An Investigation into the EFL Research Culture of Addis Ababa University: The case of the PhD program**". Hence your genuine response to the different questions counts much to the success of this project.

In the questionnaire, there are questions which require background information, general purpose questions relating to your current as well as previous research and research-related (such as supervision) activities. There are short answer and Likert scale questions divided into the different themes describing EFL research culture. Hence, you are kindly requested to read the instructions under each section carefully and answer the questions accordingly.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Part I: Questions relating to background

Instruction: Read the questions and put a tick mark (√) in the boxes provided next to the categories which apply to you.

1. Do you have EFL research experience other than what you did for your degrees?
   Action research ☐ Yes ☐ No
   Other research ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. If yes to action research, how many? ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 if more, write here...
   ☐ Individually ☐ In collaboration ☐ Both

3. If yes to other research how many? ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 if more, write here...
   ☐ Individually ☐ In collaboration ☐ Both

Part II: General questions on the research culture

A) Questions relating to your beliefs about your role as an EFL teacher, researcher and supervisor

Instruction: Read each item and use the rating scale 1-5 to express your agreement or disagreement by putting a tick mark (√) in the table.

Key: SD= Strongly Disagree, **D**= Disagree,**U**= Undecided, **A**= Agree, **SA**= Strongly Agree

No	Items	rating				
		SD	D	U	A	SA
	Belief					
4	More than the training opportunity it gives to students, PhD research will solve EFL problems in the country					
5	This PhD research has an important role in students' future capacity to do practice related research/s					
6	I have enough skill to do EFL research					
7	My research experience assists me to do practice- related research in EFL					
8	My research experience is assisting me to provide effective supervisory support to TEFL PhD students in their researches					

B) Questions relating to your views on previous researches (your own and those of others)

Instruction: Read each item and use the rating scale 1-5 to express your agreement or disagreement by putting a tick mark (√) in the table

Key: **SD**= Strongly Disagree, **D**= Disagree, **U**= Undecided, **A**= Agree, **SA**= Strongly Agree

No	Items	rating				
		SD	D	U	A	SA
9	I have access to outputs of previous EFL researches when I need them					
10	Results of previous EFL researches are helpful to improve the teaching-learning in classrooms					
11	They serve me as springboard to design new research					
12	They help to add up to my knowledge of EFL education					

C) Questions relating to your research-related practices

Instruction: Read each question and provide proper response.

13. Is there an institutional research policy/strategy at AAU? ☐ Yes ☐ No
14. If yes, did you consult it when you initiated your research/es? ☐ Yes ☐ No
15. If yes, was it helpful? ☐ Yes ☐ No
16. What kind of EFL research do you prefer to conduct?
    ☐ Conventional research ☐ Action research ☐ Both
17. What is the reason for your choice? .....
18. How do you want to do it? ☐ ndividually ☐ h collaboration ☐ oth
19. What is the reason for your choice?.....
20. Did you share your EFL research outputs? ☐ Yes ☐ No
21. If yes, how and to whom?.....
22. If no, why?.....
23. Did you publish EFL research output/s? ☐ Yes ☐ No
24. How many and in what publications?.....

D) Questions relating to supervisory practices

I. Instruction: Read each item and use the rating scale 1-5 to express how often you do the following by putting a tick mark (√) in the table.

Key: **N**= Never , **R**= Rarely, **S**= Sometimes, **O**= Often, **VO**= Very Often

No	Items	rating				
		N	R	S	O	VO
25	I attend seminars when my supervisees present their works					
26	I attend defense sessions when my supervisees present their works					
27	I give enough time to my supervisee for discussions before my written comments					
28	I give enough time to my supervisee for follow up discussions on my written comments					
29	I share materials to my advisee					
30	I control the originality of my supervisees' work					
31	I control the overall quality of their work					
32	I encourage him/her to consult also other supervisors					
33	My supervisees are ready to accept comments and guidance about the research work					
34	I take enough time to read and comment on my advisees' work					

II. Instruction: Read each question and provide proper response

35. Do your supervisees discuss with you on the need to disseminate their research outputs? ☐ Yes ☐ No

36. If yes, at what stage of the research?
☐ Proposal ☐ Design ☐ Completion If any other, please specify.....

37. How many MA and PhD TEFL students are you advising now? MA... .& PhD.....

38. Considering your teaching load and number of M.A. and PhD students you advise, do you spend adequate time reading the works of your advisees who are in the TEFL PhD program? ☐ Yes ☐ No

39. How does the university view the need for dissemination of research results to different audiences, including to the subject population?

Integral to the research itself ☐ Secondary to the research process ☐
As sideline issue ☐ No need for dissemination ☐

Thank You for your cooperation!

Appendix D: Interview schedule used by Hiep (2006)

1. How do you define research?
2. What are your general attitudes toward research work? What are your aspirations in doing it? What makes you hesitate to do it?
3. What form of research (e.g. quantitative, qualitative, action research) have you chosen/will you choose to conduct, and why?
4. How did institutions reward you for the research project(s) that you have done?
5. What problems you have experienced in doing research?
6. How did you disseminate your research findings? How does this affect /enhance your motivation in doing research?
7. What is the impact that you think their research can eventually make on your professional development, your students and your institution, and knowledge?
8. What you have said is very likely to be published in the TESL-EJ -an international journal in our field; I hope that many colleagues in the world will read it. How do you like this idea? Do you want to make any other comments about doing research in Vietnam?

Appendix E: Validated Interview Schedule for PhD TEFL Students (Pilot Study)

1. How do you explain the role of your PhD research to you and others? (Probing questions: You may consider your future EFL teaching and research practice)
2. How did you identify the topic of your PhD research? (Probing questions: 1) was it easy? 2) Who participated in evaluating its relevance? 3) What were your considerations in deciding the topic?)
3. How do you explain your motivation in doing this research? (You can consider intrinsic and/or extrinsic ones)
4. How are you going to communicate your findings to potential users? (Probing question: what strategies have you proposed to disseminate your research results?
5. How do you evaluate the criticality and supportiveness of the supervision provided by your supervisor? (Probing question: What is your impression of the feedback or comments?
6. How do you think you can contribute in making this interaction productive?
7. How do you see your readiness to openly and freely deal with your advisor on matters related to your research? (Probing question: in discussions and/or debates over the research)
8. What problems have you faced in different stages of the research so far? (Probing question: in relation to1) material and financial matters, 2) supervisors, examiners, reviewers)
9. So taking all this into consideration, what specific improvements do you recommend so that the situation would improve for the future?

Appendix F: Validated Interview Schedule for EFL Teacher Educators of AAU (Pilot Study)

1. How do you explain the role of EFL researches to you and others? (Probing question: 1) in your professional development, 2) in your EFL teaching and supervisory practice)
2. What are your motives to do EFL research other than what you did for your degrees? (Compare practical/professional Vs external drivers such as pressure from the university or promotion)
3. How did the university reward you for the EFL research project/s you have done?
4. What problems have you faced in doing EFL research/s so far? (Probing question: in relation to 1) material, 2) financial matters, 3) peer and/or collegial support)
5. How do you describe your role in advising PhD graduate students especially in helping them develop critical thinking and enquiry skills?
6. Do you check the originality and relevance of their researches? (Probing question: 1)what mechanisms do you use to do that ?)
7. What problems have you experienced in advising PhD students? (probing question: in relation to your assignment as to your specialization/ your relationship/discussions)
8. How do you evaluate the overall research environment of AAU where EFL researches of PhD students and of your own are done?
9. So, what do you recommend so that the whole research situation is improved in the university?

Appendix G: Questions Used in the Focus Group Discussion (Pilot Study)

1. How do you evaluate your interest to make open discussions with other students on research- related matters?
2. Given the actual research context in the TEFL PhD program, how do you see your determination and commitment in doing relevant PhD research which will have contribution to EFL education in Ethiopia?
3. How do you evaluate your relationship to your supervisor/s? How do such cultural elements as respect come into play in this interaction?
4. How do you evaluate PhD seminar and defense sessions in terms of their effectiveness in providing you with the learning opportunity you are expecting?
5. How do you evaluate your own participation in giving comments and asking questions in seminars and defense sessions?

Appendix H: A Transcription of Interviews with PhD TEFL Students (Pilot Study)

Interview with the first candidate (PS1):

Q1. How do you explain the role of this EFL PhD research to you and others? (You may consider teaching and research practices in EFL)

R: Ok. The roles can be seen in two ways. One, it will help us to engage in research activities in the future. I think, since my research knowledge and experience was poor I was not doing scientific and fruitful EFL researches so far. But this program will give me a good practice so that I will be engaged in more productive research activities including action research in the future. Secondly, it will promote my teaching for the practice of teaching becomes more effective when supported with research activities.

Q2. How did you identify the topic of your PhD research? (Was the task easy/ who participated in the identification/ what were your considerations in deciding the topic for the study?)

R: It was not easy. And I couldn't exactly remember the time that I came up to decide this topic for my PhD research. It was such a long process that I shaped and came up with the current topic that I have. I had to spend more than a year reading different sources to identify a topic for the PhD research. Even it is after the pilot study that I could shape the title of my research and I could say that it is not an easy task and it couldn't be identified with in a very short period of time. When I identified the topic my concern was on whether or not it has been done in our context. I have checked that local MA and PhD researches haven't addressed the topic of my research and I felt that it would be original. But whether it can or cannot be useful in solving EFL problems in our country didn't come to my mind. Should it? What matters here is whether the topic is impressive and new to be a topic for PhD research.

Q3. How do you explain your motivation in doing this research? (You can consider intrinsic and/or extrinsic ones)

R: To be frank, it is not intrinsic motivation that made me to engage in this research activity. Securing my PhD degree is what made me come to the research. I can't say it is an internal motivation for knowing more about this issue that instigates me to work on this issue. If you want to complete your study, you have to do some research.

Q4. How are you going to communicate the findings of your study to potential users? (What strategies have you proposed to disseminate the results of your study?)

R: There are two things here. 1) Research findings be it MA or PhD or even others are not used in our country and concerned bodies are not consuming results of researches. 2) May be due to this reason the university (AAU) doesn't expect me to disseminate my research results to other users. What is expected from me is writing the thesis at the end and it will be put in the library; nothing else. So how can I plan a mechanism for dissemination? Of course, if there had been a tradition that findings should reach users, I could think of communicating it by using different modalities.

Q5. How do you evaluate the criticality and supportiveness of the supervision provided by your research supervisor? (What is your impression of the feedbacks and comments he provides on your work?)

R: My expectation was great from the supervisors. I expected the supervisors to be very much closer for us to be friendly with us and help in every step of the research work. Personally I am not satisfied with the support that I received from my supervisor. Because he doesn't go through the papers, he doesn't seriously comment and give me feedback. And it is less than my expectation. There is no regular dialogue or conversation on the work, there is no regular visiting of my supervisor. I think, supervisors should be very much committed to evaluate and comment and give feedback for their advisees so that an outstanding research output will be there. But, these days as to me and other PhD candidates complain, supervisors are not providing and giving sufficient support in evaluating and commenting the works of these PhD students.

Q6. How do you think you can contribute in making this interaction productive?

R: Our contribution could be expressed in different ways. One is working on and submitting our works in a regular and planned manner. Whenever our supervisors are in need of us, we have to be around regularly. The other is if the feedbacks and comments are helpful, we have to accept and if they are not, we have to politely deal and discuss with them so that we can establish good relationship with supervisors and continue peacefully. But if we should contribute something positive in the process, we should first be given the time to sit together and make discussions. But that is not happening.

Q7. So how do you see your readiness to openly and freely deal with your supervisor on research related matters (E.g. discussions and/or debates over the research)?

R: I'm personally open to deal with my supervisor let alone on the research work even I need my supervisor to help me in my personal problems. This is because, I think my supervisor is the closest person for me during the course of this research work .So I can say that I am open as long as my advisor is ready to assist and communicate with me. But I'm not confident enough to enter into serious arguments and I prefer accepting whatever comments he provides. As you see from the trend when there are some cracks debates and arguments between the supervisor and supervisee, things are going to the worst side even you see some termination of the advising and supervising role so that having that fear, I don't get into confrontations although what the supervisor says is not acceptable for me.

Q8. Taking the whole process into consideration, what problems have you faced at different stages of the PhD research work (in relation to material& financial support; examiners reviewers etc?

R: I faced different challenges. One is from the supervisor. He doesn't give me the feedback timely. My paper stays with him for about 2 or 3 months without giving me comments and feedback. I see some negligence, ignorance on the part of the supervisor. From the reviewers there is a great delay. It takes more than 2 or 3 months. When I come to the finance and material problems, there is a great challenge in securing and getting materials and financial resources. There are no recent and updated reference materials in the library. The other is financial problem. The budget that is allocated for us is head breaking and surprising. While

the cost of living in Ethiopia is increasing every day, the university is granting the same amount of money that was used to be given to PhD students years back. This may be an indication that they are not expecting that our research will come up with something relevant. And if you are not expected to do something good, you will also do it simply to complete your study.

Q9. What are your recommendations to redress research related problems for the future?
R: The faculty should have clear guidelines for PhD advising. The role of advisors and advisees should be clearly defined so that both parties can take their responsibilities seriously. As you see, there is unnecessary wastage of time probably due to the negligence from both PhD students and supervisors. So the faculty should consider this area. The other is financial problem. The department should consider the nature of individual researches so that allocation of money should differ accordingly. The faculty should not treat different researches equally. The faculty/department should supply books, journals etc. Formerly there were journals in ILS library, but now it is interrupted probably due to the weakness of the department/ faculty. The department should create a conducive social environment where the department, PhD students and supervisors together create a good research culture that will be motivating to carry out the PhD research in a very fruitful manner. Another point is, in assessing the final outcome of our works, the department goes to the extent of inviting external examiners. That is good as it will add to the quality of the research. However, the department gives more focus to assessing the final outcome using appropriate examiners rather than assessing (through face-to-face talks with studnts and supervisors) while the research is in progress. This should be improved.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Interview with the second candidate (PS2):

Q1. How do you explain the role of this EFL PhD research to you and others? (You may consider teaching and research practices in EFL)

R: I think, this research will have good contribution for my professional development and for others. Since the whole process in the PhD research presents problems that we should resolve by ourselves, this skill of solving problems by ourselves will make us efficient action researchers to solve problems we face in the EFL classroom. I think, it is this skill that action researchers require. The reading that we make on the area of our research would also equip us for conducting good problem- solving research. Moreover, attending presentations of others' works would also inform you the current trends in the research practice as well as in the field. Whatever you do in the research process brings to you something important that will help you in the future.

Q2. How did you identify the topic of your PhD research? (Was the task easy/ who participated in the identification/ what were your considerations in deciding the topic for the study?)
R: The topic of my PhD research started from my MA thesis for new research questions emerged at the end of the research. It is like a kind of recommendation I had made at the end of my MA that someone may like to continue further. By the time I joined the PhD program, I just went back to that topic and thought too much what I can just find. Regarding the originality, from what I surveyed in the local literature, I found my topic not researched and I felt that it would add to the

knowledge, I mean to the area. And Yes, I hope it would have some originality and indeed I checked this by myself and nobody assured me that it is an original work. I think my advisors have also the same idea on the originality of my work.

Q3. Alright, so does it mean that you were intrinsically motivated to do this research?

R: It is not a mere intrinsic motivation that led me to conduct this research at any risk. One side during the program, you know you have to present a topic as a requirement and I had to find a topic and I tried to find one which is of my interest. I tried to look at my previous experience and what could I make best. It doesn't mean that I'm conducting this research for the sake of satisfying my interest. Probably, after this PhD I may develop intrinsic motivation to do other EFL researches. As I told you earlier, even when I identified the topic for this research, it was not a special interest in the topic that made me take this topic but I had to look for some topic for the PhD research.

Q4. How are you going to communicate the findings of your study to potential users? (What strategies have you proposed to disseminate the results of your study?)

R: That is a very good question. As far as I'm concerned, I didn't include in my plan this element of the research –communicating the findings of my research to users. But lately the comments of one of my readers led me to think about this point. I thought that the whole responsibility that I have is to conduct my research report in seminars, in papers and if possible by publishing in a kind of local journals so that other people would read it. Otherwise, I didn't have any plan in my proposal and in my pilot report about how to disseminate in a kind of special way to the responsible stakeholders. PhD and MA students are not required to include in their proposal the means of communicating results and the budget for that. And this is an indication that even the institution is not expecting us to communicate our research results.

Q5. How do you evaluate the criticality and supportiveness of the supervision provided by your research supervisor? (What is your impression of the feedbacks and comments he provides on your work?)

R: I can say that they are not that much critical as far as I'm concerned. They tend to read my paper and they leave it for me. They expect that what I just write or say there would be, I don't know, somewhat revised and may be they expect me that I know the issue. But I just observed that even my supervisors and others are more critical when they read reports as evaluators or examiners rather than when they see it as advisors. You know most of the time supervisors are more critical when they read research works as evaluators or examiners than when they see these works as advisors. That is what I have.

Q6. How do you think you can contribute in making this interaction productive?

R: I think, supervisors should see that you are the most responsible person than anybody else in your research work. Supervisors give you additional guidelines. As far as I'm concerned, I always make the best effort to meet requirements and ask for help from them when I need. And I feel that they have that kind of understanding and they don't hesitate to provide the kind of help they are expected to. At the beginning of my work, they were more formal and they tended to keep things for

other time, but lately things are changing; even I can find them everywhere; every time. Hence, showing them all your efforts, I think, would be the best way to let them help you much. I think, responsibility from the advisee is really very important even to make the relationship very calm, good and fruitful.

Q7. So how do you see your readiness to openly and freely deal with your supervisor on research related matters (E.g. discussions and/or debates over the research)?

R: There is always subjectivity in researches. I think, the most important thing is the way you approach them. I always feel free to at least present my view. You know, most of the time supervisors may not be clear with what you wanted and intended to say in your report or even in your communication. In that case, you need to make things clear. And once the debate is clear, I believe that there is always something that you need to accept. Once you and your advisor are clear about the issue, I think, either of you must accept. I don't see this as a disagreement. It is a kind of discussion. One way may be better or more acceptable than the other. I'm ready to deal with matters freely even to change since I'm not rigid. If things are logical, I accept and I agree. If they are not, I can even go to the extent of making them change.

Q8. Taking the whole process into consideration, what problems have you faced at different stages of the PhD research work (in relation to material& financial support; examiners reviewers etc?)

R: It's a very important question. There were lots of problems throughout the process. Financial issues are the most serious. This time things are changing; you need to invest a lot of money for the support you get from your subjects for materials etc but the research fund you get from the university is the amount it used to be given years back. To overcome this, you have to find alternatives even to do some other private works and this in one way or the other would affect the research work and that is really a very serious challenge that I'm facing right now. The other problem I experience is readers' and examiners' schedule. There is no any fixed time schedule that readers should be abide by. Some readers return the document earlier than others and hence things become out of your control and determine your pace. The same is true for examiners. There is fixed time written on letters but they are not put into practice. Of course, I understand that they have busy schedule but it's creating a problem.

Q**9.** So taking all this into consideration, what specific improvements do you recommend so that the situation would improve for the future?

R: Let me just start from what we PhD students need to do. We often face frustrations in the research process. I think the best quality that we need to possess this time must be to avoid frustration and to stand on ourselves. There can be problems, for example, in relation to schedules of advisors. In such cases we should be tolerant. The other is regarding readers and examiners. Some people say that since there are already advisors and the trend is new, using anonymous readers is simply a waste of time. But as far as I'm concerned, I found the readers more critical than even advisors and I found them very helpful throughout. It is up to you to accept or refuse things; you have always a space to defend things. I like the quality of their comment. That really helps us a lot. However, the department has to set a clear time plan for readers and examiners. They should not take more than a week or two to give feedbacks. Our pace in the research work should not be

obstructed by the problems from the department. The other is the budget issue. This time you spend money not for leisure things. But you have money; you do more things. If we should concentrate on our research and do fruitful works, money should not be a problem. We don't need to run here and there for the sake of finding money to support our family. I believe if these things are improved in the department / the university, we can do better research that will contribute to EFL education in Ethiopia.

Thank you very much for your Cooperation!

Interview with the third candidate (PS3)

Q1. How do you explain the role of this EFL PhD research to you and others? (You may consider teaching and research practices in EFL)

R: Firstly, as part of the research work I'm reading a lot and this will assist my professional development. Since my research is related to classroom problems, it has something to do with teaching process. Hence this will help me to assess students' problem which means that it will have contribution for my future EFL teaching. Moreover, the practice I've got from doing this PhD research and my reading on the topic as well as research methodologies and the practical application of statistics in analyzing data will contribute a lot to conduct more EFL researches including action research after this degree.

Q2. How did you identify the topic of your PhD research? (Was the task easy/ who participated in the identification/ what were your considerations in deciding the topic for the study?)

R: It was a difficult process. We don't have many materials in the libraries; the only reliable source is internet. I've got only some books therefore it was difficult to select the research topic. But after I have got this topic, it was very difficult to contextualize it in our situation. Of course, my friends have participated in the process. When I come to the second question, when I decided on the topic, my consideration was that the issue has not been seen in the Ethiopian situation. And you know this will make the research original and I thought that if the work is original, it will have some contribution. Since it addresses students' real problem, it will be a benefit for students and instructors in my and other campuses. I hope it will also serve as a springboard for further research in this area. Therefore this is important. I believe that the teacher, students and other researchers will benefit a lot from this research result.

Q3. What was your motive to undertake it? (you can consider internal and external drives)

R: I think, it is both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that made me conduct this PhD research. You know, as I have told you earlier many researches are conducted outside Ethiopia on the issue I'm working on. But when we come to Ethiopia, we don't know much about it. This inspired me to do research on the area. But the other one as you know we are expected to upgrade ourselves always. Therefore, you know these two motives forced me to do this PhD research at AAU. Therefore it is both of them.

Q4. How are you going to communicate the findings of your study to potential users? (What strategies have you proposed to disseminate the results of your study?)

R: Frankly speaking, I didn't think about it. I just want to do my PhD work at this time. It is true that this is another important stage to improve the teaching learning process in the country. As I said earlier, the result of this study will have significance for teachers, students, other researchers, material producers and so on. Therefore if I get the chance to publish particularly in a reputable journal, that will help me a lot to disseminate my research result to the other users and researchers. But since this is not possible, I may prepare summary of the results and distribute at least to my staff (my host university). But so far, I didn't think about how I can disseminate the results to other users. The university also doesn't expect me to worry about it. I'm sure anyone in the program does the research with the understanding that the research will serve no more than a reference in libraries. This will have an impact on the quality of the researches. We remember that we did another EFL research in the MA program but we did nothing on that. If there are responsible organizations, parties which are going to disseminate research results of the PhD works in the future, I will participate actively. But I don't bother about dissemination at this stage. This is because; there is no any system and culture of disseminating research results in our campus or at the ministerial level.

Q5. How do you evaluate the criticality and supportiveness of the supervision provided by your research supervisor? (What is your impression of the feedbacks and comments he provides on your work?)

R: It is not possible to say there is advisor-advisee relationship. I see gaps between what the faculty/department expects us to do and what is happening between supervisors and supervisees. Firstly, the department tells you (through the written guideline) that you can choose your supervisor but it goes to the extent of changing the supervisor/s you have chosen. Secondly, the department expects us to come up with a well written work developed through feedbacks from supervisors but supervisors do not have time for discussions. You know, my supervisor wants to give me only written comments. He writes them on my paper. The problem is sometimes I don't understand what he wants to say in the comments. In such situations although I want him to invite me for face-to-face discussions and explain these comments, he doesn't do that. Therefore, if you don't understand comments, you don't make use of them. Secondly, our supervisors have many supervisees and hence they don't have enough time to have face-to-face discussions with individual students. As I have observed from other students the same thing is happening. Even it is difficult to get written comments in short periods. You have to wait months to get comments.

Q6. How do you think you can contribute in making this interaction productive?
R: I may have a responsibility in this. But before we think about the responsibility of the supervisee, what should come first should be the responsibility of the supervisor. What are the responsibilities of the two parties? These things are not made clear by the department or the university and hence things are done only traditionally and they are already established trends for long period. Therefore, how do I describe my responsibility if I don't know the responsibility of my supervisors? I think, the department/faculty doesn't clearly state roles of the two parties.

Q7. So how do you see your readiness to openly and freely deal with your supervisor on research related matters (E.g. discussions and/or debates over the research)?

R: As I said earlier, there is no face-to-face discussion most of the time and therefore, when there are disparities between what the supervisor said and I the researcher said based on my reading, I didn't have even the chance to discuss this issue openly with him. Unless you sit face-to-face and discuss the issue openly, how is it possible to talk about openness? First of all, there should be time for free discussion before and after the written comment of the supervisor. But most of the time I didn't get that opportunity. When I attempted, he was not ready and even may give you another appointment and as a result you fade up.

Q8. What other problems have you faced in different stages of the research work so far (in relation to material& financial support; examiners reviewers etc?)

R: First, when I see the assignment of the supervisor, I don't know how the department does the assignment of the supervisors. If the supervisor doesn't have good knowledge on the topic you are doing the research, you will not get appropriate expert support. This, I think, is a problem. The other serious problem is one of financial. You know how much money you need to conduct research and even to distribute a single instrument, to collect data or to transport from one area to another. Therefore the money allotted for this PhD research is very small and even less to pilot your instruments let alone finishing the whole work. This is the most critical problem. Since the funding they give us is far less than what the research requires, you can do what is only possible but not what should be done in the research. Moreover, you have to go here and there to do some part time jobs to compensate this. Due to this, you don't give your work the required attention. The other problem is the relationship between supervisees and the department. We don't have good relationship with the department. No support from the department. Unless you go and shout, no one comes to you and checks what is going on with us.

Q9. So taking all this into consideration, what specific improvements do you recommend so that the situation would improve for the future?

R: The department should at least prepare a session where open discussion with the supervisors and supervisees separately can be done. Only writing warnings when there are delays will not be a solution; the department should see what's going on in the PhD program.

Q10. Do you have a few words to add before we close?

R: In this country we don't have well established research culture. We do MA and PhD degree and put our thesis and dissertations on the shelf. But do we really conduct those researches to put on the shelf? I don't think so. Therefore there should be a system where the shelved works can come to action. This, I think, will encourage others to do genuine research. In this regard, the ministry of education as well as the universities should work to disseminate these research works and to bring quality education to this nation.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Appendix I: A Transcription of Interviews with EFL Teacher Educators of AAU (Pilot Study)

Interview with the first supervisor (PT1)

Q1. How do you explain the role of EFL researches (you may consider the issue of professional development, EFL teaching and supervisory practice)?

R: Em. In the teaching process, there are always problems that you encounter not necessarily in the classroom. But the whole set of language teaching in the country involves a lot of problems. We can see that there are numbers of problems, issues and may be most of these issues actually are solved through research. You know, through research, you can find many possibilities, many ways by which the problems of the country in terms of teaching the language issues are solved. There is widespread complaint these days in the country that the students at any level of the education system are not up to the expectations in terms of their capability, their understanding and their use of the language. So in this case research in EFL will contribute a lot in solve such problems.

Q2. So, let's take EFL researches you do. What are your motives to do EFL researches other than what you did for your degrees? (You can compare internal and external drives).

R: Well, the motive could be seen from two perspectives. One, as a professional, you'd like to see what is going on in the field of studies; you'd like to see what's going on in TEFL in this country. You'd like to see some of the problems and possible solutions to these problems as well. So this could motivate you as a professional. This would actually exert its own impact on you so that you conduct research and solve some of the problems existing in the country. Externally, the university requires that you advise students MA and PhD students. And directly or indirectly you are also involved in researches of this sort may be to release your responsibility. They want you to advise a number of students, that you should do as a requirement may be as part of your work load in the university. So this or the other way research in fact if we use it, the problem is that many of the research results in this country are left on the shelf.

Q3. How does the university reward you when you are engaged in these kinds of researches?

R: Reward? You know, to me the most important reward should have been seeing the findings of your research solving some problems in the country. You know, basically you conduct a research not simply to conduct it. It is not something you do for researches sake. It should have been to address some problems. There are existing problems in the country in terms of some fields of studies. If you come to English language teaching, we have lots and lots of problems in relation to how things go about in this country and the most important reward should have been seeing the findings of your research solving some problems in the country. That doesn't happen unfortunately. If you take the MA and PhD researches in this department, I haven't seen any of these research findings tried out in the field and used by professionals in the schools and universities and colleges. That is a pity. In many parts of the world, research contributes a lot to the development of the field of studies you are in. It doesn't happen here. If someone is serious at one time in this country, I think this is what is required to be considered. This is one thing. The other thing may be the material reward. Material in a sense, if you get your

research result published, may be you can get academic promotion. But the problem associated with these promotions is that: One, may be the journals that we have in this university are very few and you don't even have a number of possibilities. May be what we have is only one journal in this country that I know of in the field of education and may be another one is evolving these days. That is very, very it is like nonexistent. It is just one. People should stay for years to get published there. And that is probably one of the problems surrounding this. In addition, the university demand is increasing from time to time. Originally for example, in order to get promotion from one rank to another, you needed one article published but now they are taken up to three. And getting three articles published in reputable journals in this university is not an easy task. Hence getting three articles published in a journal of that sort is not something very easy today even other conditions are improved.

Q4. What problems have you faced in doing EFL research/s so far (in relation to resources, peer/collegial support etc.)?

R: You know, publication of any research result is not something very easy for the condition is a bit discouraging. Discouraging because, One- getting to that stage of having your material published is not easy. There is what they call peer evaluation. These reputable journals are all peer reviewed. And in the peer review, you know, usually people know who is writing what. Although the paper comes to you as a reviewer anonymously, it is like you more or less know who is after that paper, who is after that article. And for some reason, the collegiality here, you know, the support we have for each other as academic staff I don't think is really positive. People always want to see your efforts, would I say negatively? So it is not very encouraging as you know usually your paper may not get through as for some reason unless otherwise this by some chance went to somebody close to you. People are not very positive in encouraging others. Very honestly, I can't see the staff encouraging each other in this line. That is one problem. The other problem is, even if you get published, there are very minor issues that come along if you ask for promotion. They start from the point of the area that you are writing on. You know, these days research is a multidisciplinary stuff and teaching English if you happen to publish on something that is related more of education than specifically English education, they say 'ah this is not related to the field, so would you call him an assistant professor in English or education; associate professor in this or that?' which actually is, I think, discouraging again. When we have to work towards, like I said, multidisciplinary approach, people kind of you know put things into certain specific pockets and say this is that and it is not that.

Q5. How do you describe your role in supervising PhD students especially in helping them develop critical thinking and inquiry skills?

R: Well. The assumption is that MA and PhD students already have good theoretical background in conducting research. Any research student, in fact, conducts the research himself/herself. As a supervisor, you are not going to write down things for them. You show the way, you guide them. And my role in this regard is I read their paper and when things lack critical reflection in my opinion, I say alright this is just descriptive kind of thing what do you think about this one, what is your view positively, negatively. So I encourage them to be critical and reflect on that. Otherwise, you know, apart from guiding these people apart from commenting on the fact that some of the issues need may be more in-depth insight into what they are doing, basically I don't put things in their mouth. They have to think, they know the principle, they have the theoretical knowledge and putting that into practice is

up to them and I guide them and show them the way and doing it is up to themselves.

Q6. Do you check the originality of these students' works? If yes, what strategies are you using?

R: Ya, This is probably one of the very bad areas of controversy we have in the department. It is expected that a PhD work will have a bit of originality. There is no particular instrument by which you can say this is not an original work and throw away kind of thing. We always question that not only in advisement but even when we examine students we find out may be nothing original in there. And that actually worries us to some degree. But the trend now is the students maybe not either very serious or probably they fail to come up with something original or an original bit in their work. I know we lack that in this university. So the thing is that, I mean, may be expecting something original could be may be could I say something that's gone far in terms of the demands that we put on the students. These days, I am very sorry to say, it is like anyone who has an MA degree can do a PhD work. It is like dragging somebody from the street and saying alright you can do a PhD degree and going to it. And when they come, they fail to perform up to the standard. But you can't do anything because they are in the system. And if you say well this student can't do the job, and this student is not actually qualified, there are other issues involved. People go to the university president, to some political organization, people go here and go there and then try to put some imposition on you as a supervisor. So apparently, people once they are put in here, they can believe that there is no failing and that has its own bad impact. Given these situation you can't say your work doesn't have originality.

Q7. What problems have you experienced in supervising PhD students (E.g in relation to the assignment of advisees, your relationship, discussions etc.)?

R: Well, a few years back we had much fewer students than we have now. I remember when I started teaching the MA program 10 years ago, we had 10 students in a class. With this number of students, the assignment was more or less very much closely related to your field of studies. These days the number of graduate students admitted every year is increasing. So if your research interest and specialization is in testing, it doesn't mean that only students who do the research on testing come to you. So, the field of specialization and the kind of students that come to you for advisement are not necessarily the same these days. So it is possible that you advise people or students who are not very much in your specific research interest. This might have its own impact on how successful that research will be. When it comes to students' schedule, it depends on the individual students. Some students are very serious about their work. They see you and you follow up the work they are doing from time to time in which case things can go as planned. And sometimes there are also these kind of students who completely disappear for some time; you know to the extent that you forget these are your advisees and one day they just pop in and they say have brought some chapters to you. But, I think, you have to tolerate both, I mean, so long as there is no let's say strict rule saying this kind of student is not entitled to be supervised, a drop out or dismissal or whatever. There was a student who came two days before to my office and dumped his proposal on my desk. I haven't seen the student for a semester or even longer. I have to tolerate.

Q8. Let us take the overall research environment of AAU where EFL researches of PhD students and your own are done. How do you evaluate the general environment?

R: You know, conducting research requires favorable condition. Are the conditions favorable in terms of administration in terms of academics etc? These days, teachers in the academic units are accused of not doing research. To be honest, it is not because teachers/lecturers in different departments do not want to do research. There are a lot of other more pressing situations. Most of us are worried about making ends meet. If your pay can't cover your house rent, how can you think about conducting research? Because everything should be covered: you have to send your children to school, you have to eat, you have to pay rents, you have to do this you have to do that and the academic reward we have in this institution is very, very far from adequate. So I have to run here and there to support myself in these regards. And One- if the university wants to get the staff do research, I think the living condition of teachers of the university should be seen again. Two- maybe we also need to be disciplined. When I say we, I'm talking about instructors and teachers ourselves. Disciplined in the sense sometimes, when conditions are favorable, I think we have to try our best to do the job as well. It is not only to say that this has not been done for us, we have also to say that we have to try our best to put things into practice in this regard. So overall conditions will be assessed, and the problems teachers have to conduct research and disseminating results and putting these researches into practice and trying them out. Unless things are done about these, the fate of research in this university may be a kind of struggling.

Q9. So, what do you recommend so that the whole research situation is improved in the university?

R: You know, when you are in an academic situation, I think, you have to be guided by academic standards. However, in academic environment, you know a personal or social matter or a political matter should not be a major issue. I'm doing academics and if things are not up to the standard, I have to be able to give academic decision. If different people (instructors) see the same work as inadequate stuff, then we should be heard. We should be to some extent be accepted. We lack that now. When somebody is genuinely incapable, not genuinely competent to do a particular job, I think, we have to be able to act on that. But if you say that to somebody, if the department says no to somebody, there is no office that these people do not knock at. They go to the president, to the ministry of education; they can go to any office that they think would sympathize with them and try to exert some pressure on the department, the supervisor which actually compromises the quality of work, compromise the originality of PhD we are talking about. I think there should be a way by which we could be free from this and the department of the academic unit will have its own decision.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Interview with the second supervisor (PT2)

Q1: How do you explain the role of EFL researches (you may consider the issue of professional development, EFL teaching and supervisory practice)?

R: Doing research in EFL is necessary for professional development. By professional development, I mean, people who are involved in EFL teaching upgrade themselves

in terms of teaching capacity as well as research. And research, of course, contributes to teaching capacity as an input.

Q2. What are your motives to do EFL researches other than what you did for your degrees? (You can compare internal and external drives).

R: Primarily, I was motivated to do research to improve my profession; there were topics I was interested in and so I wanted to know more about these topics I did research on. This is the first thing. The second is, the demand from the university that we produce in order to get promoted.

Q3. How did the university reward you for the researches you have done?

R: Well. As I said earlier, my primary motive to embark on doing research was not for promotion. But after the publication of my articles in a reputable journal, I applied for promotion to the rank of associate professor and I was promoted. Well, I don't know whether academic title is a reward. Yes, the university has promoted me. It didn't bring much money; it didn't bring much excitement at the personal level. When you come up with an idea that could solve a particular problem, if you see that it solves some of the educational problems we have in the country, you know that gives you a big psychological satisfaction for you that is a reward to me. But that tradition of using results is missing here and hence you lose interest to do research.

Q4. What problems have you faced in doing EFL research/s so far (in relation to material and financial matters as well as peer/collegial support e.g. in cases of doing collaborative researches)?

R: Well. I have never attempted collaborative research because that kind of research is not part of the tradition here. People struggle all alone and do what they can. And I think if one wants to initiate that kind of plan here, it may take us years, because the tradition it hasn't become a tradition. I didn't also seek any material or any other kind of support from anybody in the university. The main problem I faced was finding a reputable journal that was interested in publishing my work. Since there are no alternative journals, you have to wait for 3 or more years to hear whether your articles are accepted or not. You know, by the time your articles are published, the ideas are likely to be old. So I stopped writing journal articles.

Q5. How do you explain your role in supervising PhD students especially in helping them develop critical thinking and inquiry skills?

R: Well. To start with, my role as a supervisor is to guide these students. We discuss the relationship between a supervisor and a supervisee. A supervisor is there to guide the candidate in a proper way and the candidate also has the right to say that he is not properly guided. He can tip the supervisor, he can say this is your view, but these are my views and where do we stand? We discuss issues like this. I also tell my supervisees that the paper is theirs, and the work is theirs and hence they should take more responsibility. If the candidate says this way is better for me and then I will face the consequences, he can continue. Moreover, it is assumed that from their previous studies these candidates have gained some fundamental theoretical inputs about research and now they are expected to demonstrate that independently. In assisting them to be critical thinkers, we base whatever we do on the basic concept of research. One critical area in research, for example, is the issue of originality. I think, originality is very rare or almost nonexistent in language

teaching area. So what I tell my students regarding the concept of originality is to find out what has been done in the topic of their interest here in Ethiopia and elsewhere. And then, if they find out something has been done on the topic elsewhere and in Ethiopia, I ask them what they want to contribute. I tell them to look at what has been done critically and find out a gap. If there is no gap, there is no research, there is no originality. That is one thing we talk about. The other thing is the research methodology. Once they identify the gap, the identification of proper, reliable, viable research methodology that can help them fill the gap properly. I don't know whether these are strategies, but they are crucial and critical elements. And these are the areas students should think about critically.

Q6. What problems have you experienced in supervising PhD students (E.g in relation to the assignment of advisees, your relationship, discussions etc.)?

R: Em...The biggest problem is students, I'm sorry to say this, but they want to do MA or PhD just because they want the title. I think, a PhD or an MA must be done to promote one's knowledge and then to give sustainability to one's profession, skills, knowledge and so on. So, I'm not happy with the idea of people who want to do a PhD because they want to be called doctors. Because it is not just on the desire for knowledge; students come without preparation. And some, in fact with a good number, come with no idea of what they want to do. I mean, we iron out what we want to do as we go on. But initially we should have some kind of idea. But when they come blank, and they want me to help them with selecting a topic, I think that is a problem. The topic I select is my topic not theirs. When somebody selects a topic for you, it will take a lot of time for you to appreciate, internalize and get into it. So that is a problem. The other problem is, TEFL is teaching English as a foreign language, but I'm sorry to say this, a good number of students I advise do not have enough English themselves let alone teaching the language and doing a PhD in it. You know, when I tell my advisees that their English is substandard, some feel that it is an attack and that spoils the social relationship though they don't say it. Frankly speaking, there are students from other departments who want my help with their English and actually although they are from other departments, their English is much better than my students who are doing a PhD in TEFL.

Q7. Let us take the overall research environment of AAU where EFL researches of PhD students and your own are done. How do you evaluate the general environment?

R: I don't think it is conducive, but we can make it conducive if the department has the commitment. One, the department should not allow or admit people who simply want a PhD. The department should admit people with proper background in English language teaching. That is one. Two, the department should conduct or administer standard English proficiency test and find out who is up to the mark, who is below the mark and should decide how students can be supported with the language skill during their research. I mean, there are universities abroad which help foreign language students with all source of courses so that they can keep their English up to the standard from entry to exit. That kind of system should be there while PhD students can have materials on line or English improvement courses. For example, these students need to take courses about writing thesis. They should know about the language of research paper(acknowledgements, introduction, literature review, data treatment and several of these things. I think, if the department takes the initiative, we can produce better candidates. But as it is now, I'm afraid, there are several problems. And it is also sad that, we don't sit together at the department level and raise such issues. And people don't have time

for this. And I think, my idea is the idea of all the teachers. And for young teachers this idea of helping the students is out of date. It is running away from the students. If you say, let's go to class regularly and help the students when we have the time, they think that you are Biblical about teaching.

Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Interview with the third supervisor (PT3)

Q1: How do you explain the role of EFL researches in general? (You may consider the issue of professional development, EFL teaching and supervisory practices)

R: Well, although AAU's decision to start the PhD program in TEFL was good in relation to the need to develop the teaching staff of the new universities, I don't think enough preparation has been done. So the supervision part that students get, I think, is not as it should be partly because the assigned supervisors are not involved in research work. If we are not involved in research work, then it would be difficult for us to give critical review on the works submitted by their supervisees. And on the other hand, the commitment of the students to dedicate their time and energy to the research work is not as expected. The candidates would like to have their PhD without meeting the requirements of coming up with added value in the field, and they are also pressed by living conditions and they are trying to spend more time looking for part time works. This too remains a serious problem to the PhD program.

Recently, in order to help candidates get collective feedback on their proposals, upgrading and the final submission, reviewers, anonymous readers were introduced. However, there is no incentive for doing this kind of extra work. But the university management is not prepared to understand this. And because of this, you know the review although it is still in place, it will not be as critical as it is expected to be. The weekly seminar is also with problems. The seminar was intended to enable presenters get feedback from students, colleagues from the facilitator and as well as from staff attending. But advisors do not attend presentations. Since students also attend seminars without much reading, the comment they make is not as critical as it should be. The major hurdle is, as I see, the way the graduate program is managed. You know, I don't see the university is investing enough resources on the graduate program. If I teach a graduate program; for example, I teach research methodology for the PhD students. It is just like teaching a freshman course. The load is the same; and the real evaluation is the same. If I am going to the PhD course, I have to prepare a lot and read a lot and hence it is very demanding. So it is not properly conceptualized. Although the university claims that it is going to be a graduate program institution and graduate programs are expanding their PhD, but I don't think the university has properly perceived what a PhD program is and how much it costs. So the resource is not being directed to the program. You know, those who are doing the work are not getting the incentive and difficult for them to be critical in their readings and serious with their supervision.

Now, I read some proposals as well as upgrading documents and I can say that students are not getting proper supervision. So it is a bit difficult situation that we are in. And I'm worried that there is a push from the university rather that there should be many PhD graduates. But if a person having a PhD cannot critically think and develop independent analysis and evaluation of events, then it is a waste. You're just adding to the qualification but without any added value.

Q2. What problems have you faced in doing EFL research/s so far (e.g. in cases of doing collaborative researches with colleagues and or your students)?

R: I'm fully engaged in research but not specifically EFL research. But the research issues more or less were talking about tackling problems; not writing recipe. So how do you really tackle problems with those methodologies, processes etc.? That puts me in a better position to critically see what PhD students are doing. When I come to problems, one is related to publishing tradition. Overall, the publishing tradition is not something that we see in the university. This is one of the problems. Otherwise by this time different departments should have had their own journals and should have been involved in publishing abstracts as well as pilot results or even critical assessments of the researches and so on. This would have been appropriate but this is not encouraged here. If you want to do EFL research here, it is not easy to get the funding. They say there is the funding but when it comes to the actual accessing, it is not be easy.

It is also expected that PhD candidates should publish from their PhD works although they are not doing it. Otherwise, the candidates publish their pilot research results and the supervisor is more or less becomes the secondary author although the main author is the candidate. This tradition is not very much promoted here because No. 1. We don't have a journal that really encourages students to publish. And publications are very much connected with promotion so those who are in charge of journals that are used for promotion tend to be difficult for many people and students are not encouraged. Where as in other universities, there are journals that publish students' works. And this is motivating to the students to publish. We don't have this tradition here.

Q3. How do you explain your role in supervising PhD students especially in helping them develop critical thinking and inquiry skills?

R: It is the duty of the supervisor to discuss and see whether a candidate knows or has a rough understanding of what he is to make research on. He should make the person think by asking questions. So what I design is I ask why s/he wants to do this, the motivation, how is it contextualized, whether the idea comes from the review or is related to the field, the researcher's own experience, the situation of this country, what sense does s/he make out of the topic, the significance, whether s/he himself observed the problem etc. So the major duty is to ask questions and give comments and show weaknesses as well as appreciate strong points. When a candidate really is genuinely motivated by the topic, the research issue, and if I perceive that he has the passion for it, I appreciate and say go ahead. And we will go to the next move and I ask him to read what has been done in the field so far. So by really questioning in every stage, then you make the candidate ask himself/herself about what he/she is doing. And this is how you develop critical thinking skills in your supervisees. And then if it is illogical or if it is just an impressionistic or hasty generalization, I ask the candidate to read more and substantiate it with more reading and with more arguments and more secondary evidences that might be foregoing to the primary data. So you know, I'm very critical on every sentence and every word the candidate writes and the word choice itself. So the way that person states his proposition is very important and hence I make critical points on that.

Q4. Do you also consider the originality of their works and how?

R: Originality is relative. In the field of language teaching the contextualization of the issue is the most important thing. That is what makes it original or not. When people do research on whatever issue, what matters most is how grounded it is in the given context. And then of course, as the person tries to use different paradigms, theoretical frames, it is quite possible that the contextualization which will generate data that would really have an impact on the very theoretical paradigm that has been in place it will be a way of finding it. So a very genuine research can contribute to the existing paradigms and theoretical ramifications. If that kind of thinking is evolving, it is excellent. That is what PhD students should do. But within the given framework also if the candidate exhibits critical thinking, you know, assuming those frames, still we evaluate that. That is also a contribution. You know, so the topic may not be an original one, but the way it is contextualized and given meaning in connection to the local situation of Ethiopia and then from that perspective then that research can contribute to a global issue.

Q5. What problems have you experienced in supervising PhD students (E.g in relation to the assignment of advisees, your relationship, discussions etc.)?

R: Ya. The thing is that as far as I'm concerned, I have my own standard. I insist on my requirements As you have seen I have my office hours and I expect a candidate in at least once every two weeks, but they don't do this. They disappear for a semester and they come up with a bulk of compiled work. And that is the common problem for all. If a candidate can independently work , if she has developed analytic thinking and then if the thing that comes is well done and if the candidate can defend the questions I ask, then I can accept that. But the best thing is to see the supervisor regularly, get feedback and present seminars as much as possible. But this has been a problem with all the candidates. But I have to tell you that if a candidate doesn't meet my requirements, he will not get my approval. The candidate has to meet the minimum standard for the PhD work. Some candidates can do independent work because they have developed or have the ability to critically think and analyze issues. Ok that is good, but almost most of them don't have that skill and they need this assistance. And the PhD training itself requires that the supervisor gives feedback on the work. But regularly meeting the supervisor is a big difficulty and students do not do this.

Q6. So how do you evaluate the overall research environment of AAU where EFL researches of PhD students and your own are done?

R: In other universities there are requirements that are imposed by the management. But, you know, in here the university top management is not serious I can say that the management of the university is very unconducive for a disciplined PhD work as far as I'm concerned. They don't use the same standard for all. It is unfortunate that the university is like this. And it failed to reinforce the graduate programs.

Q7. What do you recommend so that the whole research situation is improved in the future?

R: The department should be encouraged; there should not be too much intervention from the top. All resource should be directed to the department. In principle they say this, but there is too much intervention coming from the top. And this has to stop. And the university's guidelines of the graduate program should be reinforced and should work accordingly. And also university professors and PhD supervisors should be engaged in research work and they should get the

appropriate incentives for the work for it is a big responsibility. The program should be assessed by external assessors. We invite external assessors, but you know we should not wait until the students finish their PhD works and come for their examination, but in the middle the whole process should also be assessed whether it is going the right way or not.

Thank you very much for your genuine response!

Appendix J: A Transcription of the Focus Group Discussion with TEFL PhD Students (Pilot Study)

Q1. How do you evaluate your interest to make open discussions with other students on research- related matters?

PF1: I have an interest to make such discussions. And I even have been doing it with my close friends at different stages of the research.

PF3: I also have the interest; but practically there is no such a tradition among ourselves. Since many of us in the program share the same supervisors, the comments supervisors give to one PhD student can be useful for others at least to do our works according to the format acceptable to the department and supervisors. Although this can be done when we are open to each other, this is not happening. Many students are interested in seeing the written comments supervisors give to their friends but they purposely hide their own. And some even ridicule other students after they see the comments given by supervisors.

PF4: I think discussing research-related issues with others is rarely seen in this program. From my own experience and from what I saw from other PhD students, in most cases we do our researches secretly. Even sometimes we are ashamed of showing our works to others.

Q. But what do you think are the reasons for this low level of openness?

PF3: It is possible to mention two reasons here: our background and the current research environment. In our previous educational lives we used to compete one another. And this even went to the extent of keeping our results secret. I think, it is this tradition that is making us keep comments given by supervisors secrete. When I come to the second reason, the department/faculty has not created an environment where we can practice and develop the culture of open discussions among ourselves and with the staff. I believe that the PhD seminar is in principle intended to make us practice such things. But it is not organized in a way it can serve this purpose.

PF2: Because we have passed through an educational system where competition is highly encouraged, we still prefer struggling independently. Moreover, revealing one's lack of some knowledge is still considered unacceptable and a sign of inferiority. This I think is making us to struggle alone in our PhD research activities. Moreover, the situation here is not helping us to avoid this tradition. While sessions like PhD seminars are in principle prepared to make us learn through open discussions, they turn out to be sessions where we sit silent while formal questions are thrown only from facilitators. These people don't seem to encourage us to involve.

PF4: I realized that PhD research requires exchange of information with other students and my advisor also told me not to expect everything from him and instead to learn by working with other students. However, I couldn't put this into practice for the reasons mentioned.

PF1: Since we mostly expect perfection in our works, we feel that our friends may ridicule us when they see shortcomings in our research activities. This, I think, is also making PhD students do everything in isolation.

Q2. Given the actual research context in the TEFL PhD program, how do you see your determination and commitment in doing relevant PhD research which will have contribution to EFL education in Ethiopia?

PF1: The actual context doesn't seem to be supportive to do high quality PhD researches. Firstly, lack of research budget comes first. Since the university grants a fixed amount without considering the current market, we are forced to do only what is simpler rather than being committed to doing what is more important. For instance, I have reduced the proposed coverage of my research data collection after I realized that I can't afford it with the given grant. Secondly, there is no a system in which we PhD students work according to the themes of our researches. This blocks the chance of learning from one another. This also makes it difficult to crosscheck what research issues are under investigation and which are not. In such cases even there is a possibility for different PhD students to do researches on almost the same issues which means wastage.

PF2: Quality of research is determined by the resources available. First, research should basically be a collaborative venture. And to do that resource must be available. Since there is shortage of such resources, our target in the PhD research has become fulfilling the minimum standard, completing the study and getting our degrees. How is it possible to do fruitful researches in such cases? As far as I am concerned, the other pressing reason that weakens our determination to do quality researches is the tradition that even outstanding researches will serve no more than references in libraries.

PF3: What needs to be mentioned here is also the problem of research administration. I don't know why a student who does his PhD research by collecting data from different parts of the country is granted the same amount to the one who does a research on a group of students in one classroom. This is discouraging. When the necessary data collection is hampered due to such reasons, there is the danger of pushing results simply to fit our interests. Of course, in the absence of a mechanism to control this side of our researches, there is much possibility for this to happen.

PF2: Since there are no enough reference materials (up-to-date journals, books etc.) in the university, we are using internet as a major source. In such cases, since many of the references we need are cited by other works, we have to take these references as secondary sources. But the problem is since taking too many secondary sources may not be acceptable in our researches; we may even take them as if they were taken from primary sources which are not ethical. This means that lack of material resources is another reason for lack of determination in doing relevant EFL researches.

Q3. How do you evaluate your relationship to your supervisor/s? How do such cultural elements as respect come into play in this interaction?

PF1: It is true that there is and should be a mutual respect between we-supervisees and our supervisors. And this is one of the realizations of our culture. However in terms of our relationship over research issues, I would say the roles assumed by the two parties go beyond that. In other words, rather than allowing a bidirectional flow of ideas, supervisors tend to make you accept their ideas.

PF2: No matter how much close you are to your supervisor, you don't openly say no or argue against him/her. It is not because your supervisors say that, but you

yourself become afraid that the supervisor may get offended and you prefer dealing with him/her at a distance. Actually the less encouraging situation where our supervisors are working, I think, also contributes to this. Since they are not well rewarded for what they do including the supervision, they may need to budget some of their time for additional jobs. Due to this, you don't feel at ease to pay them repeated visits. This also makes your relationship remain very formal and at a distance.

PF4: At this point I want to mention the importance of shared responsibility in establishing good relationship between the two parties. I mean, there are some PhD students who do not meet their supervisors regularly and are not serious in their works. But they push the blame to their supervisors when something goes wrong. Hence, if there is a problem of relationship, it occurs due to the problem from both sides.

PF1: Although they are few in number, there are supervisors who genuinely assist students at every steps of the research and regularly check whether their supervisees keep track of their work. They also give students enough time for fruitful discussions about the research and encourage their supervisees to take their own independent decisions.

Q4. How do you evaluate the quality of PhD seminar and defense sessions in terms of your expectations?

PF3: It is encouraging that the previous tendency of examiners forcing presenters to accept what is said from the stage is changing. However, more still needs to be done regarding what role the audience should play. Although we PhD students attending such sessions are in principle the primary beneficiaries, we are made to be passive listeners. While these sessions had to give us the opportunity to openly ask, criticize and debate and in turn change the cultural problems mentioned earlier, practically they are not serving these purposes. While it is expected that we students are the primary beneficiaries of these discussions, examiners and facilitators take the lions share in asking questions and giving comments. They only give the last minute for the audience to ask questions and give comments. It is nominally done.

PF2: For me such sessions are not practically organized in a way they encourage PhD students learn from one another. I think these sessions do not have some agreed upon standards. I don't think presenters know what minimum requirement they should fulfill when coming for proposal or upgrading defenses. Moreover, in these sessions the mood is not encouraging and supportive for the presenter becomes defensive and examiners offensive in most cases. Since most of the time an examination mood prevails, in these sessions, presenters use whatever means to escape from the series of challenging questions rather than using the presentation as a learning opportunity.

PF1: Although examiners have some criteria for grading students in proposal and upgrading presentations, students do not know what this criteria is. For me, this is an indication that such sessions are sessions for examining students rather than making them learn. Moreover, since the criteria are kept secret, presenters come without the necessary preparations. Though our only choice is asking how previous students did it, most of them keep it secret; they don't want to show us what format they used when they wrote proposals or pilot results. What is more, while it is true that appreciating the positive side of the work encourages productive discussion in such sessions, there doesn't seem to be such culture of support in presentations.

Q5. How do you evaluate your own participation in giving comments and asking questions in seminars and defense sessions?

PF1: I think the main purpose of presentations in these sessions is simply to enable presenters gain collective feedbacks on their works in progress and help them improve the work. It is also to help different parties benefit from participations in asking questions, giving comments etc. However the exam-oriented tradition prevalent in our educational system, I think, is making us feel that presenters are sitting for an exam in these sessions. Hence, most of the time we feel that asking questions and commenting on the presenter's work may magnify problems (if there are any). I don't think there is an understanding that both the audience and the presenter learn from this kind of interaction. Due to this most of the time we don't participate.

PF2: For the reason already stated, I don't want to ask questions and give comments. Rather I try to learn something from what goes on between the presenter and examiners or the facilitator. Since the presenter is also one of us, he/she may not be happy when questions are raised on the work. You see the presenter defends whatever is said by examiners and examiners emphasize the negative points. In such situations, asking the presenter more questions may be considered an attack. So even if you have questions, you prefer silence.

PF3: As far as I'm concerned, let alone asking questions by myself, I don't want others ask questions for that will widen the crack that has already been found by examiners.

PF1: I also agree on the points mentioned. And for these reasons, I and many other students go to seminars and defense sessions mostly to see how presenters defend their work in one way or another from challenging questions of examiners and get ready to do the same when we take our turns. I can say that we don't go there with the feeling that we can contribute to the presentation.

Appendix K: A Questionnaire to be Filled by PhD TEFL Students (Main Study)

Dear respondent,

This questionnaire is designed to collect information that will be used for a PhD research entitled "**An Investigation into the EFL Research Culture of Addis Ababa University: The case of TEFL PhD program.**" Hence your genuine response to the different questions counts much to the success of this project.

In the questionnaire, there are questions which require general demographic information, general purpose questions relating to your current PhD research as well as previous research activities. There are multiple choice, short answer and Likert scale questions divided into different themes describing your EFL research culture. Hence, you are kindly requested to read the instructions under each section carefully and answer the questions accordingly.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Part I: Demographic information

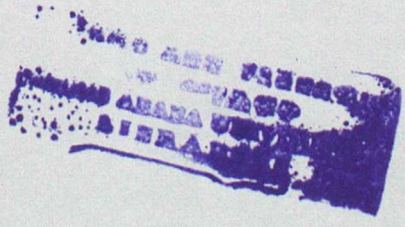
Instruction: Put a tick mark (√) in the appropriate box

1. Sex: ☐ Female ☐ Male
2. Age: ☐ 21-30 ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ Above 50
3. Professional rank:
   ☐ Lecturer ☐ Assistant professor ☐ Associate professor
4. Have you attended Higher Diploma Program? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Your EFL teaching experience at Higher Education Institution:
   ☐ Under 5 years ☐ 5-10 years ☐ 11-16 years ☐ Above 16 years

Part II: Research-related background

Instruction: Answer the following questions by putting a tick mark (√) in the boxes

6. What EFL research have you done other than what you are doing for the PhD now and what you did for the previous degrees? Mark the box/boxes.
   ☐ Action research ☐ Other research (conventional research) ☐ Not any
7. If your choice for q. No. 6 is 'action research', how many?
   ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 If more, write here.....
8. Of these action researches, how many were done in collaboration? Write your answer here.....
9. Of these action researches, how many were done individually? Write your answer here.....
10. If your choice for q. No. 6 is 'other research', how many?
    ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 If more, write here.....
11. Of these other EFL researches, how many were done in collaboration? Write your answer here.....
12. Of these other EFL researches, how many were done individually? Write your answer here.....



Part III: Questions related to beliefs

A) Instruction: Read each item and use the rating scale 1-5 to express your agreement or disagreement by putting a tick mark (√) in the table.

Key:1=Strongly Disagree, **2**=Disagree, **3**=Undecided,**4**=Agree,**5**=Strongly Agree

No	Items	rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
	Beliefs					
13	It is the results of researches other than the PhD that should be used to solve an educational problem in EFL context					
14	Whatever quality my PhD research will have, there is no chance for it to be used in decision making (e.g. in policy, syllabus design, material preparation etc.)					
15	This PhD research has an important role in my future capacity to do practice related research/s					
16	This PhD research will help me to improve my teaching effectiveness					
17	Discussion with colleagues can contribute a lot for the effectiveness of PhD research work					
18	My PhD research is addressing an identified problem relevant to the Ethiopian EFL education					

B) Instruction: Using the rating scale 1-5, indicate the extent to which you have the following skills of doing any successful research in EFL

Key: **1**=Very Unsatisfactory, **2**=Unsatisfactory, **3**=Undecided, **4**=Satisfactory, **5**= Very Satisfactory

No	Items	rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
19	Identifying (sorting out) researchable topic					
20	Contextualizing the research problem					
21	Grounding the research problem in an appropriate conceptual framework					
22	Locating relevant literature					
23	Using appropriate referencing of different sources (e.g. electronic sources, journal articles, books etc.)					
24	Developing appropriate data collection instruments					
25	Employing appropriate data collection procedures					
26	Analyzing and interpreting the research data					
27	Using appropriate statistical tools (e.g. SPSS and others)					
28	Writing the research report appropriately					

Part IV: Questions relating to your PhD research and related practices

A) What you do as part of the research activity

Instruction: Read each item and use the rating scale 1-5 to express how often you do the following as part of your PhD research by putting a tick mark (√) in the table.

Key: **1**= Never **2**= Rarely, **3**=Sometimes, **4**= Often **5**= Very Often,

No	Items	rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
29	I openly accept comments (about my research) from other PhD students					
30	I'm free to comment on my friends' research works					
31	I deliberately make discussions with other PhD students working in related area					
32	I feel anxious to reveal my research capacity to other PhD students					
33	When research related problems arise, I openly ask for assistance from other PhD students					
34	When research related problems arise, I am free to tell my advisor					
35	I attend PhD seminar sessions					
36	I attend PhD defense sessions					
37	I ask questions when there are any in these sessions					
38	I freely comment on what is presented in seminars (when there is the need)					

Instruction: Answer the following questions by putting a tick mark (√) in the boxes

39. Which of the following designs of research are you using or intend to use for your PhD research? Put a tick mark (√) in the appropriate box.
    ☐ Quantitative ☐ Qualitative ☐ Mixed-methods
40. Indicate the reason/s for your choice by putting tick mark (√) the box/boxes.
    ☐ The research problem is best done using this design
    ☐ I have the skill of employing this design
    ☐ The faculty and examiners tend to accept this as legitimate form of research
    If any other, please specify.....

B) Questions related to the system of research supervision

Instruction: Read each question and provide proper response

41. Did you choose your supervisor/s? Put a tick mark (√) ☐s ☐
42. How many supervisor/s do you have? Please write your answer here .....
43. Who did choose the supervisor/s and on what criteria?.....

Instruction: Using the rating scale 1-5, indicate the extent to which your supervisor does the following as part of his/her supervision of your PhD research work. Rate using a tick mark (√)

Key: **1**= Never **2**= Rarely, **3**=Sometimes, **4**= Often **5**= Very Often

No	**Items**	**rating**				
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
	My supervisor:					
44	encourages me to do more					
45	gives me enough time for discussions before written comments					
46	gives me enough time for follow up discussions on his/her written comments					
47	assists me in locating materials and references relevant to my study					
48	encourages me to make my research work original					
49	controls the overall quality of my work					
50	gives me written feedback (on the papers I submit) on time					
51	Encourages me to consult other professionals who can be of some help in my work					
52	gives me constructive feedback					
53	Respects my own opinions when I present them from a different perspective					
54	Is accessible to me					

Part V: Questions relating to factors

Instruction: Using the rating scale 1-5 decide the extent to which these factors are affecting your current PhD research practice.

Key: **1**= Never, **2**= Rarely, **3**= Sometimes, **4**= Often, **5**=Very Often

No	Items	rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
55	Lack of knowledge and experience about doing research					
56	Lack of determination in making the research fruitful					
57	The belief that my research findings will not be put to any use					
58	Absence of the collegial support from other PhD students in doing the research					
59	Lack of up-to-date reference materials (eg. journals, books etc.)					
60	Shortage of financial resource					
61	Inadequacy of support from supervisors					
62	Lack of control from the department/ faculty					
63	Inadequacy of support from the department/ faculty					
64	Absence of research related information which show, for example; research priorities, work in progress etc. in the department					

Thank you for your cooperation!

Appendix L: A Questionnaire to be Filled by EFL Teacher Educators of AAU (Main Study)

Dear teacher,

This questionnaire is designed to collect information that will be used for my PhD research entitled "**An Investigation into the EFL Research Culture of Addis Ababa University: The case of TEFL PhD Program**". Its purpose is to understand your beliefs about the role of EFL PhD researches, your own research-related activities including your supervisory roles in the TEFL PhD program. Hence your genuine response to the different questions counts much to the success of this project.

In the questionnaire, there are multiple choice, short answer and Likert scale questions divided into different themes which will describe the prevailing research culture in the TEFL PhD program. Please answer each question based on the instructions provided under different sections.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Part I: Background information

Instruction: Please mark your answer in the appropriate box

1. Sex: ☐ Female ☐ Male
2. Age: ☐ 31-40 ☐ 41-50 ☐ 51-60 ☐ Above 60
3. Current professional rank:
   ☐ Assistant professor ☐ Associate professor ☐ Professor
4. Your EFL teaching Experience at HEI
   ☐ 5-10 years ☐ 11-16 years ☐ 17-22 years ☐ Above 22 years
5. You did your PhD in a:
   ☐ fully local program
   ☐ Sandwich program with a foreign university
   ☐ Foreign University
   ☐ I haven't done a PhD

Part II: Research experience
Instruction: Answer the following questions by putting a tick mark (√) in the boxes and writing on the blank spaces

6. What EFL research have you done other than what you did for your degrees? Mark those that apply
   ☐ Action research ☐ Other research (conventional res.) ☐ Not any

7. If your answer for Q. No. 6 includes 'action research', how many action researches have you done?
   ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 If more, please write here.....
8. Of these action researches, how many were done in collaboration? .....
9. Of these action researches, how many were done individually?.....
10. If your choice for Q. No. 6 includes 'other research', how many other researches have you done?
    ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 If more, please write here....
11. Of these other researches, how many were done in collaboration? .....
12. Of these other researches, how many were done in individually? .....

Part III: Beliefs and practices

A) Beliefs

Instruction: Read each item and use the rating scale 1-5 to express your agreement or disagreement by putting a tick mark (√) in the table.

Key: **1**= Strongly Disagree, **2**= Disagree, **3**= Undecided, **4**= Agree, **5**= Strongly Agree

No	Items	rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
13	The results of local PhD researches in EFL will be used to solve EFL-related problems in Ethiopia					
14	Whatever quality a PhD research has, there is no chance for it to be used in decision making (e.g. in policy, syllabus design, material preparation etc.)					
15	Doing PhD research enables TEFL PhD students to do practice-related research (action research) in the future					
16	Doing PhD research enables TEFL PhD students to improve their future EFL teaching practice					
17	In order to do successful PhD research, TEFL PhD students require further research course/training					
18	TEFL PhD students will be guided at all the stages of their research					
19	Doing EFL research is part of my professional responsibility					
20	I have a clear understanding about the roles I should play in supervising PhD students					
21	The research skill I have so far is enough to provide the required supervisory support to TEFL PhD students					
22	The provision of effective supervision requires more than having good research skill					

B) Research-related practices

Instruction: Please read each question and provide proper response.

23. Is there an institutional research policy/strategy at AAU?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know
24. If yes, did you consult it when you initiated your EFL research/s?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No
25. If you said 'yes' to Q. No. 21, how did it help you in your research?
    .....
26. What kind of EFL research do you prefer to conduct at this university?
    ☐ Conventional research ☐ Action research ☐ Both
27. What is the reason for your choice?
    .....
28. How do you want to do EFL researches in this university?
    ☐ Individually ☐ In collaboration ☐ Both
29. What is the reason for your choice?
    .....
30. Did you communicate your EFL research outputs to some audience?
    ☐ Yes ☐ No
31. If yes, how and to whom?.....
32. If no, why?.....

C) Supervisory practices

Instruction: Read each item and use the rating scale 1-5 to express how often you do the following by putting a tick mark (√) in the table.

Key: **1**= Never **2**= Rarely, **3**= Sometimes, **4**= Often, **5**= Very Often,

No	Items	rating				
		1	2	3	4	5
33	I am accessible to my supervisees					
34	I give my supervisees the written feedbacks on time					
35	I give enough time to my supervisee/s for follow up discussions on my written comments					
36	I respect my supervisees' opinions when they are presented from a different perspective					
37	I encourage my supervisee/s to make their work original					
38	I control the overall quality of their work					
39	I assist my supervisee/s in locating materials and references relevant to their studies					
40	I encourage my supervisees to consult other people who can be of some help in their works					
41	I attend seminars when my supervisees present their works					
42	When my supervisees defend their works, I intercept examiners' criticism when I feel they are not acceptable					

Instruction: Please read each question and provide proper response

43. How many MA and PhD TEFL students are you supervising now? MA....., PhD...

44. You are supervising this number of students .....

☐ Upon your interest ☐ the department has entrusted this to you

☐ Both If any other, please specify.....

45. .....of these students are given to you on the basis of your specialization.

☐ All ☐ some ☐ the majority

46. Do you spend adequate time reading the works of your TEFL PhD supervisees?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Thank you for your cooperation!

Appendix M: Interview Schedule for PhD TEFL Students (Main Study)

1. How do you explain the role of your PhD research to you and others? (in terms of EFL teaching and research practices)
2. How did you identify the topic of your PhD research? What were your essential considerations in deciding the topic?
3. How do you explain your motivation in doing this research? (You can consider intrinsic and/or extrinsic ones)
4. How are you going to communicate your findings to potential users? How does this enhance or affect your motivation in making your PhD research relevant to the practical context?
5. How do you evaluate the criticality and supportiveness of the supervision provided by your supervisor/s? What is your impression of the feedbacks or comments?
6. In what aspects of your research work do you want your supervisor to be of more help and give you more critical feedback?
7. How do you see your readiness to openly and freely deal with your advisor on matters related to your PhD research? (e.g., in discussions and/or debates over the research)
8. How do you explain your responsibility in the process of the supervision?
9. What problems have you faced at different stages of the research so far? (e.g., in relation to material and financial matters as well as supervisors, examiners, reviewers etc.)
10. What specific improvements do you recommend so that the situation would improve in the TEFL PhD program?

Appendix N: Interview Schedule for EFL Teacher Educators of AAU (Main Study)

1. How do you explain the role of doing EFL researches to you and others? (in terms of professional development, EFL teaching and supervisory practice?
2. What are your motives to do EFL research in this university? (you may compare practical/professional Vs external drivers such as pressure from the university or promotion)
3. How do you see the reward system of the University for Academics when they do EFL research/projects?
4. What problems have you faced in doing EFL research/s and disseminating their results so far? (e.g., in relation to material, financial matters, as well as peer and/or collegial support)
5. How do you explain your role in supervising PhD graduate students especially in helping them develop critical thinking skills and gradually become independent in the research work?
6. What are the individual or departmental mechanisms by which the originality and relevance of TEFL PhD students' research works can be controlled?
7. In what aspects of the research work (e.g., language, methodological issues, their arguments etc.) do you think your supervisees need more help and more critical feedback?
8. What problems have you experienced in advising TEFL PhD students? [In relation to your assignment as to your specialization /your relationship /discussions /students' research skills and commitment etc.)
9. How do you evaluate the overall research environment of AAU? How does this enhance or affect the way EFL researches are done by TEFL PhD students and you?
10. What do you recommend so that the whole research situation is improved in the graduate program and the university at large?

Appendix O: Categories of Research Topics and Examples of Typical Content Areas for Categories (Adapted from Lin and Cheng (2010))

1. **Affective Factors (AF):** Learner's motivation; anxiety; belief; need; self-perception.

2. **Culture, Social, or Gender Issues(CSG):** Cross-cultural studies; cultural learning; multicultural or ethnic issues; gender differences; bilingualism; socioeconomic status; family factors.

3. **English for Specific Purposes (ESP):** ESP program; English for academic purpose; English for occupational purposes.

4. **Integrated Skills (IS):** Studies on the combination of two or more language skills.

5. **Learner Factors (LF):** Individual difference; prior learning; cognitive development; conception.

6. **Language Skills (LS):** Listening; speaking and communication (including pronunciation); reading (including phonological awareness, metalinguistic awareness, or phonics); writing (including spelling); vocabulary; grammar.

7. **Materials or Curriculum Design and Evaluation (MC):** Teaching or learning materials (including supplementary materials, projects, or tasks); curriculum design and/or evaluation.

8. **Testing and Evaluation (TEVAL):** Language tests; achievement tests; portfolio assessment; peer evaluation; test; college entrance exam.

9. **Teacher Factors (TF):** Teachers' beliefs; personality; attitude; aptitude; pedagogical or content knowledge; teacher behaviors and strategies.

10. **Teaching Method (TM):** Teaching methods, such as communicative language teaching, audio lingual or direct method, task-based approach; the application of specific teaching activities, such as drama, jazz chants, storytelling, or debates.

11. **Teacher Professional Development (TPD):** Pre-or in-service English teacher training or programs; team teaching; tour study program for teachers.

Appendix P: Research Topics of TEFL PhD Researches in Progress at AAU

No	Title
1	The Major Factors that Affect the Students' Reading Ability in the EFL Class Room: In the Case of Hotia Preparatory School in Wollo
2	Effects of working conditions on teachers' professional identity as revealed through.....
3	An investigation of ELT professional development practice: Higher Diploma Program in focus
4	The Effect of Differentiated Instruction on Students' Vocabulary Achievement in EFL Classroom
5	An Investigation of Factors Affecting Students' Learning of English as a Foreign Language at University Level
6	The Efficacy of EFL Learners' Error Correction Strategies in Utilizing Different Kinds of Teacher's Written Feedback: Practices and Attitude in Writing Process Based Approach
7	A Study on the Effect of Autonomous Learning through Portfolio on Students' English Learning Development
8	High School Teachers' Pedagogic Beliefs and Practices
9	EFL Learning Style Preferences as Related to Gender: A Cross-cultural Study
10	ESC classroom Ecology: The effects of Sitting Position on Learner achievement and participation
11	The effects of Cooperative Learning on Achievement in reading and social skills of students in EFL classrooms: Grade 10 in focus
12	Effects of Learning Strategies Training on Students' Writing Proficiency
13	An Exploration of ELT Materials Development: The Case of Bahir Dar University
14	The Effect of Reading Strategy training Use on the Reading Proficiency Level of University Students
15	Trends, Directions and Challenges of English Language Teachers Education in Ethiopia
16	A Study of English Language Educators' use of Diversified Techniques, the Teaching of Grammar at Undergraduate: Four Universities in Focus
17	An Investigation of Ethiopian Learners Familiarity to the English sound system and the intelligibility of their speech
18	Investigating the Challenges of First Cycle Primary Level Students in Reading Comprehension in English
19	Psychosocial determinants of anxiety in EFL classes
20	Exploring newly qualified English teachers' classroom-based practices with an implication for their professional development: A case study in 2nd cycle schools in SNNPR
21	Effects of Gender, learning style preference and achievement on listening learning strategy use of EFL students: The case of Bahir Dar university
22	Exploring the Current Practices and Challenges of Teaching Reading in Ethiopian Primary Schools
23	The Role of E-assisted English Language Writing Skills Development in Ethiopian Higher Institutions-challenges and Prospects: Hawassa University in Focus
24	Talk designing in writing and learners' (AAU third year DFLL students in focus) perceptions of the writing tasks.
25	Teachers' Perception and Practice of Communicative Language Teaching: The Case of Development of the Speaking Skills
26	An exploration of instructor's and students' perceptions and practices of tasks in an EFL writing context

27	Primary English Language Teaching in Ethiopia: Policy, Pedagogy and its Practice
28	Perceptions and Practices of EFL Teacher Supervision: Primary Schools in Focus
29	An Investigation of the Effects of Cooperative Learning Teaching Strategy on Students' English Writing Ability 1st Year University Students in Focus
30	The English Language Needs of English Major Students vis-a-vis the English Skill Courses Offered in Higher Learning Institutes of Ethiopia
31	Corrective Feedback and Learner Uptake: A Comparative Study of Implicit Versus Explicit Corrective Feedback Moves
32	Language use in promoting peace and harmony: A case of Jimma city peace committees
33	The Effects of Strategy Instruction on Listening Performance: The Case of Dilla University First Year English Majors
34	A Study of EFL Teachers' Efficacy Beliefs in Teaching Reading Comprehension Strategies and Their Classroom Practices
35	The Predictive Validity of English Entrance Exams for Higher Education: The Case of Hawassa University
36	Students' writing perceptions vis-à-vis their writing performance: Jimma University in focus
37	A study on teachers' roles and professional learning in grade 10 plasma supported EFL classroom
38	The Effectiveness of Focused versus Unfocused Error Feedback in Improving Writing Accuracy
39	The Process Paradigm to Approach Writing Skills: Its Implementation and Impacts: The Case of Four Universities in SNNPRS
40	A study of students' and teachers' use of English as the medium of instruction in secondary schools: Oral interaction in focus
41	An Evaluation of EFL Text Books Prepared for Grades 9th and 10th Students
42	An Analysis of the English Language Needs of Students of Hotel and Tourism with reference to Some Selected Universities
43	The Effectiveness of Short Story in EFL Classes in Terms of Developing Students' Critical Reading Skills: Preparatory I Students in Focus
44	Materials: Problems and Perspectives on Production, Induction and Evolution
45	Applications of Language Learning Strategies to EFL Learners in Improving their Listening and Speaking Abilities
46	The Washback Effects of School-based Oral Assessment on the Teaching and Learning of Speaking Skills
47	The Role of Ethiopian High School Future in EFL Material Development: A Case of some Selected in Addis Ababa
48	The Effect of Teachers Questioning Behavior on EFL Learning: A classroom- Based Research. A Case at Mizan-Tepi University
49	A study of factors that affect effective reading comprehension in English and some strategic interventions for handling them: The case of freshman program students in Adam University
50	Promoting self-regulated learning in writing classes: effects on self-beliefs and performances
51	The Effect of Teaching English Grammar through Communicative Approach on Students' Grammatical Accuracy in Academic Speaking
52	An investigation into the EFL research culture of Addis Ababa University
53	The utilization of English Language Teaching Via Plasma TV in Addis Ababa Governmental Preparatory Schools
54	Assessment for Learning: An Exploratory Study of Learners' Self and Peer

	Assessment of their Oral and Written Performance in University EFL classes
55	The Washback Effect of the Ethiopian Higher Education Entrance Certificate English Examination: Focus on Teacher's and Students' Perceptions and Practices
56	The Effect of Learning Styles on Active Learning Methods in an EFL Classroom
57	An exploration of the Nature, content and tools of reflection: reflective thinking practice of secondary school English teachers
58	The Effect of Cooperative Learning on Students' Reading Comprehension Performance
59	The Effect of Teaching Reading Skills in English as a Foreign Language Through Plasma Television Communicative strategies
60	Tradition and revolution in EFL Teaching vis-à-vis Student Motivation to learn among Ethiopian Secondary School
61	Exploring the Implementation & Teachers' Perception of CPD at High School Level Dire Dawa City in Focus
62	An Assessment of the Effects of Integrated Teaching of Writing on Students' Critical Thinking Skill in their Writing
63	An Investigation of the Effects of Restructuring EFL Teachers' Assessment Method on Students' Integrated Skills Learning and Their English Proficiency
64	An Exploration of the Integrative Reading Paradigm Shift: The Case of Undergraduate English Language Students at Four Universities
65	Oral error corrective feedback and student uptake: An Exploration of teacher beliefs and practices in Public high Schools in Addis Ababa
66	An exploration of the concordance between EFL active learning and assessment practices in Tertiary level education: the case of 3rd year learners at Wollo University.
67	A Study on Teachers' and Learners' Preferred Grammar Activities and Learners' Performance
68	Collaboration-observation-reflection-appraisal (CORA) to continuous professional development (CPD) for English language teacher education
69	The effect of teaching reading skills in English as a foreign Language through Plasma Television
70	Pre-service EFL Student Teachers' Development of Effective Teaching Skills During School-Based Experience: Exploration of Development and Attribution
71	Exploring the Academic English Skills Needs of Dilla University Students: the case of English Majors

Appendix Q: Issues Addressed in the PhD Dissertations Done by AAU EFL Educators in the years 1993—2010

No	Dissertation Topics	Year
1	Strategies of Vocabulary Learning of AAU Freshmen Learning English as a Second/Foreign Language	1997
2	Effects of Teacher mediation on Student Conceptions and Approaches to Reading	2005
3	An Evaluative study of ELT practices in secondary schools in Ethiopia	2004
4	Conception of Language teaching and learning and classroom decision making: A case study of High school English teachers in Ethiopia	1999
5	Verbal participation Group works:A case study of first year students of AAU	2000
6	Language testing and its practical application	1994
7	The effect of a process approach to teaching reading on First year students at KCTE	1999
8	Individualized Reading for E.A.P Social science First Year students	1993
9	Effects of Instrumental Enrichment and Mediated Learning Experience on EFL Vocabulary Task performance of Students with hearing Impairments	2008
10	A Study of secondary School English Language Implementation of methodology	2005
11	A Study of the Requirements in Writing for Academic Purposes at AAU	1999
12	The Effect of Communicative Grammar on the Grammatical Accuracy of Students' Academic Writing (2008)	2008
13	Developing a Service English Syllabus to Meet the Academic Demands and Constraints in the Ethiopian Universities.....	1993
14	A Comparison of the Effectiveness of Teacher versus Peer Feedback on AAU Students' Writing Revision...	1999
15	Teacher behavior in ESL Large Classes in Bahir Dar Senior Secondary Schools	2001
16	Investigating Methods of Training for Developing Student Skills for Academic Oral Work	1998
17	An Exploration of the Task Design Procedures f EFL Teachers in Ethiopia	2005
18	Feedback in the EFL Classroom: An Exploration of its Role in the Communication of Teacher Expectation	2000
19	A Study of the Reading Strategies of First Year Students at a University College in Ethiopia	1999
20	An Exploration of the Relationship between Uptake and Classroom Questioning	1999
21	The Effect of Academic Background on Reading Comprehension: The case of First Year Students at College of S.S.	1999
22	Classroom Verbal Behavior and Learning Opportunities in Selected Secondary School EFL Classroom	2000
23	The Construction and Validation and validation of a Test in English for Tertiary Education with Reference to AAU	1995
24	Exploration in the Preparation of Pre-service EFL Teachers: A Learning Centered approach	1993
25	Action Research Practices in Teaching English as a Foreign Language in Ethiopia	2010
26	Effects of DELL Students' Low Level English Language Proficiency Skills and Student Placement problems on....	2009
27	The Interaction of Extroversion, Neuroticism, Psychoticism and Oral and Written Proficiency, Achievement	2009
28	Effects of Teacher Mediation on Students' Locus of Control, Self Efficacy Beliefs and Oral English	2010
29	The Classroom Language of Primary School English Teachers in the Ethiopian .....: A Study in Communication	2010
30	A Study on the Perceptions of Writing Instruction and Students' Writing Performance	2005

Appendix R: A Transcription of Interviews with PhD TEFL Students (Main Study)

Interview with Ms1

Q1: How do you explain the role of your PhD research to you and others? (in terms of EFL teaching and research practices)

R: The problem that I raised in this PhD research was the problem that I observed while I was teaching in my classroom and while others were teaching in their class rooms. So I hope the research will help me to solve this problem observed in teaching. I also believe that others may benefit from this research by sharing the information I will get from my work. They can learn from my research or can even conduct further research. I hope it will help me to solve the problem of teaching and learning in the actual situation. As you know, we teachers are expected to conduct mini action researches to solve our problems. Although I have had an experience of doing these types of researches, this PhD work may help me to strengthen this knowledge.

Q2. How did you identify the topic of your PhD research? What were your essential considerations in deciding the topic?

R: Ok. First of all, when we conduct research there must be a problem that puzzles or strikes our mind. So from my experience and observation of other research conducted on the area, I tried to identify the topic. So the very important point that I took into consideration for identification of the problem was the question of whether that was really a problem, whether it was researchable and whether teachers and students can benefit anything from it. So my first consideration was the question of whether it was really a problem.

Q3. How do you explain your motivation in doing this research? (You can consider intrinsic and/or extrinsic ones)

R: Some people may want to upgrade themselves just for the sake of getting more salary or something like that. It can be one factor. But the most important one for me is the intrinsic one. If you are not internally motivated in doing the research, who knows, you might fail somewhere. Let me tell you. I was working as a vice dean in a college. When I transferred to a university, I left that position deliberately just to upgrade myself not for the money but to get knowledge, to know more about my area. So the intrinsic one weighs more than the extrinsic one. But it doesn't mean that I don't have an extrinsic motivation. It is also there.

Q4. How are you going to communicate your findings to potential users? How does this enhance or affect your motivation in making your PhD research relevant to the practical context?

R: Very good! This is what most researchers lack. When we conduct research, we go somewhere to gather data, we ask subjects' consent, we gather data, we say thank you then we stop there. After we finish the research, we don't go back and tell them what our findings were. Genuinely speaking, after I complete my PhD work, I will disseminate my findings even by giving trainings for teachers teaching at different levels. I personally don't expect anything from the university to tell me to go there and disseminate my findings. Once you finish, you defend the work, you submit the work and they put it in the library and you go away.

But maybe what I can do is, going back to the university where I work and asking concerned persons to help me disseminate my research findings by giving trainings to teachers. Here the system does not support students to disseminate their findings. Even students do not have this kind of practice. I think, if the system doesn't allow, we have to go and try by ourselves. Moreover, not only the university where we are learning, but also the host universities will support students to disseminate their findings.

Q5. How do you evaluate the criticality and supportiveness of the supervision provided by your supervisor/s? What is your impression of the feedbacks or comments?

R: The criticality and supportiveness of the supervisors depends on the supervisor. There are different supervisors with different experiences with different attitudes to their advisees and it depends on even their knowledge of research. As far as I am concerned, I can say I am lucky. My supervisor is really critical in reading my paper from the beginning up to now. He has been reading my paper critically. I think, it was he who guided me in the right way. Had he not been reading my paper critically, it wouldn't have been reached at this stage. So for me, I can say he is critical and gives critical comments.

Q6. In what aspects of your research work do you want your supervisor to be of more help and give you more critical feedback?

R: I do have problems especially in writing statement of the problem. I think, he helped me very well to write that part of Chapter One. I usually want his help on the methodological part because this part is the core part of the research. So not only my advisor, I think, other advisors should focus on that area. Because it is liable to questions; it can be easily exposed to others to raise questions. So usually, I want him to support me on the methodological part. When he gives feedback, he reads what I write first, he cancels what he doesn't like and replaces with his own ideas and he writes comments. He sometimes suggests that it is better to say like this or like that. He also asks me why I do something. If I say, for example; semi-structured interview in the methodology part, he asks me why I chose this type. Then I try to answer his questions accordingly.

Q7. How do you see your readiness to openly and freely deal with your advisor on matters related to your PhD research? (e.g., in discussions and/or debates over the research)

R: As you know, there is always a gap between you and your supervisor. So it depends on your intimacy. Personally, I don't have this much close contact with my supervisor except giving and showing my paper, taking advises and comments. Whenever I want something, I go there and knock, greet him and ask him questions even without any appointment. By the way, he gave me his telephone number but I rarely phoned to him. I want to talk to him personally because he is open to me. If I have any problem, I can ask him openly. If I don't have any challenging cases, I don't usually get him. What I feel is there is a sort of gap between him and me. I don't know whether it is a kind of respect or another.

Q8. How do you explain your responsibility in the process of the supervision?

R: One is the student should be hard working. Whatever issues are raised by the supervisor, you can accept or you can reject them. But you don't have to reject

them for the sake of rejecting. So, we are expected to be rational or reasonable. I'm always rational and I listen to what he says. Then, I take it home and look at it. If I disagree, I will come back and tell him. So whenever I have a problem, I become rational and try to tell him. If he is convinced, he will take it; if he is not, I will try to check it again. The candidate himself should be responsible, accountable. He should not be dependent on the supervisor. Even sometimes, you are expected to challenge your supervisor. It doesn't mean you have to ignore his ideas.

Q9. What problems have you faced in different stages of the research so far? (e.g., in relation to material and financial matters as well as supervisors, examiners, reviewers etc.)

R: When I reached at this stage, it doesn't mean that I reached here without difficulties. There are so many difficulties. I don't forget what the department did on TEFL students-ignoring us from giving the money granted. So I have financial difficulties. We PhD students are expected to be supported, but I can say we were denied from our right. So that is the most serious problem I faced. The other is, I was not happy with one of the proposal reviewers. You know, my proposal stayed with him for more than two months but by the end he gave me only a half page comment which was irrelevant. So there was the difficulty of getting constructive feedback from some reviewers. Examiners, I think, may challenge you from their own perspectives. So you are expected to convince them because they just give you comments. But usually the problem is they are not this much willing to accept one who comments on their comments.

Q10. What specific improvements do you recommend so that the situation would improve in the TEFL PhD program?

R: First, PhD candidates are expected to make themselves well ready. They are expected to read well so that they can persuade their supervisors or examiners. They must have close relationship with supervisors so that they can continue. It doesn't mean to be submissive. Supervisors must also be genuine to support the supervisees. Sometimes you may give your paper to supervisors and they may tell you to go head. By the end if something is not corrected early, the burden may be left for the student. They must be open, committed to support and help candidates because candidates are here to learn. By the way, supervisors can also learn from candidates. The faculty should also do something. Sometimes I ask myself a question: Does the faculty know the PhD candidates? How many times did the department call us and talk to us? I never remember. Never! The current department head told us some information last time and should continue with this. The department is not this much organized. Information about students' progress and the titles they are working on should always be available so that the newcomers should not repeat titles. There must also be close contact between the department and candidates; between the faculty and candidates. I can say there is a wide gap in this regard. As PhD work, our research should be intended to solve the problem of our students, teachers in particular and the society in general. To make this possible, the problem we raise should be a practical problem. Our work should not be limited to getting the PhD; we are expected to share our experiences. We should communicate our findings to others.

Thank you very much!

Interview with MS2

Q1: How do you explain the role of your PhD research to you and others? (in terms of your EFL teaching and research practices)

R: Currently I'm conducting research that has an implication to professional development. So since the research tries to address teachers in general, I believe it will address the concerns of teachers and it will try to uncover multitude of issues relevant to EFL classrooms. It will try to make teachers be aware of how they can improve their own practice by critical thinking and without expecting someone to tell them to do something. So, I think, in that case it will contribute to teachers in general and EFL teachers in particular and even to curriculum designers and ministry level officials. When I come to action research, I think, even without conducting the PhD research we should try to examine our classroom practice through action research. It is part of the enquiry we all do in the classroom. Since PhD research is very scientific and rigorous one, its experience will help me beyond doing action research. It will help me just to produce articles which can be published in standardized journals -local and international. Having passed through all the procedures of the PhD research, I think, I will be confident enough to do these things. And that will help both in the theoretical and practical aspect of language teaching and learning in general.

Q2. How did you identify the topic of your PhD research? What were your essential considerations in deciding the topic?

R: Actually, this was not my first choice. My first choice was on material writing. But after I submitted a concept paper/mini proposal, my advisor was not as such interested in that area. But I am not saying the current topic is my advisor's choice. Because I have been teaching in Teacher Education College for more than ten years, I have had the chance to see factors that go in teacher education. So I was aware that some practice in the language classroom was not as productive as it should be. Hence I came to the decision that that issue in general has something to be explored.
So my experience and observation as well as my reading helped me to identify the topic.

Moreover, I have tried to browse the PhD dissertations conducted before and I have found no research done in Ethiopia on the issue I am raising. There are of course some MA researches which have addressed the issue but they are limited only to the pre-service teacher education. So I wanted to do it in the In-Service Training of teachers (INSET). So I thought it is worth investigating so that these teachers might get some insight by reading the research outcome or by discussing with their colleagues. Still I believe that it is a very important aspect to explore.

Q3. How do you explain your motivation in doing this research? (You can consider intrinsic and/or extrinsic ones)

R: Well, the topic is entirely my own choice; I have to admit that. You know, once you are admitted to a PhD program, you have to do some research in any way. That is something that you can't avoid. But being that the case, once I have to choose a topic you know, I had to list a list of topics so that I can choose the one that would be appropriate to do the PhD research. So I can say it is entirely my own interest as well as it is a requirement. There are both, but I'm interested in

doing that and happy to explore my practice as well as other teachers' beliefs, perceptions values and so on.

Q4. How are you going to communicate your findings to potential users? How does this enhance or affect your motivation in making your PhD research relevant to the practical context?

R: Well. It is not easy to disseminate research findings. There is usually a conventional way of doing this at AAU. You write the dissertation, you submit some copies and they put it in different libraries. But I don't think this is enough to reach the mass that I'm targeting. On the other hand, it is not easy to publish on journals because one, there are few institutions which are publishing journals and the other is the publication is very expensive. If you want to publish in one of the publishers and make it an article, it will be very expensive for a student like me. If you want to sell it, there is very little gain out of it. No one is interested to buy and read. Instead people are interested to read sport magazines. In other universities I know, for example; in foreign countries students are encouraged to publish in different journals. But here there is no an official request from the university that allows PhD students to submit or to divide their dissertation and publish in journals- there is no way. So the environment is not conducive in this regard. This will have an impact on our research endeavor. But we shouldn't give up. We have to find mechanisms and ways of reaching users as this is our work. Once I go back to my university, I will try to just take some abstract not the whole content and produce an article out of my work. That can be another way of doing it.

Q5. How do you evaluate the criticality and supportiveness of the supervision provided by your supervisor/s? What is your impression of the feedbacks or comments?

R: Well, if it is regarding my supervisor, I would say he is not highly critical and I would say he is not bad as well. He tries to ask me questions regarding my own work and why I choose things and I try to explain. As a PhD work, he doesn't want to influence me and that is what I want. You know, I should not be put under the supervisor's hat. I have my own way of doing that my own readings. Well, I would not say he is highly critical but it is not bad. That is how I explain it. He tries to raise questions regarding my own work; he tries to understand my justification. That is how we go.

Q. So, how is your expectation being met?
R: Well, honestly speaking I want my supervisor the way he is. Because at least he doesn't personally offend me, he doesn't instruct me. Well he raises questions, yes he has to and he tries to understand what I'm doing. But he doesn't say 'take out this, this is not important, change your objective etc.' I don't want him to do that. I want him to read my work and to give me comments, not his own way of doing that. I think, personally he is good at working with me. That is how I describe him. He is very supportive, and understanding. He even tries to understand your social concerns, how you feel, how you are working. I think that is very good.

Q6. In what aspects of your research work do you want your supervisor to be of more help and give you more critical feedback?

R: Well, I want him to comment my work especially on the methodology part, the instruments I develop. I don't want him to bring me literature, to tell me to add background here or there; no. I don't expect him to read on my own area. This is going to be my own research; I want to explore the area by myself and to show him. I think, he is doing that; but considering the time pressure he has, his many advisees; I don't expect him just to follow what I am doing every day.

Q7. How do you see your readiness to openly and freely deal with your advisor on matters related to your PhD research? (e.g., in discussions and/or debates over the research)

R: Actually I don't have problem discussing issues about my research. There are instances when my decisions and beliefs are taken to the research and he even told me that he has learnt from what I have done. So, that is what is expected at this level. For example, after my defense, there were comments given by examiners. I was interested to consider only some of these comments in my work. I discussed later with the advisor and he told me that I have to decide by myself. Examiners were not also happy about the conceptual framework I had tried to develop, but my supervisor told me to go with it if I believe it works. So he respects my autonomy as a researcher. And that is good. There are times we discuss things and in those times he tries to accept if things are really going ahead. So I have no problem in raising issues. He was insisting me to look in depth and critically. At the initial stage, there was that kind of push which was very good for students like us. But later once I have started to explore the subject, I think he became interested in the idea. Still he raises questions. That is a push to take me to the right track so that the work will be a good quality work.

Q8. How do you explain your responsibility in the process of the supervision?

R: Well, usually when I have to go to show my work to my advisor, I go there and when I meet him, we discuss on the things that I raise. He first listens to my questions and my concerns, and then he comes to his own questions and concerns. So he doesn't really insist me I want you today or next week. No. It is based on my interest. We don't usually meet for the sake of meeting. Because, I know he has the time pressure and things like that. So, if I feel that I have to go there and show him something, I go there and he tells me the time when we will meet after he reads my paper. Well, actually that is not very smooth part because of the time constraint and not getting on the time we propose.

I try to raise issues and even my readings and about what my work should look like. And, I think, that is my responsibility. At least we raise things together and so there is discussion going on.

Q9. What problems have you faced at different stages of the research so far? (e.g., in relation to material and financial matters as well as supervisors, examiners, reviewers etc.)

R: What I feel very depressing is about the department. When I came to this department, I thought I will be treated as the PhD candidates of other departments or fields in the same department. But I was very shocked to learn that the money allocated to TEFL PhD students went somewhere which I still don't know. Because it was at the very beginning stage, I was in dilemma to or not to continue my study if treated differently. Yes, the atmosphere is not good in

the department. They don't treat you as a professional. I don't have problem with my supervisor. I know that there are financial problems in the university, but on top of that, the department has created another financial problem on us by turning our budget somewhere. So that was really very disappointing. As far as I am concerned, I try to browse on Google books, libraries and I think I am ok with such resources. I don't also have problems in talking to colleagues. It is not clear how papers are assigned to anonymous readers and examiners. Personally, I had no problem with anonymous readers- I didn't know who read my paper, I got some comments and I tried to amend the comments which I believe were important. Then I submitted it and I didn't have problems with the defense schedule too. But I don't know how the department assigns papers for anonymous readers and examiners. You see some students are thrown to harsh examiners and some students to better ones. I don't know why. So there is some sort of underground issue that is not clear. I don't think papers are allocated because of the background of the readers and examiners; papers seem to go somewhere by chance. So I think there needs to be some clarity around that.

Q10. What specific improvements do you recommend so that the situation would improve in the TEFL PhD program?

R: Well, I think the first thing is there needs to be orientation at the beginning. What I have observed in the TEFL program is, once you are registered, there is no way of bringing students together to discuss issues. You are alone, you work alone. Because in a non- course based program, ones candidates contact their supervisors, they go here and there. So there should be some mechanism. The first is an induction or a sort of orientation. The other is there should be an informal contract or an ad hoc kind of contract between the supervisor and supervisees on how often they should meet during their work and on what basis. I also feel that there should be someone who really is responsible to listen to the concerns of PhD candidates. It is not a sort of guidance and counselor, but there should be someone responsible to talk to you; as there are some worries. There is no anything for PhD students- no office, no computer even when you want to defend your work, there is only one LCD. And if that is occupied by someone, you have to go back and come another day. If it is occupied another day, you should go back again. These things, I think, are very disgusting at this level. Private secondary schools are now having much more facilities than we have here. Finally, I heard informally that some students are withdrawing from this program. I think, it would be good for you meet these people and talk to them to get some information regarding the reason why they are leaving after wasting this much time.

Thank you very much!

Interview with MS3

Q1. How do you explain the role of your PhD research to you and others? (in terms of EFL teaching and research practices)

R: It has two roles for me. One, it is a requirement for the completion of the PhD. Secondly and mainly, I'm taking good lessons from this program. I believe that the readings I am making as part of this research work will also help me to improve my teaching practice as well as to do more research alongside my teaching. So it is a good school for me. And regarding its role for others, probably after this program is completed I may participate in collaborative research works

so that I could develop a kind of cooperative research skills to do EFL researches with others. Based on my observation, there is no the culture of cooperative work among PhD candidates here. They do not interact in seminars and defense sessions. That aspect is not that much promising for us to learn a lot. But simply attending others' presentations, I think, is an exposure for me. In our future careers we are expected to share ideas through attending and inviting people in different research activities where there would be a freedom of interacting where there is no any fear of asking, interacting, challenging and being challenged. But now I can't mouth fully say that from seminars, oral presentations and defenses we are getting such inputs.

Q2. How did you identify the topic of your PhD research? What were your essential considerations in deciding the topic?

R: I got the idea from my reading and I was quite sure that the area was not addressed by researchers or graduates of the department of English locally. Of course I checked whether the issue was conducted by somebody else. I think, it is what is expected from PhD works. Moreover, since the work will be original, I feel that it will be relevant in one way or another to the teaching learning process. But my fear is that the findings may not be publicized may not be considered by concerned stakeholders especially the ministry of education and others may not trace our works.

Q3. How do you explain your motivation in doing this research? (You can consider intrinsic and/or extrinsic ones)

R: To speak frankly, it is the extrinsic motivation that is outweighing. Because this is the only possibility we have to take this PhD degree. Intrinsically, I have very much reservation on this.

Q4. How are you going to communicate your findings to potential users? How does this enhance or affect your motivation in making your PhD research relevant to the practical context?

R: So far, the trend is not good. Our experience shows that outstanding research findings are not utilized. As I said, the concerned stakeholders are not trying to trace or find out different studies conducted by scholars at university level. This trend doesn't motivate us to work for the sake of solving a certain problem, to contribute for the teaching learning process. Since our experience doesn't show us that the findings of MA and PhD research results reach users (where EFL teaching learning takes place), we don't have that motivation and we know that our work will not also reach users. So it affects our determination to purposely make our research outstanding. Who do you think would care about laboring much day and night to produce an excellent research while he/she knows that the research will work no more than completing the PhD? I know that I am doing it for the same purpose and it will be kept on the shelf. So, you do the research and at the end you will write some recommendations to the usual stakeholders (policy makers, curriculum writers etc.) any way. You know and even your examiners know that you do this simply as a requirement.

Q5. How do you evaluate the criticality and supportiveness of the supervision provided by your supervisor/s? What is your impression of the feedbacks or comments?

R: Still I have some reservation. It is below my expectation. My supervisor is not critically commenting and evaluating my work. He is not that much supportive. I thought that as a supervisor he would look throughout my work. Probably, he touches some part of the work like the objective or research questions for the sake of saying that he has commented my paper. But to be frank, he doesn't know every part of my work. Moreover, during defense or oral presentations our supervisors are alienates or strangers. They don't have any say there. They don't take themselves as part of that work and even sometimes they ask their supervisees just like the examiners do and the same is true for me.

He doesn't evaluate my work critically and hence I don't have trust on the feedbacks. Surprisingly, just to show me that he has read all the work, he underlines something on some pages, puts a number of question marks with no any clue. Even examiners after defense sessions, they give your paper back with a number of question marks. What those questions mean is not clear for you. They don't have any clue. Simply they put question marks or they underline with a red pen, with no any clue, suggestion or comment. This is the experience I have starting from the proposal up to the current work. I can say clear, relevant and constructive comments are not received from the supervisor.

Q6. In what aspects of your research work do you want your supervisor to be of more help and give you more critical feedback?

R: I don't need the supervisor to read every part of the paper. I don't expect him to give comments on the language whatever; whatever. I need the supervisor to comment on the title, objective, research questions, methodology probably the analysis and so on. These are the key areas that I need the supervisor to have a look at. The other thing is that at least there should be some time to have discussion with the supervisor. I can say that with my stay here, we didn't have any experience of discussing on my paper. We don't make discussions on his written feedbacks and the feedbacks I receive from reviewers or examiners. I need the supervisor to arrange sometime to discuss on my work. Because through the discussion, I expect that my ideas will be clear and his ideas will be mead clear. He can have better insight about my work. But these things are missing.

Q7. How do you see your readiness to openly and freely deal with your advisor on matters related to your PhD research? (e.g., in discussions and/or debates over the research)

R: Yes, a lot is expected from students in this respect. I wanted to have very intimate or close relationship with him so that I can share with him whatever challenge I face in my work. I tried to do that but what I have experienced is that asking or approaching to get support from supervisors doesn't give you some freedom. I don't know what to say; the supervisor doesn't like that. My interest was to have regular contact and to share what I have done for the supervisor and to be always available for whatever comments the supervisor may want to give me. But the reality is different.

Q8. How do you explain your responsibility in the process of the supervision?

R: What is expected from me is sharing the challenges I have for my supervisor and getting comments on that and to be always ready to work accordingly and to be available regularly or occasionally based on certain schedule. And I can't say I have discharged my responsibility to the level expected. Since the supervisor is not interested to see me there regularly, I want to stay far away from him.

Sometimes I deliberately disappear from the area. Because, whenever I appear there, he doesn't feel good, he doesn't show me good face. Due to these and sometimes my failure of accomplishing my tasks timely, I could say I am not fully discharging my responsibilities.

Q9. What problems have you faced in different stages of the research so far? (e.g., in relation to material and financial matters as well as supervisors, examiners, reviewers etc.)

R: A number of challenges are there. But to mention the major ones, one is financial constraint- it is obvious that with 20 thousand birr you cannot do PhD research. So the financial constraint is definitely affecting my work. Secondly, the support I get from the supervisor is very much limited. I expected that the supervisor would push me to work according to the plan set for the PhD program but he doesn't care about the time that I am wasting. And I could say the department is not working well. The department simply harasses candidates. It does not push supervisors, examiners and anonymous readers to give feedbacks timely and to handle their supervisees. But, you know, in order to make them free from the accountability, warning notices and letters are forwarded for the candidates. So we candidates are under grate trouble. This is affecting our work. One, we are running out of time. You know, when our papers are kept with the supervisors and readers or examiners, we become passive. There would be a certain gap on our work. This is a serious challenge. Recent materials are not available here, there are no subscriptions. This is definitely affecting our work. If you take my case there are no books, journals etc useful for my study and I had to make a friend of mine from abroad to send me some materials. To be frank, due to financial constraint, we are not collecting enough data required for our research. If you take my case, for example; I took a very small sample for the pilot study and I am doing the same for the main study because with that little money I couldn't travel to different places and address different participants. You can see that the research titles of most of the studies are case studies; you will find that many of the titles say, 'the case of this university', 'the case of this school etc.'; there are no survey studies. That has affected for example my work. Because I couldn't mouse fully say that this sample is enough.

Q10. What specific improvements do you recommend so that the situation would improve in the TEFL PhD program?

R: One, the department should be fully responsible for the program in making available the required materials, in trying to get funds or asking the university to allocate the required budget. For a candidate that works in Addis and works somewhere away, the same amount of money is budgeted. This is very shameful. So the department should allocate the budget according to the nature of the students' work. It should also check whether supervisors and examiners are properly discharging their responsibilities. There should be time for the supervisors to give feedback; they should handle their advisees in a very scholarly and smooth manner. There is a very big distance between the two parties. The oral presentations are not teaching rather they are battle fields. You know, we are really frustrated during defenses. That is why we are not sharing our ideas during presentations. That environment should be very healthy for learning; that is expected from supervisors and the department. And we, as candidates, should be very much committed. We shouldn't be influenced by the trend of doing research for the shelf. We have to think about the contribution of our work for the whole community. We don't have some experience of having

some peer discussions on our works; we shouldn't always expect our supervisors or examiners to help us. There should be a peer review, peer discussion so that our works would be useful, very much quality up to the standard. We PhD candidates should work hard to contribute something because this is the highest ladder in the career of education.

Thank you very much!

Interview with MS4

Q1. How do you explain the role of your PhD research to you and others? (in terms of your EFL teaching and research practices)

R: Well. First of all, my study was motivated by the consideration that it would have a great contribution towards teacher trainers and trainees and that is concerned with teacher development. So this initiated or motivated me to get involved into that area and then make some kind of reading so that I could identify the topic which I think is crucial at the moment because trainers and trainees are now highly engaged in the development of quality education in broad terms. So when I got the chance to leave for a PhD study, I decided to work on teacher development field. So that is how I just started the whole idea of going into that field of study.

Q2. How did you identify the topic of your PhD research? What were your essential considerations in deciding the topic?

R: The whole work was motivated by the HDP that I participated in. Therefore that gave me the opportunity to look into how I was transferring knowledge or skill to trainees because I am a teacher trainer. Therefore, I got the initiation to get into that topic because it had great contribution towards the program I was participating-the HDP. I saw deficiencies in the work I was doing myself and to correct those deficiencies one has to be very active daily into going to make self assessment as to how to help his trainees. So this was the kind of push I got and then I went into that selected topic and that was even supported by some colleagues who were with me in that particular HDP program. So this was the kind how I started and by making efforts into seeing how that could be developed, I needed to go to read research materials based on that area and perform. I was highly motivated to focus on that. Because this is the current development in teacher education in the whole world I could say.

Q3. How do you explain your motivation in doing this research? (You can consider intrinsic and/or extrinsic ones)

R: Well. Research has to deal with an aspect that contributes towards the development of the life of the society. Because life is contingent on what will come in the future and therefore the extrinsic motivation was given by the university where I work. That extrinsic motivation is actually good because unless you get the support, however meager the economy might be, you would not be motivated to do it. Otherwise I wouldn't be able to get registered and started because I would be tied with daily routines in the university. So the external motivation value is driven by the university support they give you in terms of paying you the basic salary. But the important motivation that I value is the internal motivation. That really is driving me and the whole work because I feel that that study will contribute a lot at least to the university that sponsor me

for this study and to the particular area where the research is being undertaken. So I am highly motivated internally because at the end of the day I would be gratified with what I will come up and be able to first of all see myself the problem getting solved and transfer that skill and knowledge to the people who work with me.

Q4. How are you going to communicate your findings to potential users? How does this enhance or affect your motivation in making your PhD research relevant to the practical context?

R: Well. So far, I don't see as such a good culture or way of behaving towards helping one to publicize a research finding so that it will be communicated to the community at large. I don't know the reason why but it would have been possible to get materials published in publications either elsewhere or locally inside. They should have tried, may be call it the department, faculty or the university responsible for that, they should have done this sort of thing. What so far I know as a practice is an individual whether he is internally or externally motivated comes and does a work and then it would remain the sole responsibility of that individual to get it communicated to people he thinks would benefit. He has no way to go beyond that. If you take my case, because I saw deficiencies in my teaching, I am the first person to try, to put it into practice and become an example for the rest of my colleagues if they are interested in following the kind of practice that I will be doing. Therefore, the courses that I am going to deal with would be shaped at least in a way the kind of finding that it would tell me. And therefore, I can say it is now an individual's responsibility or perhaps a few group of people who are close by to take the primary concern to my sense of that research finding and put it into something beneficial.

This has an impact on the work. First of all, when a researcher finalizes his work, then he will get a qualification and get gratified by what he has got and then he would be called with some title. And then he will forget everything. That is the problem I usually observe. The other dimension of the work at the end of the day is, the person who went into that study and came out with some kind of behavioral change has to show, has to take the determination, regardless of all the problems he faces, to make some kind of effort to make it a reality so that the other people can follow in the same way. Otherwise, if you expect everything to be completed by a given sponsor or a given department, unless that sort of practice or culture changes, it will remain again a problem for the individual and for the community at large.

Q5. How do you evaluate the criticality and supportiveness of the supervision provided by your supervisor/s? What is your impression of the feedbacks or comments?

R: When I consider the roles of a supervisor, there is an assumption that he is an experienced professional who would give you all possible support from the launching of the program up until the end of the study. However, this does not mean that he takes every responsibility of your problems. So this gives rise to the idea that both parties share due responsibilities. So the responsibility of the supervisor is to give assistance and every help that the student faces and comes for that kind of help. However, I sometimes hear complaints from people, I also sense myself that there are problems in terms of failing to see your advisor. According to set programs, first of all, there ought to be a set program whereby two of us can sit down and talk and again reschedule if problems are arising. But

what is being done is on a common understanding that you just ask him or he would say I will not be available that very period. So you have to be tolerant. So that repeated practice again shouldn't discourage you because that is what is going on. Therefore, when you consider this general approach to the way how things are being done, the supervisor I am now referring to is a person who has had an impact on the work I am doing because he knows it to a certain extent that he himself has done a PhD work on the area I am working on. Therefore, starting from identifying the problem which I came with, he was so happy to even reshape the topic itself several times, commenting on the research problems I was trying to deal with and even he went further into saying about the significance of the work. So he has had a very interesting contribution and interest in the work I am doing. But that interest only and that kind of attitude is not enough. There has to be an initiation from him to just at least ask me where I am, what I am doing when I fail to see him perhaps for a month or two or so. He has never had the opportunity or the possibility to ask me where I am. So that really is the negative impression that I have and the kind of practices other people are also experiencing. Therefore, his support at all times was very important but at times when he feels he is busy with something else which I can't tell, then I get discouraged to do the whole work, then months pass without again getting critical comment from the work you do. At the end of the day you would face a problem when it comes to examiners or people who come for the upgrading programs and then that time you just see each other. And therefore you sense within yourself that there was something wrong in the kind of relationship you had already built with your supervisor and I also feel that he senses something that went wrong. So the fact that he was very much important in the work I am doing, well I can see again gaps that actually should be narrowed down little by little. May be it is a question of time.

Q6. In what aspects of your research work do you want your supervisor to be of more help and give you more critical feedback?

R: The role the advisor should play a crucial element towards contributing to the work is in just helping me to critically assess the things I do after every chapter and then give his due comments critically in a written form so that we can sit down and talk on matters that are unclear to me. This actually, I am fortunate that my advisor always writes complete notes about or questions about vague things he finds and then he just tells me, "Ok can I see you on this particular day? This kind of practice is already available and therefore the critical area where he is helping me is whenever I complete a task, I give it to him, he takes time to read and comes with critical questions and comments and we sit down and talk about it. So, I think, these are the ways how we do in dealing with the work.

Q. So in what aspects of your work you want your supervisor to be of more help?

R: Well, with regard to my language accuracy, I think the great responsibility lies in me. And then, I have to do every possible means to write, rewrite, read, reread and give it for some other colleague so that they could do that aspect. So whenever you give someone to do something on your work, tell him that is my language ok? I just want you to look at that. I am talking about ordinary colleagues or friends. When it comes to the supervisor, he might find errors, mistakes in the language you use, but that is not the most important element that my advisor always tells me if he finds such kinds of problems. He just simply underlines or makes some question mark and he passes on. What he

focuses on is the content of the work I do. In a given topic and a given subtopic I dealt, "what are you really talking about? Are you getting away from the main work or you are inside that field? This is the kind of comment he has been giving me. Therefore, I think, this is the kind of thing that a supervisor should do. That is what I believe.

Q7. How do you see your readiness to openly and freely deal with your advisor on matters related to your PhD research? (e.g., in discussions and/or debates over the research)

R: Well actually so far I have not faced such kinds of problems. But once he repeatedly was making question mark on a research question that was included in the initial stage. And I persisted on telling him that this should be kept as it is. So I didn't simply throw away the question. Once we sat down and had heated arguments about to include and exclude it. So finally, I just brought a piece of work done on that and then when I read and he understood the way how it was dealt, he was so happy in my arguments. So we were as much as possible open and there are other instances I could tell. It is not only about the subject matter but also issues related to the research work indirectly. Like for example, family problems.

Q8. How do you explain your responsibility in the process of the supervision?

R: Responsibility is shared one. A PhD candidate has to know what his responsibilities are and he has to also acknowledge the responsibilities of the advisor. However, to create a common denominator for both of them so that things could go quite smoothly, it is very good to sense and take that the work one starts to do is his own; the major task is to be done by the individual. We have to accept this reality first of all. But whenever one faces a problem, because it is a shared responsibility; he/she has to be able to communicate his advisor for an appropriate advice. Therefore, when we talk about a role, we are talking of the system. When you are talking about system, we are taking about the culture. So all these are related because we are involved in the system and we are the ones to make the changes and improvements to the system. So the whole responsibility of mine is to take an identity that I am the one responsible to make everything possible. Whenever I face a problem, I just contact my advisor and if he fails to do, I have to be able to understand why he failed. If there is a mutual understanding between a supervisor and supervisee; I think things would come out successful.

Q9. What problems have you faced in different stages of the research so far? (e.g., in relation to material and financial matters as well as supervisors, examiners, reviewers etc.)

R: well again this goes to a task of seeing or viewing the whole work of a PhD responsibility to be shared among many stakeholders beginning from the department secretary up to the department head and still above. So if I bring it down to the department level, the faculty level, initially, I had great hope that things would be fine in the process we do the work. And beginning lights were very good. But developments really didn't give rise to that. It all started with the financial problem; the budget I requested was totally rejected and I was forced to write the minimum meager economy they could give me. This is one discouraging factor of the work. If you see the administrative issues, whenever you go to a specific issue of your work and then you want to deal tasks related to the

bureaucracy, again there are problems because you don't have any value to be respected as an individual who is now taking a responsibility and should be assisted in some way. There is no this kind of consideration. So whenever you face people, you see a kind of lack of interest in helping you. This is another factor that really has been discouraging me. And therefore I sometimes think to go to the office and consult people, but that sort of picture comes to my mind and I restrain myself into going there and start the whole thing all over again. There are also matters related to examinations, upgrading or other systems they are already built like anonymous readers. It is very good to have anonymous readers; it is very good to sit for examinations. But the problem is sometimes people fail to come with appropriate suggestions advice and questions. But they come all with the stance of just picking out bits and pieces of problems and then magnify them like anything have gone wrong. They ought to tell you about the positive sides of your work, appreciate it so that you would be motivated to do better and then little by little come to issues that they feel you have really failed to attempt to. The whole thing I see in the upgrading programs and the kinds of comments they give you, there is no due respect for the work you do. But magnifying smaller mistakes and therefore demoralizing one not to go ahead with what he had in mind. So the whole thing is now, the entire stakeholders in the PhD program, be it the supervisor, the department head, the examiners etc. all really should take the feel that your work would be successful in a way it should be provided that you get every possible support from every individual you go for consultation or question whatever you call it.

So unless these issues are carefully handled by the responsible people including the researcher himself, it is definite that there is a negative impact on the work you do. Because, a number of things have part to play in the task you do, like for example, lack of adequate finance delimits the work. Lack of appropriate support again constrains the work, lack of administrative support like what I said before about the department bureaucracy and other matters. That again negatively affects the work. So the quality of the work will be determined not only by the interest that the researcher shows and commits himself, but also the contributions and interests that every person directly or indirectly involved in the work contributes. So quality in general terms is a total quality where by everybody responsible would contribute a little bit to that work. That really gives rise to the quality of education, research anything we do. If there is no any total quality management, obviously the work you do will end up with no full satisfaction to yourself and other people.

Q10. What specific improvements do you recommend so that the situation would improve in the TEFL PhD program for the future?

R: Right. I think, what I said before was a total quality management concept which means that the quality of a certain work depends on individuals' shared responsibility. And therefore to do that it is not a written rule or norm or routine that really works, but you have to have a general understanding and even develop the practice of sitting and talking and discussing with matters related to other people who are involved in the work. So no.1 is let the concerned department develop norms and routines that everybody should follow-administrative, academic, responsibilities of the advisor and the advisee. They gave us a kind of guideline but it is not working. And therefore, that set rule and norm or routine has to be every time checked whether it is really working as a system or not. Then all concerned parties should come together and discuss if any problem is arising. The other thing is, let the responsible people be it the

department head, the secretary or the advisor sense that negative emotion really contributes negatively to the work. So every time let them be positive to the kind of attitudes of a student who comes to the department to study a given project. Secondly, let the responsible people at the department take their due responsibilities accordingly. The other thing is, the seminars we conduct used to be Ok. But recently, I just sense that things are really atrophying, they are getting away for the reasons you don't know. Therefore, this again is a problem that needs close attention. Because that is the place where you share ideas with people, you find people who would help you and those you would help so that it is possible to create a collegial relationship. An advisor-advisee relationship would better be improved if we have again a very structured system of weekly seminars, comments provided and even the department has to have the perfect responsibility to come and see what are the developments, where is the advisor?, what are the students doing?, what are the examiners, participants doing? All this has to be clear so that we would take the responsibility as we said to make it a total quality management system to make the whole work productive.

Thank you very much!

Interview with MS5

Q1. How do you explain the role of your PhD research to you and others? (in terms of your EFL teaching and research practices)

R: Yes. As it is known, the main role of educational research is to help students like me to widen their research knowledge, to be familiar with research methodologies. So I think, it can help me to widen my research knowledge in general and to be familiar with the research methodologies. Plus, even my research work can help others as a reference material. Therefore, it has a good benefit for me as well as for others. But the problem is when we see the trend or the culture, it is difficult to say material designers, policy makers can use my research product. The trend is that they are just put in libraries as references. The university doesn't at least select some good results of PhD works and communicate to users. The same will be true for our PhD research.

Q2. How did you identify the topic of your PhD research? What were your essential considerations in deciding the topic?

R: I can say that my experience and observation led me to choose the present topic. I was teaching English at High School level plus I am currently teaching writing courses at university level. So when I was teaching the writing courses, I observed that students lack writing skills. In short, the students' lack of the writing skill is just serious. Therefore, to choose my topic, my source is my observation and my experience.

Q. So in your choice of the topic, have you also considered the significance of your research to the practical situation?

R: Exactly, for example, the decision makers at the university level can just use my research result, Ya. I think it will contribute a lot to learners, students as well as teachers teaching writing.

Q3. How do you explain your motivation in doing this research? (You can consider intrinsic and/or extrinsic ones)

R: Ya. I can say the intrinsic motivation. Of course, both motivations can be there. But I can say the intrinsic one. Because if you compare, for example; the salary which you get at the MA level and at the PhD level, the difference is insignificant. So my motivation is intrinsic. Of course, I do have a strong desire to get my PhD and to get promotion but it is not my first goal. It is to know more. Although both elements are there, the inclination is more to the intrinsic one.

Q4. How are you going to communicate your findings to potential users? How does this enhance or affect your motivation in making your PhD research relevant to the practical context?

R: My intension is to try to present or disseminate my research result to the university where I am from if they are voluntary. The other thing that I plan to do is I will try to publish. If I publish it, readers can get it there and there may be decision makers or some people who can employ it. Therefore by using these two ways I will try to communicate. It is possible to say that there is no anything which is done to help graduate students' papers to reach audiences or readers. Simply they are put in the library and are used only for reference purposes. And it has a great impact. If candidates knew that their researches will be used for decision making or for some purposes, they could do more. For example, if I know that my research will be used in decision making, I may be motivated to make my research have more quality. But I am doing the research with the feeling that it will not have a purpose other than being used as a reference for other students.

Q5. How do you evaluate the criticality and supportiveness of the supervision provided by your supervisor/s? What is your impression of the feedbacks or comments?

R: I can say that the support my supervisor gives me is not sufficient. To make it specific, for the first two years I was not able to get any support from my advisors. I was having two advisors. Especially one of my advisors was careless. I gave him my research proposal. And he didn't return that document for two months. After two months when I asked him, he couldn't find it. I just reprinted another proposal and submitted. So I was so irritated and finally I was forced to leave him and to be with only one advisor. But for the last two years I can say that I got somewhat good support. There is a mismatch between my expectation and what has actually happened. My expectation was they would help me a lot, for example, I expected that they would just arrange situations to discuss issues, just to be friendly and just to see my papers critically. But these things were not met. The first supervisor as I explained was not helping me. His oral as well as written feedback was not helpful. But the recent advisor, I can say, he is more critical and is giving me good written feedbacks.

Q6. In what aspects of your research work do you want your supervisor to be of more help and give you more critical feedback?

R: I want his special support in the methodological part because this is the main part of the research. We are not familiar with this part. Equally important is the introduction i.e., the statement of the problem, the objective part. I have some limitations in this part. Especially in the methodology part my advisor didn't help me. There is some support but it is not sufficient. I don't have sufficient knowledge regarding qualitative and quantitative research. So in these areas I need the department to give some trainings and supports.

Q7. How do you see your readiness to openly and freely deal with your advisor on matters related to your PhD research? (e.g., in discussions and/or debates over the PhD research)

R: I don't be desired to explain what I feel to my advisor and to deal with these issues. But the problem is not with me; it is with my advisor. I feel that my advisor is not voluntary to accept my idea and to take my idea as important; I don't feel relaxed to just explain my idea. I fear that if I say this, he will just... Regardless of the importance of open discussion, I have to accept whatever he says. Even the present advisor I am working with shares this quality. He is critical but he warned me you have to accept what I say. If you don't do that, you will face a certain problem. In such situations, even if I have a desire to tell him what I feel regarding some issues, I don't have the freedom; I feel that he may just attack me if I don't accept his idea.

Q8. How do you explain your responsibility in the process of the supervision?

R: I don't think I can make him flexibly accept others' idea. Rather, the department can make these things through different techniques, for example, it can give workshops, guides and it can use different things to facilitate this. But a student can't do these things. There may be students who may not discharge their responsibility, but as far as I am concerned, I believe that I have tried my best to discharge my responsibility in the system.

Q9. What problems have you faced in different stages of the research so far? (e.g., in relation to material and financial matters as well as supervisors, examiners, reviewers etc.)

R: There are a lot of problems, but the main one is shortage of finance. The other thing is my advisor. As I told you, one of my advisors was careless and he was killing my time a lot. I have also observed that some students are facing problems of lack of information. For example, I observed that three students were working on the same topic. I think, the department was the cause for this. It had to have some system of notifying who is working on what etc. These are also the problems.

Q10. What specific improvements do you recommend so that the situation would improve in the TEFL PhD program?

R: The department should be well organized. Especially in the PhD program, there are a lot of lacks. Supervisors that advise PhD students should be professors. The institution can upgrade the doctors who are supervising here or they can bring other professors from especially the applied linguistics part. The number of advisees one supervisor holds should be reduced or should be manageable so that individual supervisors can have enough time to help the candidates. One advisor has 10 or 15 or 20 advisees. This is a problem. The other is, the research fund should increase. That 20 thousand birr is not sufficient to conduct a PhD research. Mostly we have observed that supervisors do not give enough support for their students but when they just be examiners, they show their strength and knowledge. They find faults. These things should be minimized. Instead of doing this, they should help and support the students. So their approach should be improved. Thank you very much!

Appendix S: A Transcription of Interviews with EFL Staff of AAU (Main Study)

Interview with MT1

Q1. How do you explain the role of doing EFL researches to you and others? (in terms of professional development, EFL teaching and supervisory practice)

R: Research is extremely important for the candidates, for MA students in particular. Basically the main task of any MA program is to enable students get better skills in doing research. So the research component is extremely useful component. When they graduate, they are expected to do high level professional careers and the important component of those careers is research. So we need to produce high level professionals and these professionals must have adequate research skills. So for the students, no doubt, it is very important. The academic staff should also do research basically to maximize and enhance their understanding in the fields they are engaged in. So basically I do research myself because I want to improve my understanding of the overall area and field I am engaged in. I am not doing research because I just want to get promotion. That part is not important to me. But what is important to me is I do research and that research helps to keep myself update with the latest developments in the field, to expand my knowledge which I may in turn use to develop the skills of my students. So research is important both for the students and for teachers.

Q2. What are your motives to do EFL research in this university? (You may compare practical/professional Vs external drivers such as pressure from the university or promotion)

R: In the university legislation, it is clearly put that academic staff should not only do teaching, they should also do research. In fact, they must do research. So research is a requirement. Again in your promotion one of the requirements is research. These might be factors in the extrinsic motivation, but in my case the internal motivation comes first to do research. In any way you may get promoted for several reasons even if the research component is not that satisfactory. But basically research has to be done, because you would like to expand the field, the profession. So research is very important particularly in this era of what you call knowledge economy. That is the basic role of universities in the Europe and America. So what is discovered in the university is going to be immediately applied in the community. So that is why we are also talking about university-industry, school-university linkage. It is the research component that gets you liked to the community.

Q3. How do you see the reward system of the University for Academics when they do EFL research/projects?

R: One way probably, as I told you earlier, if you do a number of researches, then you get promoted. So it can assist you in your promotion. So if you are very productive, you can also get your works published in proceedings, journals, and the university helps you in promoting those works- they publish journals, magazines. So I think, this is an opportunity to get your works popular. You also get academic popularity. You become prominent in your area, you become recognized. So that is not an easy contribution. May be if you want me to talk about the constraints, there are also constraints like, for example, if you want to do research, then you don't always get appropriate fund. The university doesn't

have the capacity to allocate sufficient fund. Again, you are also very busy as you have a number of commitments and teaching commitment is too much. You have also administrative commitments. So all these, I think, will not give you sufficient time to do the work. Space is also constraint sometimes because facilities are not enough in the university to do research. So, yes of course, there are constraints but there are also good sides.

Q4. What other problems have you faced in doing EFL research/s and disseminate results so far (e.g., in relation to peer and/or collegial support and others)

R: Actually, if you have any initiative to work together, you can work together. So yes, the culture is very poor, a very poor culture of doing interdisciplinary research particularly. We have been saying a lot but actually you find very few people working together. That is all a problem related to lack of culture of doing joint projects. If I want to do any research with somebody else, I can do. There is no any constraint actually. People don't say 'No, I don't want to work with you.' But the only thing is because it hasn't been in my culture to do together; that has got a very poor beginning. I am sure; there are also interdisciplinary researchers in other departments I know. So it is all a matter of taking personal initiative. If you do that, you can work together. Dissemination is also related to funds. There are limited publications, they have very limited circulation. There are websites; there are journals. But I think that is not very sufficient. So the University's website has got a very limited and very poor connectivity. So, I think, this affects the communication that disseminates your researches. So yes, there are ways to disseminate but those ways are not still sufficient; they are not very effective.

Q5. How do you explain your role in supervising PhD graduate students especially in helping them develop critical thinking skills and gradually become independent in the research work?

R: It is obvious that the advisor is very instrumental because he can guide them. You can guide them in many ways. But the problem is there is no clear advisor-advisee relationship guideline, for example; the roles of the advisee and the advisor. So one problem is there are no demarcations, the roles are not spelt out. So there is role confusion. So when you advise them what you normally do is we just advise them in terms of the core principles of advising and coaching. So there is no doubt that the advisor's role is decisive. But sometimes also there is a conflict between the advisee and the advisor. As there are good advisors, there are also very poor advisors. So when there are very poor advisors, there may not be a good relationship between the two. There is no any code of conduct, any regulation that guides that sort of relationship. The only area is in a grey area. If you take other universities, I think, they have clear guidelines. So whoever is engaged in the program has a very defined role that he/she operates in accordance with those things given in the guideline. But in our case that is quite missing.

Q6. What are the individual or departmental mechanisms by which the originality and relevance of TEFL PhD students' research works can be controlled?

R: Well actually, if you look, this is quite a different thing. We have some sort of guideline as to the quality of the PhD or the MA work and the standards that MA and PhD theses should fulfill. So there are standards we expect the research students do should comply with. So that is regarding the quality of the papers.

But I said, the advisement is a different story. So obviously advisors should check that the guidelines are implemented by the advisees. What I was saying is there is no clear guideline as to the way you advise your students, as to your relationship between the advisee and the advisor. There are many advisees and the relationship between these many advisees and the advisor are not very clear. Again also, as to the originality of the work you mentioned, there is no very sound mechanism of checking that. For example, you don't have sufficient database of previous research works that you can't really check. There is no mechanism to check whether works are not plagiarized. In some universities, they have got computer software to check plagiarism. Sometimes they can cheat. I know sometimes they can even copy significant portion of a research paper and claim that that part is their own. So I can't say there might be this problem. But you know, it is not easy to work out that those parts are plagiarized. So I think, we suffer from this problem. There are two means-One is we need a strong data base. The whole list of works previously conducted will be prepared in clear profile. Another one is we need strong, sound computer software. There is software people use in other universities but here we don't have one. Perhaps the third one is the research culture itself. When students develop their research culture, when they acquire very sound knowledge of what research is all about, then gradually they become convinced that they should depend on their own woks and they don't need to plagiarize. I think, the research ethics is something that develops gradually in the candidates themselves. Yes, because we don't have that culture, then students sometimes attempted plagiarism. I know students who have been identified plagiarizing very significant portions of MA and PhD papers. The cases are very common but the problem is how that can be controlled. We need to work on that.

Q7. In what aspects of the research work (e.g., language, methodological issues, their arguments etc.) do you think your supervisees need more help and more critical feedback?

R: I think, the very important thing is the way they design the research. So students need to take rigorous training in research design. There are different research designs. So if they have very poor research design, then that affects the whole work. So to come to a very good, sound research design, they have to first of all articulate clearly their research objectives. Usually they fail to formulate a clear research objective and if you set out your research objective, we can talk about your research design. Your research design again will affect the kind of instruments you use in your work. Students usually have problems in specifying their objectives. They quite often start with very broad objective which somewhere in the work they may fail to control. That is one problem. They don't know the relationship between their research objective and the kind of their research deigns. There are different research designs. You know, again they don't know that. So that is a problem. So I usually spend time helping them to specify, limit, to narrow their research objective, research questions whatever. Once they do that, I always take time to help them in identify the proper research design type for their work. So once they do this, things get clearer later. So other issues like research instrument, format and language issues, to me, are secondary. These are things that the students can control by themselves or anybody can help them in editing. It is not a big deal. But if they don't clearly know their objectives and the research design compatible with the research objective, they are lost. So I spend much time on these two aspects of their works.

8. What problems have you experienced in advising TEFL PhD students? (in relation to your assignment as to your specialization /your relationship /discussions /students' research skills and commitment etc.)

R: That again is a very serious problem. A very outstanding problem with my advisees is many of them are not rally committed. Some of them tended to depend on the advisor actually. I really understand that this might probably be a problem which we can avoid during recruitment. So the recruitment mechanism should be very sound. For example, if we demanded students to submit strong proposals before they join the campus, we could simply focus on those who wrote strong proposals. There is no reason why we accept those who didn't write. Then those who were not able to join could have been left from the very start. But here they simply join without any competition or whatever and when they join, they heavily depend on you. So I really wonder why they don't have that sense of commitment. If they don't have that, I think, it is a problem; they don't read. I know that there are also social problems. Many of them don't have sufficient stipend, family support and they may not have time to read. But even if that is fulfilled, I don't think they are fully responsible to do the work by themselves. So usually my problem is they don't have the commitment they got to do the work. So they don't read. I know that they don't read. You can see that from their work. So lack of commitment is the problem and that could have been avoided during the recruitment.

There are even some who graduate without having developed those skills because of the poor mechanism of the university. Since the MA and the PhD programs in TEFL are not very strong, there are problems with the advisors, problems with the program itself. So in any ways, some students who even are not capable may graduate. So, to me, that does mean nothing at all. I am trying to see it in the absolute sense-what kind of students should join and what kinds of students should graduate. In that sense commitment is very very important.

Q9. So, how do you evaluate the overall research environment of AAU? How does this enhance or affect the way EFL researches are done by TEFL PhD students and you?

R: Due to the reasons mentioned, many of the researches are under question now. Quality is really suffering at a large scale in this university. It is not something that you can only see with few graduates. No. I think, the dominant problem is the quality problem. If you take some works randomly, I could say 80-90% of the MA thesis do not really meet the standards if you like. You can see how many of them are graduating without maintaining quality. And the same thing applies in the PhD program. So, I think, it is a number one problem for many reasons I mentioned to you. The quality issue is really a critical issue. That has to be urgently addressed.

10. What do you recommend so that the whole research situation is improved in the graduate program and the university at large?

R: Number one, I think, the recruitment has to be tight; tight recruitment procedures including demanding students to develop academic proposals. So there you can filter those who are not able to join university. It doesn't mean that everybody should join university. Higher education is only for very few ones not only in Africa even in Europe and America. Higher education cannot be for all. You see what I am saying? So we need to have a kind of tough, tight recruitment



procedure. Secondly, once they join the university, then the staff who teach and advice them should have enough, sufficient time. Staff should not be overloaded, should not be overstretched. If you are assigned for example, 5 and 10 MA and PhD advisees, it is quite natural that you are not able to guide and advise them. So, very limited number of advisees should be assigned. And third one, there should be a kind of staff- student exchange with foreign universities. Then PhD students, MA students need to have exchange programs, visits so that they can see other peoples' work. That might help them to improve their work. The last one might be we need series of research workshops, I mean public presentations. This as I told you goes with the time of the staff. So actually if you have time, you can help your advisees to stage public seminars and they can offer seminars. And feedbacks from seminars have to be properly scrutinized, used for improvements. But all these things need time. So one problem is the staff is overstretched with a number of commitments so they don't advise students properly and the other one is recruitment. Probably, may be the last thing I should say is financial factor Ok. Well, students need sufficient fund so that they can do effective work.

Thank you very much!

Interview with MT2

Q1. How do you explain the role of doing EFL researches to you and others? (in terms of professional development, EFL teaching and supervisory practice)

R: Well, I think, my view is that research adds to knowledge. Through research you can learn a lot, you can come up with new ideas, new findings and you should promote human knowledge and I think it also facilitates the teaching and learning process as far as teaching is concerned. If our advisees are committed, if they do their research works properly, I think we can also learn from them and we can also share our experiences. But the problem is that there is, these days, a lot of duplication and repeating what has already been done. And some students lack the commitment, dedication and to go deep into the pains of doing research and come up with new ideas. I sense that people want easy way out. I think, in that sense as an advisor I am losing, I am losing interest.

Q2. What are your motives to do EFL research in this university? (you may compare practical/professional Vs external drivers such as pressure from the university or promotion)

R: Well the problem is that we don't have ample time for research. We spend most of our time in teaching and advising. But I reckon that doing research is very useful both for the researcher and the institution.

Q3. How do you see the reward system of the University for Academics when they do EFL research/projects?

R: Well, as far as I am concerned, the research works that we do may help us to get promotions. I can't think of any financial or material rewards that I know. Well, as far as I know, if you do research consistently, I think, you can be promoted and you can add to human knowledge and I think in that sense it could be rewarded. I am not quite sure what the university does for the research products you produce.

Q4. What problems have you faced in doing EFL research/s and disseminating their results so far? (e.g., in relation to material, financial matters, as well as peer and/or collegial support)

R: The problem that I have personally faced is that when you send your articles for publication, they keep them for too long and you lose interest to do more research. This is the major problem. I think, those who receive the papers for comments keep papers for too long. And you can't force anybody to read but if they don't read and return on time, I think the publishers can do nothing. So I think, the problem may be due to the incentive they give to the readers.

Q5. How do you explain your role in supervising PhD graduate students especially in helping them develop critical thinking skills and gradually become independent in the research work?

R: Well, you know that the TEFL program is the vast area. We advise students in all the skills. I think, that is a bit problematic. But if somebody else advises just on certain skills or areas, that could have been better. But I feel that somebody may give good advice on certain skills and he may not be as efficient in other skills. But the problem is the problem of advising students in all skills. For example, I would prefer to advise students on writing areas. But I am asked to advise students on all areas- grammar, vocabulary, reading, listening, speaking and other related areas. I think this is one problem. The other is we have, I think, too many advisees and that again will have some impact on our role and contribution.

Q6. What are the individual or departmental mechanisms by which the originality and relevance of TEFL PhD students' research works can be controlled?

R: If I know that there is some duplication, I try to comment. And if I see that students are not doing their jobs properly, I try to advice. But it is mainly the responsibility of the researcher or the student himself to observe the regulations of the research as such. We have tried to ask the department to list all publications, all the research works which have been done so far. I think, if that is done, we can minimize the problem. But I am not sure that has been done. But from my own experience, I have advised a number of students coming with a number of different topics. If I sense that there is a topic which has been already done by somebody else, I say revisit this topic, this topic has already been done and try something else.

Q7. In what aspects of the research work (e.g., language, methodological issues, their arguments etc.) do you think your supervisees need more help and more critical feedback?

R: Of course, it is at identifying the problem. Most students have problems in identifying topics. And the other is about writing the objectives clearly. And thirdly, I think, choosing the right tools to collect their data. I think these are the major areas. When I go through students' papers, I usually almost edit the work. So in that sense, I think, I also try to check the language and also help the students write correctly. And my work is not only reading, it is also editing and proofreading.

Q8. What problems have you experienced in advising TEFL PhD students? (In relation to your assignment as to your specialization /your relationship /discussions /students' research skills and commitment etc.)

R: I think, most of the advisees I have, I think, are committed. Usually we arrange together the time table. Usually they submit chapter by chapter. I think, in this regard I can't say there is some major problem.

Q9. How do you evaluate the overall research environment of AAU? How does this enhance or affect the way EFL researches are done by TEFL PhD students and you?

R: I think, we have good experience. If the teachers and the research students sit together, discuss and share ideas, I think we can still improve although I don't see that teachers and research students are holding regular meetings. I think, regular meetings and discussions with teachers and students will help to improve the TEFL program.

Q10. What do you recommend so that the whole research situation is improved in the graduate program and the university at large?

R: I think, there must be an office either at the faculty level or department level which caters for the problems that PhD students are facing when they do their research. And I think, if students get proper advise and services from the department, I think, students can finish on time can solve their problems and contribute much better.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Interview with MT3

Q1. How do you explain the role of doing EFL researches to you and others? (in terms of professional development, EFL teaching and supervisory practice)
R: In theory you must expect academic staff to do research themselves. But practical problems are there not to conduct research. So it is really very difficult to say people are involved in conducting research themselves other than perhaps indirect involvements such as advising, reading student research papers and commenting on their work which actually can give you a picture of what research is and how research can be conducted. Skill could be there, theory could be there. But you need time to actually practice it yourself. That is the problem most people around here have. I don't actually have any time set aside for doing research on my own. But in one way or another I am involved in it because I am supervising a number of MA and PhD students which simply implies that I have to do the reading myself in any way and I have to have practical ideas in terms of what my students like me to contribute. So beyond action research, I don't think I have many things to mention as my own research product as of 2002 or 2003.

When I say action research that is not research in the conventional way we know. But it is a question of identifying specific problems in class and finding ways of handling them. I was particularly involved in tutoring HDP and I had actually chances to do action research myself and to help HDP candidates do action research themselves. That, I think, is about 5 or 4 years ago. I was able to do that because I was teaching six periods and the remaining six periods were meant for activities related to doing action research, preparing myself to handle

tutorial classes for this HDP classes. But once the program came to an end, I didn't actually have an opportunity like that. So I don't feel now I am directly involved in research myself.

Q4. What problems have you faced in doing EFL research/s and disseminating their results so far? (e.g., in relation to material, financial matters, as well as peer and/or collegial support)

R: The biggest challenge is, I think, I don't know if it applies to other departments. But in our department there is very large number of MA and PhD students. And you have them as your advisees and added to that we also have 12 hours of expected teaching in a semester. This, I think, will not make you have time for yourself and for professional development. So the biggest challenge is the huge amount of work around us. We are teaching, developing our own teaching materials, we are advising and there are as well other commitments that you can personally have as an individual or a human being. So the first and perhaps the biggest problem to stop us from getting involved in research is the number of advisees we have in the post graduate program.

Q. Does this have an impact on how you discharge your professional responsibilities?

R: Well it is very difficult to say. Because may be the students themselves, the advisees whose work we supervise are, I think, the right people to comment on this. Because I don't think there is a very big difference between what I now do and what I used to do some 5 or 6 years ago when there were fewer advisees. So it is not a question of as such compromising the way it is but it is a question of the fact that the task is requiring more of my time. I don't know, I could probably do a better job if I had fewer advisees. I don't know that. But the appropriate answer should come from the students any way.

I don't think I have experienced any problem of collegiality in doing research may be because we don't have many things to do with each other. And the second thing is it all depends on how you handle things. I know people don't actually have sufficient time to do things with each other. This would stop you from asking perhaps sometimes and it is just that you do things with students most of the time. Other than that, may be you need to talk to colleagues only when you are teaching the same course, when you are using or sharing the same teaching materials between 2 or 3 or advising the same students in 2s or in 3s. Whenever this happens, people always have time to handle that. And I don't think I have personally faced any serious problems in this regard.

Q5. How do you explain your role in supervising PhD graduate students especially in helping them develop critical thinking skills and gradually become independent in the research work?

R: I think, different students require different sort of help and so I don't think there is just one right answer to this question. What I do depends on what probably the students themselves expect me to do or perhaps ask me to do. What we normally do is we meet first and explain their intension and we talk about that and perhaps I ask them to do it for sometime on what they like to take up as their research problem. Then they write something like concept paper and then we talk about that. Whether critical thinking develops there or emerges very late is a different thing. But I usually like to ask them questions as much as my

understanding goes simply to get ideas about the direction the candidate him/herself would like to take as far as the research point is concerned. I don't know whether the questions I usually raise are questions that provoke their thinking and shape their future. I am not very sure, but I am happy the way I do and I think my students are also happy the way they do things with me. But still the problem we have is you don't sometimes know how much your student expects from you and how much you should contribute in the research. If you want to do as much as anything, may be you are playing the role the student is expected to play and you are denying him the opportunity to become autonomous thinking individual. But still there are a number of ideas where we don't really have clear ideas about our roles. There are students who want you to do most of the job for them. And it doesn't mean that they don't have the potential to do that. But it simply means they feel that that is what supervisors are there to do. So sometimes you feel like sitting down and discussing roles that you can play in the students' works and the type of role students themselves have to play in their own work.

Q6. What are the individual or departmental mechanisms by which the originality and relevance of TEFL PhD students' research works can be controlled?

R: Well, I don't think I should talk about whether the system is helping or not. But I should say that if a familiar topic is chosen by a student, it doesn't necessarily mean that the same methodology used by the previous researchers is going to be used by this candidate. Or if the same methodology used by other people are repeated, I don't think it is repeated for the same purpose on the same group. So originality is relative and what is original is itself a question that needs an answer in our context. And I don't think this is a very big problem if we repeat things, it shows how serious a problem is. But the problem is, we don't have excess things- excess time, fund and finance to do the same thing twice. Other than that, the issue of originality is a very serious point as you said. But there is some element of originality in any piece of work, I guess. You don't find different students working on the same group of people, the same methodology, the same problem, the same research questions. Some way there is something new. And at a lower level, you expect people to learn from what they are doing. At a higher level, such as a PhD work, I don't think people are there really to copy things and reproduce. There is a very clear sense of seeing their own contribution. But whether that contribution is a significant one or not or whether we really expect more or not is an important issue that needs to be taken very seriously. I normally have my own way of not necessarily checking /counterchecking, but seeing how much the contribution of the new research is in what the students are doing. But to be honest, I don't encounter any case where repetition has appeared so far.

Q7. In what aspects of the research work (e.g., language, methodological issues, their arguments etc.) do you think your supervisees need more help and more critical feedback?

R: Well, Instead of talking about the aspects they want me to comment on, I think, I should say what aspects I like to focus on. In the first place, I like to see how they develop their argument which sometimes goes down to the skill of writing. People can have important ideas; important reading background and important understanding but probably not good enough in putting things together and making their points stand out. So I like to comment on that but other times you can see that there are gaps in their understanding of the issue

they want to research. That again is perhaps an area where you like to give some feedback. And language matters are there and you don't simply leave it to students and expect them to take care of that. At least you can point errors out or indicate that it has problems and further editing is required. But, as I said earlier, I like to see things in terms of the underlying thinking students have, what principles are there to guide their thoughts. So the argument and the fox of perhaps their questions, their thoughts are areas that are commonly commented on, I think.

Q8. What problems have you experienced in advising TEFL PhD students? (In relation to your assignment as to your specialization /your relationship /discussions /students' research skills and commitment etc.)

R: Well, I think there are always problems. And these are problems that are naturally there. Sometimes there are students who think that what is right is only their own way. That could be right. But there are also alternative ways of seeing things. There are some students who really don't seem to have space for that. There are also some advisors who perhaps like to impose their own thinking when their own thinking in the context of the students' thinking is not appropriate enough. May be students are there to decide this. But there are also areas where you notice that students are not paying as much attention as you want them to pay to their own work. I like to advise my students to read all PhD works from page 1 up to the end simply to get the idea, the thing, the feeling that what PhD work is like. Because they give you perhaps 20 or 30 page long introduction and instead of or in addition to telling them that you don't need to be as much as that, you sometimes can advise them to read finished works so that they can get an understanding about how much and what is to be said in the background section and how a given problem can be developed and stated. And here and there, there are problems of resistance and problems related to lack of commitment. People are involved in teaching, doing this and doing that and a number of competing activities are going together among the students. And sometimes, I like to advise students to give more attention to their PhD work although I know they have to work to live.

Q9. How do you evaluate the overall research environment of AAU? How does this enhance or affect the way EFL researches are done by TEFL PhD students and you?

R: What is very clear is that I don't think we are making much use of the research output. One big problem is there are limited ways of disseminating results. And students and a number of other interested people and capable people are also doing research and extremely limited output is getting implemented. I think, that is one big problem I observe. The other problem is we have limited facilities, limited reading background, limited materials to read; we have limited experience to guide students when it comes to supervisors and limited time meant for doing research and perhaps guiding PhD and MA students. So bits of problems are here and there. That always will have an effect on the quality of the research students are doing and on the quality of education in general. So what is getting done is not really significant but I think, more is desirable in terms of many things

Q10. What do you recommend so that the whole research situation is improved in the graduate program and the university at large?

R: Well, recommending is a big thing. But, I think, if what I have to suggest needs to be connected with points I mentioned as problems, access like what we said earlier we talked about problems of teaching reading, writing, grammar and vocabulary this and that. We talked about problems relating to teaching materials and teaching methodologies. Students do research and they recommend whatever they think can make sense towards contributing as solutions and I think, a mechanism has to be there that would take the research results to people concerned, at least to classroom teachers, to people who are training teachers and to people who are developing teaching materials. Ways need to be sought any way I don't know who should do that, ways through which results could be distributed among practitioners. This is one. The other thing is, I don't know how much this can be practical, but people (supervisors) need to have more time than is now available for their students so that they can talk, they can take pleasure in what they are doing now, for instance, in addition to teaching 12 hours as I said, I have 12 students in the PhD and MA programs to advise, I have students in the undergraduate program to advise and to do this and that with them. I am not saying exempting them from other teaching and commitment loads. This is desirable, but what I am saying is this could be minimized and that might help. I don't know who the source of that way will be.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Interview with MT4

Q1. How do you explain the role of doing EFL researches to you and others? (in terms of professional development, EFL teaching and supervisory practice)

R: Research, basically for me, is finding out. Higher education is in science and our job in science is to continually find out. This is an endless process of investigation. So science for me is not a destination but simply a journey. If I participate in research, it is because I want to be part of this journey of discovery. So I'm here in a higher education because of internal motivation that is to say I have the urge to know, to grasp, to find out, to discover. So discovery is my motive for being here. But if you were to consider factors of external motivation, you wouldn't consider the university to be the most rewarding. For instance, if you were to consider issues of market, it is now governing the world. You would compare your input and output. For instance, my own input is I have had undergraduate degree; I have done two graduate degrees. I am doing 4th degree, I have published to a degree, and the publications have not contributed to my earnings. I haven't benefited much from my own research, my reading in the practical, worldly, materialistic sense. So my main motive for the university is because I like reading, discovery, I like finding out, I like science, I love the knowledge industry.

Q2. What are your motives to do EFL research in this university? (Compare practical/professional Vs external drivers such as pressure from the university or promotion)

R: I am extremely satisfied in the classroom. Teaching is my soul, I love research. But the material expectations of teaching and research, especially in the social sciences, are very much limited because the intellectual market is not perfect. What is more important than what you bring to the knowledge market through research is your connections. And, I am sure you are aware also, the corruption in this country has also come part of life in higher education and in the research

community itself. If there is corruption in science, you can see the dangers. Science is supposed to be clean, knowledge is supposed to be clean. If corruption enters medicine, engineering, and the knowledge industry in general, this is a great threat to science and development. But this is the fact of life as an intellectual these days. Look at the people who are making a lot of money. They are simply the most connected; they are not the most able. In our case, there is an irony of expectations and self presentations.

Q3. How do you see the reward system of the University for Academics when they do EFL research/projects?

R: The rewards? It is very difficult to see any rewards. Let me tell you. I presented a teaching material proposal some 8 months ago; now I have not been given the green light from above still. What rewards are you talking about? There are virtually no rewards. You can bring about self-endangerment by doing research because you will draw unfavorable attention, hostile attention because the environment now is an environment which you think can look like pension where everybody is asleep. You know nobody wants to be disturbed from their good sleep. So given the anti-research attitude or at least the attitude which is not very much in favor of research which doesn't care about research, then doing research would be a foolish exercise. The way it is perceived is foolish because the measurement now is what your input and what your output are. We are applying market criteria. So there are no rewards. Who is going to do research? Let me give you another example, When I was a graduate assistant, what was required for promotion was one reputable article published in a journal. At the same time the requirement for associate professorship was one article. The money then was important, the difference was important. Now, they have doubled the requirement at the time when the money is less important; the professorship is less important because if you put a market value on the professorship today, it means nothing. Look at the contradiction here. The realities on the ground and what we are doing in the university represent an antithesis and big contradictions.

Q4. What problems have you faced in doing EFL research/s and disseminating their results so far? (e.g., in relation to material, financial matters, as well as peer and/or collegial support)

R: There are countless hindrances. Many people would go for personal funds for doing their own researches, because the troubles at the finance office, budget office, at every level of the bureaucracy in higher education, there are many impediments that send a message to you - don't try this; research is bad. Then if it is bad then, many people logically would give up. And people who are willing to swim against the current are very few. Moreover, in other countries, if you look at the journals, you will see that articles are authored by 5 or 6 persons in a team. If you look at local journals, you will not find many articles that are co-authored. People would secretly go to the office of the managing editor and submit an article solo and secretly. There is that trend now. The co-authored articles are very few. Take a look at this example journal which accidentally appears to be here. There is only one article that is co-authored. If you were to bring an American article, you would see the reverse of that. There is no such thing as team research. The literature would tell you that this country is one of the countries with collectivist cultures- we work together; we eat together etc. In higher education, this is fallacious. We are highly individualistic as this line up of

articles would show you and many others. So we have a totally flawed attitude towards doing research collectively although there are many advantages.

Q. What do you think are the reasons behind this individualization in research activities?

R: For one thing people are very practical in the sense that they want to publish one or two articles solo and get promoted and then sit or sleep after that. They don't want to worry about calculations of shares by co-authoring articles. And you can see clearly that the motive is promotion which is an instrumental motivation. It is to just move from one rank of sub- professorate to another. There are points given. For instance, if you co-author, if you are two and if you are in the alphabetic order, your share will be 0.7 or something like that. I think, they are revising it now. But this is funny. Interestingly at the science campus, it is probably different. There is a culture of co-authoring because they bring their contributions of different fields. Here I am probably one of the odd people on this campus because I have a tradition of co-authoring.

Q5. How do you explain your role in supervising PhD graduate students especially in helping them develop critical thinking skills and gradually become independent in the research work?

R: I approach them informally which is an important first step in research. Although research is an important discipline, it should be done informally. So, I would advise my students first to have a good methodological foundation for it is the heart of the whole work. If you have wrong questions, you will have the wrong data, wrong theory, the wrong explanation. So I talk with them about assuring and coming up with high quality research instruments that are tested, trialed and with which they can now gather acceptable quality data. So I focus on the methodology. Of course, I also look at the proposal very well. And the general tendency is that 90% of them don't write their proposal correctly. This is a conservative estimate. Even at the PhD, many don't know what the problem statement stands for. They don't know. So I don't even know what research courses they have really taken or are they really being taught? I ask many questions or was it like when I was a student when the instructor of the research methodology course would distribute topics and then sit close to the window and then look at the passing people and curse while students make presentations. And the problem with students' presentations is that students are there to learn from teachers basically not from other students. When listening to a presentation what students expect is their next turn, they are thinking about next turn; they are not listening to the presenter. The student presenter is not an expert presenter. So I can see how funny it is giving expert topics to students then to do your job by asking them to give presentations. You are asking them to teach for you. So the teacher input is very important in a methodology course. In testing a methodology course, teacher input is critical. It is an expert area. But if you look at, I have heard many people say that teaching at the MA level is easier, because you can give topics where students do the presentations. At the BA level because they are kids, they expect more teaching from you. So I have been advised to teach in the MA program and have an easy life and more pay.

Q6. What are the individual or departmental mechanisms by which the originality and relevance of TEFL PhD students' research works can be controlled?

R: You know, in a way we are heading towards a tragedy. Unless something is done, there is an impending scientific tragedy. Now we have 30 universities let us say. In principle, why would it be impossible for anyone to bring an MA thesis from BDU, Gondar University and put it here? And tomorrow, why not even a PhD? Because, some of the universities have started PhD programs. We don't have checking mechanisms in place. Because I am powerless, I was calling to powerful people in the university to have a national organization for coordinating research activities among the universities and to have a national data base of all MA and PhD dissertations in all faculties in one website and to help all advisors to first check whether the work has been done and to make all MA and PhD dissertations accessible online not block them by asking password or etc. make them free. When you make everything free and public, the truth comes out. In the absence of this, it is now possible to grab a topic and even data from somewhere, make only certain modifications to make it appear at AAU. It is a national research tragedy. No action is being taken; nobody cares now. This is the most careless era in the history of this country. No era in this country's history has been characterized by so much recklessness, irresponsibility and pessimism. I would expect that theses done during the era of the Red terror were much better than theses being done now.

Q7. In what aspects of the research work (e.g., language, methodological issues, their arguments etc.) do you think your supervisees need more help and more critical feedback?

R: I tell them that research work is a system with parts. And the parts are interrelated. If you have a poor introduction, you will have a poor problem, if you have poor problem, you will have poor methodology section; they need each other. I don't consider myself a language editor. That is not my job. Why would I edit their English? Ultimately the work will appear as their own work; not as my own. So I tell them I am not a language editor; I am a methodological advisor at best. Then, what I tell them is all the data they bring has to agree with the research questions, and then the research instruments have to agree with the research questions and the sampling has to agree with the research questions and methodology. I don't impose methodologies by the way. I tell them the three methodologies are equal. If you want to be qualitative, you can be; if you want to be quantitative, you can be, if you want to be both, you can be. I don't condemn methodologies because they are equally valid ways of knowing. I don't even insist like others do. It makes me laugh when people say, "Why didn't you use mixed methods?" It shows fear when you say mixed methods is the only orthodox methodology. There are excellent studies that are purely qualitative, and purely quantitative. So now you can see the teachers' fear and the students as well. Mixed methods, they think that being quantitative is like being an atheist. You will be condemned by everyone in the world. It is an ill-informed environment which condemns the students. Students take responsibility.

Q8. What problems have you experienced in advising TEFL PhD students? (In relation to your assignment as to your specialization /your relationship /discussions /students' research skills and commitment etc.)

R: I accept all kinds of advisement assignments; it can be testing or anything because specializations are pretentions in the ELT world. I can do testing. Why not? Just because I did one of my MA theses in some issue X, it doesn't mean I cannot do issues other than X. But there is a false claim in the department that if there is some topic, they say 'give it to Dr. somebody; give it to Dr. somebody. I

hate this. This is pretentious. I can equally well handle testing. They can also equally well handle my specialty; they can. I have enjoyed advising. The challenges are very few. The challenge these days is the English. I have seen some grade three students who speak very good English. And some of my MA advisees don't speak as well. This is the land of contradictions. Count the years; count the investment. And now my biggest problem is that we are now a dumping ground. We know that university is not for everybody. But we are being told that we can teach even a certified stupid person become a professor. I don't know where they brought this theory from. The international experience is, in a given population not more than 20% of the population goes to universities. Now I don't know this may be melodramatic, but if cattle came to this university and joined a class, it would be possible for them to graduate. Because no attendance is taken, people are afraid of failing students now, there is serious grading inflation. I have seen many incapable students graduate because such students have another compensatory cleverness-social cleverness. They can kiss the shoes of the important ones. You can expect them to rise up and the Cs become employers of the As later. We are in danger. Let me give you another offensive statistics. Look at how many people in the university/faculty have passed the ESLCE. Now you can see many people who have not passed the ESLCE are aspiring to become professors. This is the reality of higher education in Ethiopia today because the rules of the game are changed. Around the university there are now research machines. Give them a topic, they will identify the problem, they will write up, give them some money. So now where are we heading? This is being done for MA students and tomorrow you will see for PhD students. You can literally buy a degree now. It is capitalism. Ethics is not a big concern for many people in this country these days. So it is a big concern. Because Psychological needs come last and Physiological needs come first. They are right. You have to eat first to worry about ethics. So there is an impending tragedy in higher education. Unless somebody is assigned to fix it, and I am not sure whether they want it to be fixed. I have started to believe that some people don't even probably want the university to improve because it is probably in their best interest of keeping us small people all the time. There could be people who want us to be academic dwarfs from A to Z.

Q10. What do you recommend so that the whole research situation is improved in the graduate program and the university at large?

R: Political commitment is one because this is a government university. By closely observing what goes on in the university, the government should correct it by putting in place the right people; not the Pseudo-professors. For now the interest is just security; not academic (scholarly) excellence; I am sorry to say. I don't mean that there are no good people within the government. But we don't feel their presence here. This is a situation of chaos now. I don't know if the genuine ones were to come here, they would cry to see the situation in the university turning for the worse every day. And this is against evolution. Evolutionary theory would tell us that every new generation would be better. But the reverse is true here. That is why this is the country, like my teacher said, is the land of 13 months of surprise. Every new day we are coming with some surprise. The case is not different in the PhD program. Again money should be there. TEFL is not investment friendly, project friendly. Whereas the projects are in sociology, although you know everybody knows sociology, they are in legal studies; they are in other fields. The money is important these days. Universities cannot function effectively without money. Because talent goes to where there is money. And now, one comment about level of work satisfaction, life satisfaction

among university faculty- it is very low; probably one of the lowest in the world. The reason is what you see doesn't make you happy, what you hear doesn't make you happy; there is nothing that motivates you. The market rule means the best brains go to the market which pays the best. This sends a message that University is no more about ambition; it is not about excellence, about brilliance. It is simply about being worldly cleverness. People in Ethiopia have become people with theatrical skills, deception; people are theatrically behaving these days.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Interview with MT5

Q1. How do you explain the role of doing EFL researches to you and others? (in terms of professional development, EFL teaching and supervisory practice)

R: Well, as EFL teachers, instructors need to conduct EFL researches in relation to the curriculum, syllabus, materials, tasks, methodology, teacher education, language skills evaluation and the like. English is a subject that appears in the school/ college/university curriculum in most parts of the world and in the Ethiopian case English is different; it appears practically everywhere because it is assumed to have a global relevance that other languages do not have. In research, new modes of teaching may be adopted-such as different methods of teaching etc. While not fundamentally different from general teaching of EFL, research has often provided the opportunity to test out and develop innovations prior to their more general use: the use of needs analysis, task-based learning, the teaching of language and content combined and so on. This implies that, much work has not been done regarding research in relation to EFL researches. Language teachers have the task of helping their learners to master skills in the communicative use of the target language; they can do this if and only if they are engaged in research. Teachers think about various aspects of teaching and learning. That is by studying the impact of these processes on each other; teaching could be related to learning and again this with research. To this end, EFL research advances standards for professional preparation and development, and enhances communication among language specialists; produces high quality programs, services and products and promotes advocacy to further the profession.

Q2. What are your motives to do EFL research in this university? (Compare practical/professional Vs external drivers such as pressure from the university or promotion)

R: Perhaps the most important stage in developing once knowledge is by conducting research. I do research because with the view toward providing students with clear learning. As a teacher, research has to extend to the classroom. And EFL research on the classroom would help to understand teaching. This helps for teacher learning, teacher knowledge. Generally in the field of EFL, teacher research has of great importance-building on the findings in the area of education.

Q3. How do you see the reward system of the University for Academics when they do EFL research/projects?

R: I am just starting to reap the rewards of careful long-term planning. Hard work usually brings its own rewards; you deserve a reward for all your efforts. However the teaching profession is not a highly rewarded occupation in the Ethiopian case. But we are striving to make it a mutually rewarding partnership.

Q4. What problems have you faced in doing EFL research/s and disseminating their results so far? (e.g., in relation to material, financial matters, as well as peer and/or collegial support)

R: The authorities, teachers do not cooperate fully with their staff members or other teachers in the university. Besides the two companies (the teachers and the university authorities) are not cooperating in the development of a new engine (the student). The teacher researcher needs a bit of cooperation from the university.

Q5. How do you explain your role in supervising PhD graduate students especially in helping them develop critical thinking skills and gradually become independent in the research work?

R: The most important thing for a supervisor to do is to think carefully about the skills and abilities a student needs to produce a PhD in that department. Also I do believe that doctoral students need to be highly motivated, and not just drifting into higher degree work. To complete a PhD, a person needs to be passionate about the discipline and want to advance knowledge in it. The student also needs to be able to stick to tasks. So the advisor should play a great role in guiding the candidate to this destination. It is the role of the advisor to guide the student to be able to work independently and this leads the student to have intellectual creativity, which in fact again helps him to carry out the proposed research project, or be clearly able to benefit from research.

Q6. What are the individual or departmental mechanisms by which the originality and relevance of TEFL PhD students' research works can be controlled?

R: Selecting successful PhD students is the first problem facing any university department and individual supervisor. When a department and the individual supervisor get selection right, everyone wins. When the wrong students are selected, the results are serious for all parties. Nothing is more frustrating than pouring time into a research student who fails to respond to settle to work, to cope with the poverty and isolation, to gather data, to analyze them, to write them up, to submit the dissertation. So the selection of students into PhD programs should be done carefully. And the most important thing for a selection to do is to think carefully about the skills and abilities a student needs to produce a PhD in that department and separate which of these can be taught during the PhD. To explicitly ask students their references about their dexterity and bench skills is also very necessary. Besides, evidence may usually be gathered from relevant examples of students' own written work- a report, a thesis or whatever is appropriate to the discipline and is available. Finally it is good to ask for a research proposal as part of the application process, and much can be learned from that; not just about the candidate's specific ideas, but probably more importantly, about his/her ability to express them cogently.

Q7. In what aspects of the research work (e.g., language, methodological issues, their arguments etc.) do you think your supervisees need more help and more critical feedback?

R: these aspects/ components of research are interwoven and intermingled. The students need help in all these areas: skills, abilities and be passionate about the discipline, issues around academic matters such as language, method and theoretical position (stand).

Q8. What problems have you experienced in advising TEFL PhD students? (In relation to your assignment as to your specialization /your relationship /discussions /students' research skills and commitment etc.)

R: Some students have no the skills and abilities of a PhD work. There are students who have problems- they lack some fundamental qualities or because of their topic, method or theoretical position.

Q9. How do you evaluate the overall research environment of AAU? How does this enhance or affect the way EFL researches are done by TEFL PhD students and you?

R: In fact there are no favorable conditions for the staff to conduct research-lots of burdens-the teaching load, the number of students in each class forces the individual to ignore research.

Q10. What do you recommend so that the whole research situation is improved in the graduate program and the university at large?

R: my suggestions on this score are in two parts: first, ideas to make the work of the research students a matter of general concern in the department; second, strategies to weld the research students into a coherent group. Both are desirable in building a research culture. Besides, research works need to be reported regularly in a way that interest the rest of the staff/ or other researchers. Spreading the concern about research students among staff is important so that people care about all the research students. This may be done by having a sub-committee to look at the graduate students' annual or term reports or this may be instituted at the department level. The internal examiner system can also spread the general concern about the graduate students. A staff discussion about recently examined thesis, led by the internal examiners, can be a useful forum for the review of collective achievements, standards, criteria for success. Besides regular training for supervisors, and regular training for examining, are always of spreading the culture of 'graduate school activities. If the university has a published set of guidelines for supervisors, then discussion of them every year or so is useful. If the university does not have such a list, then developing some for the department or faculty is a good way of focusing colleagues' minds on the work of research students. Furthermore, it can be helpful for staff to have a list of what research students are registered in the department, what their topics are and who is supervising them. Such information- regularly updated- can be included in the department's internal newsletters (if any), on their Web Homepages and in other sources of information. The dissemination of such information can be especially helpful if there are many part-time students who are not regularly visible in the department. It can also help graduate students to find out each other, while making research supervision a more visible part of the department's work. Also, research students should be giving seminar papers regularly to the research group closet to their project and to the whole department. However good this is for them, it will not spread the culture of research group unless staff and other students are encouraged, or even required to attend.

Generally, to build camaraderie among the researchers (teachers and students), I suggest the following: First, the department should provide the best facilities it can afford, ensure that all the research students are aware of them and encourage them to use them. Second, it should have clear policies on supervision and research, ensure that these are known to students and monitor them. Third, it should provide training and development opportunities for the research students throughout their registration period. The mock viva can be a useful developmental and social event. Furthermore, encouraging or requiring graduate students' attendance at departmental seminars given by staff, fellow students and visiting/outside speakers and making outside speakers address students without staff involvement is also very good. When visitors are in the department, it is important to ensure that graduate students meet them, and are not just passive members of the audience, left to slip away unobtrusively at the end of the seminar. All in all, the contribution of the staff members to the overall promotion of a department in a university is invaluable. Experienced researchers can do a great deal to provide day-to-day advise to graduate students, while also helping to inculcate research awareness, and research values in the university.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Appendix T: A Transcription of the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with TEFL PhD Candidates (Main Study)

FGD I

Q1. How do you evaluate your interest to make open discussions with other students on research- related matters?

MF1: In this regard, I don't have as such good culture of making such discussions with other PhD students except some very rare cases. I believe that making discussions with other research students can be a good means of dealing with matters when comments given, for example; by examiners do not satisfy us. But we are not doing it. Since students are coming from different places and are not familiar to each other, the opportunity to make such discussions with different students is very rare. This culture of making students openly comment on their peers' works in seminars and other open sessions had to come from the above. The weekly seminar doesn't seem to encourage this. But still there is something that we ourselves had to do.

MF3: I think, I have the interest to make open discussions with other students. But I can make things open only after defenses or present my work in seminars. Because you know especially at the proposal writing stage you will not have that confidence. Moreover, we observe that some students snatch ideas and even research topics from their friends and submit secretly. For this reason, I personally don't have the interest to talk about my research openly. But you see, after I deliver some presentations, I may sometimes raise research-related issues with some close friends. But still, since everyone is busy doing their own research, I don't have the chance to raise my issue and make others comment on it. All in all, whether it is because of some cultural influence or my behavior, I don't know, I don't have that experience of dealing with matters openly.

MF2: Mine is a bit related to this. But, I don't have problems in talking to friends about my research issue. But the problem is we don't have the tradition as well as time to do it. Of course, sometimes those of us who have close relationship and have the same advisor informally discuss on what our work should look like, what framework we should use etc. But the problem is it is only me who know my own area of research; so no one will take and read my work and comment; I don't also read others' papers. Once, I remember that we decided to make a forum for similar batch students for discussions about researches but we couldn't make it practical for everyone was busy doing things individually and because of shortage of time.

MF4: I don't know whether I can do it in the future. But what I see here is not encouraging me to show my work to someone else. I personally saw someone who has been ridiculing another PhD student with scornful words after the student showed him his written work for some comment. "If you see what he wrote, his objectives, his questionnaires etc, you will be surprised; said that student, "he didn't write anything; I helped him." Such words of contempt that some students tell about their friends' works has made me afraid of being ridiculed in the same way and try my best only by myself. I kept myself at a distance. Although I had asked this same individual about t-test and we had had some appointment for discussion, I canceled the appointment after he told me that story. You know, as far as our educational background is concerned, the culture is you study secretly and beat others; you don't cooperate with others. I think, this

tradition is still with us. If you ask someone now about something, he/she will tell you that they have no idea even though they know it very well. Even in seminar and other presentations I keep silent, I don't ask questions for fearing that others may consider me as if I were saying I know more than the presenter does. Therefore, although you face many research-related problems which could be solved through the assistance from other students, you don't show your work to others and you don't see theirs.

MF6: My advisor usually tells me that I should not expect everything from him and instead I have to discuss issues with my friends. Moreover, I personally believe that exchanging ideas with colleagues about our researches has an irreplaceable role in shaping our works. And although this is the belief shared by many of us and even we intended to practice it, for the reasons mentioned and may be others, we couldn't make it possible. I feel that we missed this important opportunity.

Q2. How do you evaluate your relationship to your supervisor/s? How do such cultural elements as respect come into play in this interaction?

MF2: I have a particular example here. Once the anonymous readers told me to include something in my research topic and in turn change my methodology. After that my supervisor and I made discussion and decided that it will not be included. But at the proposal defense I was criticized for not including the comments which had been given by the readers. But since I had had enough reading on that and the advisor also agreed, I retained the topic as it is. So what I am saying is I don't have problems in discussing with my advisor. But though the student reads more on the topic and hence knows how much some new proposed inclusion can affect the work, sometimes examiners force you to do something in the way they like. There are still some advisors who have related problems. For instance, one of my friends has been repeatedly pushed (by his advisor) to something that he didn't accept and finally the advisor himself told the student that he is in the wrong track and hence he will not advise him anymore.

MF4: Comparatively I make discussions more with my advisor than with other PhD students because my advisor has taken the responsibility and I acknowledged his responsibility too. Moreover I believe that he can help me with my shortcomings. But in the discussions I do with him, I don't have the courage to openly say what I have in my mind. I simply take his comments and if I am asked to include or cancel something which I didn't think of, I try my best to consider that; otherwise I don't want to express my feelings and beliefs face-to-face. The longstanding tradition we were talking about previously, I think, applies to this too. I grew up in a culture where we students should accept what the teacher gives us. I am sure you all share my idea. I don't want to argue with my advisor; I sometimes feel that this may have some bad consequence. I heard that in other countries, supervisors are close friends to research students and they have informal relationship. Moreover, if they do something simple, supervisors appreciate them and encourage them to do more. But in our case, this doesn't seem to happen; the relationship is very formal.

MF5: We can't say culture doesn't have an impact; it does for we have been passing through it. While there is still the problem to openly discuss matters with supervisors, I think, the academic environment is contributing more to this. For instance, an attempt has not been made by the university and especially the department to break this tradition. For me there is always a very formal relationship between we, students, and our teachers and this distance is always there whether we are in undergraduate or postgraduate (MA or PhD) level. Hence in

the absence of a friendly relationship, I think, it is difficult to make free and open discussions with supervisors. No attempt has been made to change this situation. The second is, there is time shortage. Latest developments indicate that transformative learning is possible when students are engaged in reflective practice. I could have had many things to discuss with my supervisor and tried to openly say what I feel is right if he had given me some time for that. But when I go there, mostly he shows me some signal that he doesn't have time; he either tells me that he is going to class or answers his mobile. How can you say let's sit down and talk when he shows you that? Mostly, I meet my advisor outside his office probably when he goes to class or somewhere else. So that time you may ask him whether he has read your paper; you can't talk about more serious things. Therefore, I can say, the required type of collegial relationship between supervisors and we, students, is affected by the academic environment and time shortage.

MF1: As far as culture is concerned, it is good to have the culture of respect between experienced and less experienced ones; that is ok. But when it comes to the relationship between advisors and advisees, it is more than that; we have the culture of fear. What one PhD graduate said after his completion of the study always calls in my mind. He said, "What I have learned from this university is how I should be servile." This is not what the culture creates but the institution and particularly the department. Once I had the chance to attend a defense session in the Department of Development Studies. What I observed there was actually different. I wish we had a similar tradition. What they did was, the examiner came with his questions printed and gave both for the student and his supervisor; they made discussion on that and it was over. But there is no such a culture in our case. Secondly, supervisors do not set time for discussions. For example my supervisor, has 2 hours per week for consultation. When you go for advisement, let alone making detailed discussion with him, even taking your turn to take your paper will be difficult since 10 or 15 students or advisees will perch in front of his office. Thirdly, although the student usually needs more assistance from his advisor, he/she is the one who has read more on the research issue. But when the student goes to the advisor to get some assistance, there is the tendency to force the student to accept something. For instance; once when my advisor told me to change something in my work, I told him that what I did was on the basis of what is recommended in the recent literature. Rather than respecting my idea, he was offended and asked me whether I meant that he had had an outdated idea. How can you openly put forward your stand after your advisor says this?

MF6: For me, as research is a matter of answering questions, it always involves dilemmas that students should make clear through discussions with supervisors. And, I think, openness with supervisors can be there when the assignment of supervisors is made on the basis of mutual agreement between the two parties. But that is not happening here and hence whenever I go to my supervisor I don't have the confidence to express my feeling freely. Our communication is only through papers although they may or may not be read as you want them to be.

MF3: For me, openness is different when it comes to discussions among research students and between the research students and supervisors. My reservation to make open discussion with other PhD students is not there with my supervisor. Firstly, since whatever I do should get acceptance from my advisor, I feel that I have to tell him what I am doing. If I am not open in such matters, it will have an impact on my own work. So I try to discuss issues with him openly. It may be demanding to find him whenever I want. But when we meet, I can raise whatever I think should be raised. But what I observed from my supervisor is, he doesn't seem to read my

papers deeply and ask me something challenging. Rather, he asks me some questions about how I want to go about it etc. Therefore, when I come back to my work, I always come with an assignment and ask myself what I should read, whether I have to change something or retain it as it is. Therefore, I don't think cultural influence has significant effect on the level of openness in discussions between supervisors and their supervisees.

MF2: I think, the working condition of supervisors itself is not supportive. I don't think the department staff is enough to hold this number of students and the teaching and advising load. One supervisor is forced to supervise 6 or 7 or more students. Other than this, there are MA as well as undergraduate students and their advising and teaching. Due to these burdens, I don't think they can have time for such discussions.

3. How do you evaluate PhD seminar and defense sessions in terms of their effectiveness in providing you with the learning opportunity you are expecting and how is your participation in these sessions?

MF3: I think, as seminars are learning scenarios, we learn something from the content of presentations as well as other things. We can learn from the way one presents, the way he/she answers questions etc. But it doesn't mean that whatever forwarded by examiners is relevant. Even sometimes there are situations when you we are surprised by comments and questions of examiners. You may not sometimes see consistency in the comments they give to presenters. Whatever the case, although we may not get the required level of learning, we learn something from every session. As far as I am concerned, I learn both from the strengths and weaknesses of presenters. Hence, I believe that they are useful scenarios. But participants of these sessions (students) do not have active roles in discussions. I don't participate in these sessions, i.e., in asking questions and commenting. Rather I prefer to give comments to the presenter (when there any) outside the sessions may be because I don't want to waste examiners' time or I don't know I don't have the habit of critically commenting on issues publicly.

MF1: yes, there are lessons we learn from such sessions; we take something from what examiners raise as well as from how the presenter answers questions etc. But I don't say these sessions are providing us the learning opportunity we expect. I believe that ideas and comments from the audience (the students) are as valuable as ideas from facilitators and examiners to enrich the presenter's work. But unfortunately, we attend seminar and defense sessions just as formality; we are passive observers there. Interaction is between the presenters and examiners or between presenters and facilitators. Especially in defense sessions, I don't ask the presenter any questions. Because, for example, I feel that asking a question that has not been forwarded by examiners may lead them to another shortcoming they had not noticed and that may expose the presenter and reduce the value of the work. As a result if I have questions or comments that the presenter has to consider, I do it secretly and in private. Even you see the presenter him/herself doesn't welcome questions from other students. But in the defense session I attended in another department, I saw that defense is really a learning opportunity; not an exam. Examiners raise issues, the presenter says something and the supervisor also contributes something. Questions and comments which were freely forwarded by the students (the audience) were given more time. Students were commenting and asking questions this much for the environment was healthy and smooth. The case is different in our department.. When one comes for defense, what comes in everybody's mind is he/she will sit alone for a very serious exam. How

merciless will you be if you throw a question in such situations? Although the case is not that serious in seminars, I think, this fear of expressing ideas freely is not still a tradition. I think, there is something that has been extended from defense sessions.

MF2: I want to see seminar and defense sessions separately. As it is already stated there is something that you learn from defense sessions. But sometimes I get confused in defense sessions. In one defense session, a presenter was asked whether there is such thing as mixed-research. If the intention of the examiner was to make the presenter say a better name for the design, for example; mixed methods research, that could be ok. But when the examiners insisted that there is no such thing as mixed research, I was confused because I have read that in the literature. Another day, there was a fierce debate on where 'framework of a study' should be put. One said that its right position should be at the end of the statement of the problem, another said that its place will be after the literature review and still another said after the methodology. Finally someone from the stage suggested that since it is not decided by the DGC and students will have some knowledge on that, it is better to put the framework on what students say is appropriate. If there is no one right answer for such questions as 'what should a proposal contain? 'What things should be included in a pilot report, etc?' and if the experienced people themselves don't have an agreement on such big issues, what can we benefit from attending these sessions?

MF6: Some examiners do not use words of encouragement when they open sessions, rather they throw words which tell the audience that the presenter is going to be challenged. That really creates a threatening mood and in that case no one will be willing to add to that tense situation by asking questions. What one foreigner did last time is an indicator that our tradition has problems. What he did was, he met the presenter before the defense and told him the things the presenter has to include in the work and told him that he is not going to degrade his work publicly. Since such things are not common in our case, I always frustrate after defense sessions. More than what I learn from the presenter, I only think what my fate will be when the day comes for my defense. When it comes to seminars, we may not have enough knowledge about the issue presented and this may not give us the chance to take part in discussions. But much can be said at least about the method. But still the trend is not encouraging.

MF5: There is no doubt that seminar and defense sessions are potential sources of learning for us. But I can say that we are not benefiting much from these sessions. Firstly, since what is said by different examiners is different, we don't have one correct way to follow in doing our individual research work. Secondly, simply to say that we have given the audiences the chance for interaction, examiners say "One or two questions" after everything is over. In such cases many students raise hands but do not get the chance to ask questions or comment. This implies that they want us to sit there as passive observers but not to learn through reflections. Due to this we attend these sessions not to take part in discussions and contribute something but to think of the possible questions we will be asked when we come for similar presentations.

MF3: I feel that as long as we have the interest to ask questions, the stage doesn't stop anyone to do it. But what I witnessed is there are students who enter into unnecessary dialogue and/or argument with presenters, examiners or seminar chairman when some issue related to their own work is presented in seminars as well as in defense sessions. But still when I see my own practice, I may be

interested to say something about the issue if it is related in some way to my area of research. And if I feel that the response from the presenter will be useful for me, there is nothing that stops me from asking. As you said, since the areas we are working on are different, we may not be familiar with the issues presented. In that case, I sometimes feel that raising some other technical issues may waste time. So I think, we sometimes keep silent because we have nothing to say about the works presented.

MF4: As far as I am concerned, I don't want to ask questions and give comments even if I know the issue presented. Firstly, examiners invite questions simply to say they have given us the chance but the time is not enough. Secondly, I am afraid of people on the stage and the audience. I can say the culture of criticism and fault finding that we have passed through is still here in our academic interactions. Hence I have the fear that even the audience may find some faults from my comments or questions. You may not believe, at university level someone has publicly criticized me saying "If the English people had listened to your English, they would have immersed you into the toilet." When I joined the MA program, since I had had an experience of open discussion with foreigners in the ELIP program, I tried to do the same in AAU MA and PhD seminars. But I decided not say anything after some members of the audience criticized me that I was wasting their time by asking questions. Thirdly, I don't want to expose the presenter by asking questions. Even if you ask a question, examiners do not politely lead questions and encourage the student to answer. This sends a message that your question is contributing negatively to the student's work.

Thank you for your cooperation!

FGD II

Q1. How do you evaluate your interest to make open discussions with other students on research related matters?

MF8: I always try to find people whom I can exchange information, discuss with and borrow materials etc. But in my experience, I have observed that in most cases people do things secretly. Even you can see the titles of the students' research works only when it is posted for some presentation or defense. Sometimes when you seek for some assistance from senior students, you are not welcome. I remember when I was writing my proposal; I had to ask some senior PhD students to show me the format of the proposal and what it should contain. But it was very difficult to find one. This, I can say, is the result of the tradition of competitive education that we have been practicing for so long.

MF10: I also share his ideas. When I was studying in the MA program I had good friends and we were working together. When I joined the PhD program I came with the expectation that the same will happen. But it is the reverse of that. As much as possible I try my best to approach other candidates but people are not cooperative; no one is willing to listen to you. For example; after I registered for the study, I asked some senior students to give me their proposal so that I could see how it should be written. I know their research area is different from my own. But they were not willing to show me. Even one student openly told me that he doesn't want to give me his proposal. Here I don't know, there may be some fear that students who borrow such papers will steal research topics.

MF11: I have the interest to make open discussions with other students about the topic of our researches and share experiences. I am sure if you ask any other student, he/she will tell you that they have the same interest. But the problem is when it comes to the practice; people will retreat. If you go and personally ask for something, no one will tell you things clearly. Since there are no enough resources in libraries, one possible means of solving research-related problems is having peer discussions especially with senior friends. But I don't know the reason; there is no interest to sit together and make discussions.

MF8: I see two challenges in this regard. Firstly, in the program we candidates are not organized in terms of our research themes and hence no one knows who is working on what. Due to this, it is difficult to find other candidates who are working on related areas and make productive discussions and exchange information about our research and even exchange recent literature. The institute is not doing that. Therefore, we always grapple with the work all individually. Secondly, we also have problems which I can call is cultural problem of not working cooperatively. Hence the institution is not helping this tradition to be changed.

MF11: Last time we had some methodology training at OSERIA and there I realized that if there is someone to organize PhD students, they have the interest to work together, to exchange fruitful ides about their research activities. In that training session students coming from different disciplines were playing an active role in presenting what they have done and were having full interest in giving comments etc. Of course, trainers who came from Kenya, Sudan etc were encouraging us too much. We have learnt a lot from that short training. You know, what is missing here is someone who will organize PhD students into groups and manage their activities. Otherwise, candidates have the interest to discuss things together.

MF7: Although much of the problem is from outside, I see that there are also problems on the side of we, PhD students. Since we live scattered and come to the university based on our own individual programs, finding someone who works on an issue related to our area of research will be difficult. We may not come to the university on the same season. For example; although I heard that there I someone who is working on an area related to mine, I couldn't find him still. When he comes to the university, I may not be available; and when I come here, he may not. Therefore, the problem is both from inside and outside.

MF12: I can say that we couldn't meet our expectations in this program. For example, when I first came here, I came with the expectation that there will be some means of making students come together and do tasks together. If there had been, for example; a course, it could have been possible to make students do certain tasks together and in turn exchange their ideas. And that also could give us the chance to meet, discuss our research issues and enrich our individual works. But in the absence of this, we still don't have the confidence to approach other students and make open discussions. Moreover, as a PhD student I expect to learn many things in the program. I think, I have to learn not only about how I can do effective research, but how I can openly argue and freely exchange opinions with other minds. I expect to learn these important qualities from experienced professionals i.e., our teachers or supervisors. But we never see our teachers doing that through, for example; presentations of their works. So who should be our models to teach us about free and open discussions on research matters?'

2. How do you evaluate your relationship to your supervisor/s? How do such cultural elements as respect come into play in this interaction?

MF9: This I think varies from one individual to another. As far as I am concerned, I believe I have to propose what I personally observe. I expect my supervisor to tell me if he has something that can help me shape my work. Other than this, I faced nothing that required me to take a different stand. But he raises questions as to how I am going to do the work. And I think, he accepts when I tell him this is how I am going to deal with it. So I don't have the fear to say what I have read or got from experience. As human beings there are differences between my supervisor and me but that does not go to the extent of developing fright not to say what I think has to be said. Of course, I also don't go there with the expectation that he would tell me everything.

Q: Have there been factors that affect openness?

MF8: Let me say something about two supervisors I personally know. With the first, my communication was only through papers; I give him my paper, he gives it back. If I have a question, that will come after that. Such questions can be answered and both of us can have a common understanding about the work when such written feedbacks are followed by face-to-face discussions. But that was almost missing. There are of course other supervisors who give such chances for discussions. My current supervisor has this quality. One reason for not giving the chance for face-to-face discussions may be the time shortage for supervisors. For example, when I asked my previous supervisor to clarify some points from his comments, he always had reasons like having classes etc. not to sit with me. Therefore, the question of openness can come when there is first the opportunity to sit together for discussions. In short, I can say either there are no follow up discussions or if there are such discussions, we don't deal openly with our supervisors. So if there are no discussions and the advising is done only through papers, ideas which could enrich your work will not be generated and when you fed up, you will finally decide to accept whatever is said by the supervisor. This will have a negative impact on the research.

MF11: There is a big gap between supervisors and supervisees in this program. For example, in my case after I submitted my proposal, months passed without getting the feedback from the supervisor. We had to postpone our appointment many times. But at the end of the day, he gave me the paper without any comment saying that it is my own work and he will not do anything to it. So my paper was kept there for months only for a signature. He never gave me a comment to add or cancel something. The supervisor is there to give us professional assistance so that we can use feedbacks to shape our works. But they don't sit with you and tell you this and worse than that, they don't give you relevant written comments. They give you the paper without any comment. Although they have the knowledge, they don't tell you how you can go about it. So mostly you will be in dilemma whether to do this or that. Due to this, you will not develop confidence and find it difficult to proceed. All in all, my supervisor was not giving me the required feedback on my work. Although the tradition has already been stopped, the comments I got from anonymous readers have helped me a lot.

MF7: As already said, I think, time shortage is one serious problem. Supervisors have maximum 2 hours consultation for all their advisees and students. They advise PhD and MA students, they teach regular students and there may be extension classes. So making open discussions with different students will be difficult for them. I am now in the 3rd year. In these years, I have never been invited even to sit. For that matter, there are no chairs for guests in my supervisor's office. There is no an opportunity to make discussions with the supervisor. I don't think

this is only due to shortage of time; I don't know. Therefore, up to now I have been taking only written comments which tell me to include and/or exclude something. I never asked "why?" even though I have had these questions in my mind because there are no opportunities for discussions. Moreover, I sometimes see some lack of confidence on the side of the advisor. I don't think they read our works from beginning to the end. They give you comments only on some subsidiary aspects of the work and they don't want to make detailed discussions with the student. I never had any such discussion with my supervisor in my stay here for three years. So, is it only due to time shortage? As stated before, although we don't contribute in defense sessions by asking questions and giving comments, we see questions asked and comments given to presenters and we do something to our own work based on that. Otherwise, we don't freely discuss issues with supervisors in a way it adds something relevant to our works.

Q: Does this have some impact on how you do the research?

MF7: Yes. Because I don't make follow up discussions with my supervisor on the comments he gives me on my papers, I find it difficult to consider comments in my work. As far as I am concerned, since my supervisor reads only part of my paper and gives comments based on that, mostly comments are not clear and hence I don't understand what he exactly wants to say in the comments. In this case what I can do is going my own way. You can see how much face-to-face discussion could have been helpful in such situations. So lack of these opportunities has serious impact on how I do the research.

MF10: Although the literature says supervisors at this level will treat students as colleagues, there is no such collegiality in this university. My supervisor was willing to advise me on the research issue I selected. But after we went some steps together, he told me that he will no more be my advisor. After such steps were over, he told me that that is not his area of specialization. But later I got another advisor. He is more democratic and I can meet him whenever I want. But still I am not getting full feedback. He tends to read only towards the beginning of my paper and leave the rest. In this case, if you don't get full information about the overall work, how can you have the confidence to consider that partial comment? Moreover, sometimes there are situations when the supervisor undermines you and tells you that you don't have the capacity to do the work. I know, I have been doing well and I can in the future.

MF8: There is another problem here. There are only few students who are lucky to have supervisors who have the specialization fitting to the issue the students are working on. You can guess what problems will be there if students do not work with such supervisors. These supervisors have to have the knowledge of latest developments in the area. since supervisors practically have a lot of responsibilities here, they will not have enough time to sit and listen to individual candidates. You sometimes see that from the way they treat you. So I think it is difficult to establish the required type of intimacy and relationship. They will not have time to read on the issue as well as to make the necessary follow up. The trend here is not to make the students work with supervisors who have related specializations but to reserve such people to examine students when students defend their works. More attention is given to examining students than helping them in the process through appropriate supervision.

3. How do you evaluate PhD seminar and defense sessions in terms of their effectiveness in providing you with the learning opportunity you are expecting and how is your participation in these sessions?

MF10: This is another problematic area. I always go to these sessions with the expectation that I will gain something good. I believe that we can learn from these sessions by getting involved in free and open discussions. But there is an atmosphere of fear there. I don't think organizers of these sessions have the belief that we are the ones to benefit from these sessions. They invite us to say something only for the sake of saying that they have given us the chance. Even when the chance is given, we don't say anything. We feel that by withholding our questions we can protect the presenter from another challenge from examiners. This culture, I think; hurting us.

MF9: These days, seminars are being given lesser attention. A year or two back, there used to be a seminar every Wednesdays. But recently seminars are either canceled or postponed for the reasons unknown. For example; recently seminar presentations of two senior students were canceled twice. Even these days some upgrading defenses are done in closed sessions in offices. I personally came to attend these defenses but I couldn't because they were closed and held in offices. This is not a PhD experience. This indicates that the problem is not only on the part of the students and supervisors; even the department is not giving these presentations the required attention. When it comes to Mock Viva and seminar presentations, we are expected to contribute something through interactions. But that chance is getting narrower and narrower. Surprisingly, even the department chairman told us that the assignment of supervisors is made by drawing lots. And he told us that they do this because they know who will be the recurrent choices of students if students are given the chance to choose supervisors themselves. Look, you are forced to work with someone who is not your choice and the advisor is advising you without his/her interest. Therefore, your only choice is completing the study by whatever means available to you. Hence since the outside environment is this much challenging, everyone tries what he/she could individually. What is more, since our sole resource these days is the internet, the department members seem to suspect that candidates may bring something directly from the internet. They don't seem to believe that these days students are reading and are able to see things critically. So as a PhD student, proceeding forward with such feelings in mind is very difficult. These things, I think, are destroying the academic and intellectual discourse that is expected to flourish in the program.

MF11: Since we, TEFL PhD students, are expected to produce concept paper, proposal etc. without taking any research courses in the program, seminars and defense sessions are the alternative ways to get some lessons about research. Personally I have got some lessons about writing proposals and others. I couldn't have produced my proposal if I had not attended such sessions. Previously seminar presentations were given serious attention and there were even attendances; I remember. But now this sole opportunity is being weakened. Students in the applied stream take advanced research courses but we have nothing.

MF8: I share this opinion. Towards the beginning of our study some 3 years back, we used to get much input from seminars and that helped us to produce our proposal. When we asked the department for some guideline or form that would tell us what format we should follow, they gave us what was prepared for MA students. But we could learn a lot from seminars then. So towards the beginning, even students used to ask questions in these sessions. But later that tradition was

forgotten. Even presenters sit there simply for the formality they are required to satisfy in completing their study; not to get feedbacks. When we see defense sessions, as it was stated earlier, there are some members of the department who give genuine professional assistance to presenters. They give constructive feedbacks and suggest important directions and tell presenters decide by themselves to or not to consider the comments. But what is surprising about defense sessions is some people whom you know are not critical in their feedbacks for their advisees show a special strength when they examine other students. So sometimes defense sessions seem to be places where some people show their capacity.

MF12: In addition to these, there are some problems I was observing when there are proposal and defense presentations in these sessions. Many times I see that different examiners have different preferences about for example, the format and something like that. I don't think there is one correct approach accepted by all. For example; in one of the defense sessions I attended I heard from one of the examiners that the methodology section of the research should not include literature; in another session when another examiner asked a student why he did not justify his selection of the method through some literature, we got very confused. I think this is one of the challenges for students like us.

Q. And, how is your participation in giving comments and asking questions in these sessions?

MF10: No, I don't agree. Mostly I withhold my questions in these sessions because, I think; that will expose the presenter. Therefore, I don't want to ask questions.

MF8: In the seminar sessions I attended so far, I asked a question only once for what was presented was related to my own work and I felt that something he mentioned was different from what I myself had read in the literature. I asked him how he was going to go about it, whether he had read what I had seen. But when I attend other seminars and defense sessions, I go out of the sessions with a lot of questions and comments in my mind.

MF7: The other is there is no time for questions. Examiners and chairmen give you the chance to ask questions while they have already started collecting their belongings and leaving. How can you ask a question while they are telling you that they are going? Moreover, I don't think people who usually ask questions and give comments are seen positively and are welcome. I personally saw that people who ask questions in different sessions are considered talkative. So these things are making us reserved. If the presenter is our friend, we write our questions and ask him and even suggest something. If he is not, you do nothing.

MF12: Personally, I go to these sessions to see what kinds of questions I should expect from different examiners when I come for my own presentations in the future and how I should answer questions. For me, there is no an inviting situation to ask and freely say what you have in mind. I don't think, even examiners and advisors want us to do these things. Since we are reading much about research, we could comment on the presenter's work and contribute something and this can also help us to improve the skill of making public debates. But, you see that people on the stage do not give you the chance and encourage you to do that. So if I have a question or comment that a presenter has to consider, I write them and secretly give him/her after the session is over.

Thank you for your cooperation!