

17. Advisor and Advisee Perspectives in ELT Supervision :A Dual Analysis Using AWAI-A and CQR¹

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Abstract

English Language Teaching (ELT) postgraduate programs heavily rely on the advisor–advisee relationship as their main supervision pillar since their advisees encounter academic and linguistic hurdles in their degree program. The study examines how advisors evaluate their supervisory practices versus how advisees experience these supervisory interactions through dual-perspective analysis based on the Advisory Working Alliance Inventory—Advisor Version (AWAI–A). The study involves two phases. The initial phase required ELT to have three thesis advisors fill out the Advisory Working Alliance Inventory – Advisor Version (AWAI–A) since it is a verified instrument that rates advisors' supervisory methods. Schlosser and Gelso (2005) developed the AWAI–A based on Bordin's (1983) working alliance theory which evaluates supervisory relationships between advisors and advisees through three core dimensions: rapport, apprenticeship, and task focus. The second step of this study involved talking to 15 advisees who have been guided by their designated advisors. Semi-structured interviews were held with 15 advisees who had experienced the supervision of these advisors during the second phase. As a result of the findings, the advisors felt it was important to review how they combined advising with teaching and leadership functions. The results from the advisees' point of view showed they prefer advising that includes support for procedure, emotional awareness and academic skills. They highlight the need for supervisors to create approaches that blend practical support with what advisees actually experience. By presenting a clear framework, this study points out the significance of matching advisor and advisee views and the potential benefits of using reflective methods during postgraduate ELT supervision. The findings highlight places where supervision already works well such as in organizing academic areas and recommend improvements in how advisors relate to and support their advisees. These findings could inspire methods for

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mentoring and teaching that both improve academic achievement and make multilingual, multicultural supervision easier.

Keywords: Supervisory Alliance, ELT Postgraduate Education, Advisor–Advisee Relationship, Advisory Working Alliance Inventory (AWAI–A), Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR)

ELT Denetiminde Danışman ve Danışan Perspektifleri: AWAI-A ve CQR Kullanılarak Yapılan İkili Analiz⁴

Öz

Yükseköğretimde tez danışmanlığı, özellikle İngiliz Dili Eğitimi (İDE) yüksek lisans programlarında, akademik başarı, araştırma becerileri ve kişisel gelişim açısından belirleyici bir role sahiptir. Bu çalışma, danışmanların kendi danışmanlık uygulamalarına ilişkin değerlendirmeleri ile öğrencilerin (danışanların) bu süreci nasıl deneyimlediğini karşılaştırmalı olarak incelemektedir. Araştırma, Bordin'in (1983) çalışma birliği kuramına dayalı olarak geliştirilen Danışmanlık Çalışma İttifakı Envanteri – Danışman Versiyonu (Advisory Working Alliance Inventory – Advisor Version, AWAI–A) ölçeği ile yürütülmüş ve iki aşamadan oluşmuştur. İlk aşamada, üç deneyimli İDE danışmanı AWAI–A ölçeğini doldurarak kendi danışmanlık uygulamalarını değerlendirmiştir. İkinci aşamada ise bu danışmanlar tarafından tez sürecinde desteklenen 15 yüksek lisans öğrencisiyle yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir. Veriler Uzlaşıya Dayalı Nitel Araştırma (Consensual Qualitative Research – CQR) yöntemiyle analiz edilmiştir. Bulgular, danışmanların daha çok görev ve yapı odaklı alanlarda kendilerini yeterli gördüklerini; öğrencilerin ise duygusal güven, akademik kimlik gelişimi ve profesyonel yönlendirme gibi ilişki temelli boyutlarda yetersizlik hissettiklerini ortaya koymuştur. Bu durum, danışmanlık sürecinde teknik destek kadar duygusal ve kimlik temelli rehberliğin de önemli olduğunu göstermektedir. Çalışma, kültürel ve dilsel çeşitliliğin yoğun olduğu İngiliz Dili Eğitimi yüksek lisans programlarında daha dengeli, empati temelli ve bütüncül bir danışmanlık anlayışına ihtiyaç olduğunu vurgulamaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Denetim İttifakı, ELT Yüksek Lisans Eğitimi, Danışman-Danışan İlişkisi, Danışmanlık Çalışma İttifakı Envanteri (AWAI–A), Mutabakalı Nitel Araştırma (CQR)

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1.Introduction

Effective supervision in postgraduate education in English Language Teaching (ELT) is essential because advisees in postgraduate education have the dual burden of not only having to grasp academic material, but also having to deal with linguistic and cultural intricacies. Supervisees, under the support of experienced advisors, will find it easier to excel in their academic performance, gain research proficiency, and ensure personal wellness (Lee, 2008; Lessing & Schulze, 2002). Advisors are one of the most important people in ELT programs especially, not just as academic coaches, but more so, as linguistic and intercultural guides. Quality of advisor--advisee relationships is of particular concern, therefore, because of these multilayered demands. This research is informed by the working alliance theory developed by Bordin (1983) that frames supervision as a working relationship and organizes it around three dimensions: rapport, apprenticeship and work task. Based on this, Schlosser and Gelso (2005) created the Advisory Working Alliance Inventory -Advisor Version (AWAI-A) that is a strong model used to assess supervisory alliances. Whereas AWAI--A is a thoroughly tested instrument in various fields (e.g., counseling, genetic counseling; Steber, Fishler & McBrien, 2023), its use in ELT has been scarcely explored--at least on the side of the advisor. Most of the available literature focus on the satisfaction of the advisees and the outcomes, which leave out how the supervisors themselves think about and assess their own practices (Kahn & Schlosser, 2010; Morrison & Lent, 2014). Yet, in multicultural and multilingual learning environments, in particular, ELT postgraduate programs, the dynamics of supervision are determined not only by procedural or task-based issues but are strongly affected by emotional support, cultural awareness, and academic identity formation (Manathunga, 2014; Fragouli, 2021; Winchester-Seeto et al., 2014). The present study helps to fill an existing research gap as it offers a two-vision approach to the topic of supervision in ELT. Through a systematic comparison of advisor-reported supervision rating with the AWAI--A and advisee-reported experiences with the same subdomains, the proposed study not only confirms the validity of the AWAI--A framework in a new context but also reveals a lack of correspondence in relational, emotional, and identity-based aspects of supervision. The study is also characterised by the use of Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) in order to have rigour and richness in the analysis of views. In doing so, the present study will provide novel knowledge regarding the dynamics of supervisory relationships in the socio-linguistically diverse environment of ELT postgraduate programs--thus making a theoretical and practical contribution to the subtler, more reflective, and more effective supervisory relationships.

Research Questions

1. How do ELT postgraduate advisors rate their supervision methods by considering rapport, apprenticeship and task focus, based on the AWAI--A?
2. What do ELT advisees think about their supervision in regards to rapport, apprenticeship and task attention?
3. How does the way advisors rate themselves compare with the way their advisees describe their performance across the ten areas of the AWAI--A framework?

2.Methodology

2.1 Participants

The research recruited two kinds of participants: advisors and advisees, each from postgraduate English

Language Teaching programs. There were three advisors in the group and all had more than 30 years of experience supervising research done by undergraduate and graduate advisees. The three advisors took charge of supervising graduate advisees during data collection and had worked with five or more master's or doctoral advisees throughout their careers. When the study took place, each advisor had five current postgraduate advisees under their supervision. The advisee group consisted of fifteen graduates of the ELT postgraduate program, who were supervised by the advisors taking part in this project. All advisors in the study had an even number of advisees, so that there were five advisees per advisor. All the theses in question had reached an advanced point and the advisees received regular direction from their advisors. Saturation of data was achieved with the help of iterative analysis throughout the interview phase. The research team paid close attention to emergent patterns and discovered that no new core ideas and subthemes were emerging after the twelfth interview. Three more interviews were carried out to ensure saturation, but instead supported the previously observed patterns without making new insights. It is also consistent with the standard practices of CQR, which suggest saturation as an essential signal of an adequate sample size in qualitative research (Hill et al., 1997).

2.2 Instruments

The study made use of two instruments. Schlosser and Gelso's Advisory Working Alliance Inventory – Advisor Version (AWAI–A) was given to the advisors at the start of the study. This scale is based on the working alliance theory from Bordin (1983) and tests the quality of supervisory relationships by evaluating rapport, apprenticeship and task focus which consist of 31 items scored on a Likert scale. The tool's 31 Likert-scale items which has proved useful for both educational and counseling settings when assessing supervisory alliance quality. This instrument allows researchers to measure advisor assessments of their thesis supervision methods specifically for ELT postgraduate advisees. The interview questions were formulated directly based on the ten AWAI--A subdomains to achieve conceptual consistency and thus validate the results. The following open-ended questions were subsequently submitted to expert validation by a PhD researcher who had substantial experience in qualitative supervision research as well as instrument development. The role of this expert was more than face validation since he was giving comments on clarity, logical order, and conceptual addressing of the questions. Further, two postgraduate advisees of ELT (not included in the primary sample) participated in a pilot test to check the comprehensibility and the fluidity of the interview protocol. As a result of this pilot, there were some minor changes of words to achieve better accessibility and remove any ambiguous language.

After that, semi-structured interview questions were designed for those who were part of the study. The questions were taken straight from the ten subscales of the AWAI–A framework to ensure consistency with the advisor instrument, making them open-ended. The questions asked during the interview were developed with the help of ten interpretations based on rapport, apprenticeship and task focus, keeping the advisor self-assessment in mind. Analyses of the interview recordings followed Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR), created by Hill et al. (1997), involving categories for the topics covered (domain coding), identifying key ideas (core idea extraction), comparison of cases (cross-case analysis), reaching agreement about interpretations (consensus judging) and review by an outsider (external auditing). To confirm that the guide for interviews had content validity and was of academic importance, it was checked and endorsed by a private PhD researcher skilled in designing and overseeing qualitative studies.

2.3 Research Design

To explore how thesis supervision is experienced in ELT postgraduate programs, this study used a qualitative, exploratory case study design following Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) guidelines. This study tried to see both sides of advisor and advisee experiences, using the Advisory Working Alliance Inventory – Advisor Version (AWAI–A). Qualitative collection made it possible to understand the topic in-depth and CQR allowed all results to be analyzed systematically with teamwork and theme checking. This design was chosen to ensure that the experiences of supervisors are considered and to provide a good comparison of supervision from multiple perspectives in a challenging education system.

2.4 Data Analysis

To analyze the collected information, the method of Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) developed by Hill, Thompson and Williams (1997) which stresses teamwork and understanding in interpretation, was used. The method was selected since it is not too inflexible, yet still offers a thorough look into participants' viewpoints. The study proceeded in a structured and ongoing way, starting with organizing the answers into the ten subscales of the AWAI–A. After that, experts took what participants shared and shaped it into simple, crisp ideas for every domain. The next step was to analyze all the case studies together in order to discover general, typical and variant issues within the data. To make sure the interpretations were free from bias and correct, two coders—one of them a trained graduate—worked on the study jointly. The study ended with an independent audit, conducted by the same outside expert who had evaluated the interview process earlier, increasing both the trustworthiness and reliability of the findings. CQR techniques of external auditing, consensus coding, and saturation checks were applied rigorously, but expert feedback was also sought when developing the instruments. This triangulating procedure of data validation contributed to the increased plausibility and richness of the interpretations made on the basis of both advisor and advisee accounts.

2.5 Comparative Interpretation

A comparative interpretation phase was carried out after analyzing each set of participant responses. This meant bringing together insights from each perspective within the same AWAI-A subdomains to see what matched and what differed. Comparing responses allowed a clearer picture of whether advisors and those supervised experience similar or different things. By adopting two perspectives, the study demonstrated where the supervisory process was strong and what areas needed improvement in postgraduate ELT fields.

3. Findings & Discussions

3.1 Advisor Findings & Discussions

At the beginning, three experienced ELT postgraduate thesis advisors' views on their supervisory practices were studied using the Advisory Working Alliance Inventory – Advisor Version (AWAI–A). Analysis of their responses was based on Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) and main themes were created for every AWAI–A subscale. It was found that most advisors were more confident about their abilities in the task areas of Planning & Structure, Instructional Support and Accessibility. Advisor 1 and Advisor 3 agreed strongly with questions about organized guidance and clear expectations and their subscale scores averaged between 4.0 and 4.33. When it comes to domains like Emotional Safety, Relational Quality and Professional Integration, individuals usually rated these lower or differently

when looking at their own progress. It appears that establishing trust and emotionally safe relationships was a challenge for all three advisors, as both Trust & Belief and Emotional Safety scored very low on average. While they listed themselves as moderately skilled in Modeling & Mentoring, advisors thought they did not do as well at providing professional identity guidance or assisting advisees with joining the academic community. The findings imply that advisors usually prefer to have supervision that is clear in its procedures and structures, even if it lacks depth in the advisor-advisee relationship or helps with developing growth. These conclusions support earlier findings by Morrison and Lent (2014) and Kahn and Schlosser (2010) that advisors favor using cognitive and task-focused feedback over helping with emotional and professional concerns. Since training in learning new languages and cultures adds more challenges to communication in ELT, considerations of emotional or relational aspects may be even more urgent, making wider awareness of affective supervision needed.

Table 1. Advisor Subscale Averages

Subscale	Advisor 1	Advisor 2	Advisor 3
Trust & Belief	2.0	2.3	2.0
Emotional Safety	1.4	1.6	1.3
Relational Quality	2.5	3.3	2.7
Advisor Pride / Image	3.0	2.5	3.2
Modeling & Mentoring	3.0	2.5	3.2
Academic Identity	3.3	2.7	3.0
Professional Integration	3.5	2.8	3.2
Planning & Structure	4.3	4.0	3.7
Instructional Support	4.0	3.8	3.2
Accessibility	3.3	3.7	4.0

It appears from these results that advisors are more likely to focus on what advisees need to know than on what they need emotionally. Both Morrison and Lent (2014) and Kahn and Schlosser (2010) indicate that advisors might not be as involved with emotionally supporting supervisees. ELT settings that involve different cultures and languages can increase challenges which might mean supervisees begin to feel cut off from their sense of self.

Table 2 . CQR Analysis of Advisor Responses

Subscale	Core Idea Summary (Advisor Perspective)	Theme Frequency
Trust & Belief	Limited mutual trust and personal connection	General
Emotional Safety	Advisors uncertain about providing affective support	Variant
Relational Quality	Confident in structured communication but relational depth varies	Typical
Advisor Pride / Image	Mixed self-perceptions of their mentoring image	Variant

Modeling& Mentoring	Moderate belief in offering guidance, with limited developmental focus	Typical
Academic Identity	Inconsistent support for research identity development	Variant
Professional Integration	Little emphasis on integrating advisees into academic communities	Variant
Planning & Structure	Strong belief in organizing the thesis process effectively	Typical
Instructional Support	Consistently confident in giving direction and clarity	General
Accessibility	Generally perceive themselves as reachable and supportive	Typical

3.2 Advisee Findings & Discussions

Phase two consisted of examining semi-structured interviews with 15 postgraduate advisees who all worked with the same three mentors. The same AWAI–A subdomains were used to study their experiences so they could be directly compared. The CQR effort led to the identification of key core ideas about how advisees perceived the strong and weak aspects of their supervision. Most of the advisees mentioned positive experiences in areas related to building instruction and planning how instruction should be carried out. Many advisees were happy with the clear goals, regular reviews and detailed steps their advisors provided during their thesis. Most advisees felt supervised and assisted well, but few were certain about ongoing emotional support from their advisors. Many advisees discovered that their advisors explained things clearly and were easy to reach, but missed developmental assistance and a strong connection. The findings agree with what the advisors think about their own strengths which suggests that both groups recognize the same strengths. But when talking about rapport and apprenticeship, advisees gave more examples of critical incidents. According to advisees, some of the feelings they had in these two environments included not feeling welcome, not seeing reassurance or feeling afraid of judgment any time they felt unsure about their learning. Similarly, advisees in Modeling & Mentoring and Professional Integration often mentioned that they were given academic feedback, but not many opportunities to shape their future academic routes, meet other scholars or communicate at academic events. Such feedback commonly revealed that supervisors cared most about thesis completion, not about helping the advisee develop. Findings such as these agree with research done in language teaching that identifies the added challenges faced by diverse advisees when their safety and social support are minimal (Wang & Li, 2011; Winchester-Seeto et al., 2014). According to Fragouli (2021) and Manathunga (2014), advisees think that supervisory relationships must involve empathy, showing them how to write well and having important conversations to support both their identity and self-confidence.

Table 3. Advisee Subscale Averages

Subscale	Advisee Avg
Trust & Belief	1.8
Emotional Safety	1.6
Relational Quality	2.0
Advisor Pride / Image	2.4
Modeling & Mentoring	2.2

Academic Identity	2.2
Professional Integration	2.0
Planning & Structure	4.2
Instructional Support	3.8
Accessibility	3.5

The survey results suggest that participants valued the way their advisors carried out tasks but missed further advice and mentoring. The authors in Fragouli (2021), Manathunga (2014) and Wang & Li (2011) argue that emotional and identity-affirming supervision is especially vital in the ELT field.

Table 4 . CQR Analysis of Advisee Responses

Subscale	Core Idea Summary (Advisee Perspective)	Theme Frequency
Trust & Belief	Advisees felt unseen, emotionally distant, or unsupported	General
Emotional Safety	Many feared judgment or lacked safe space to express confusion	General
Relational Quality	Communication felt rigid or hierarchical	Typical
Advisor Pride / Image	Unclear on advisor's motivation or pride in supervisee progress	Variant
Modeling & Mentoring	Little evidence of long-term mentorship or academic role modeling	Typical
Academic Identity	Few advisees felt guided in building their scholarly self-image	Variant
Professional Integration	Rare exposure to academic networks, publication, or co-presentation	General
Planning & Structure	Strong support in scheduling, deadlines, and structuring thesis	General
Instructional Support	Valued clarity, correction, and consistency in feedback	General
Accessibility	Mixed but mostly positive views on advisor responsiveness	Typical

3.3 Comparison of Advisor and Advisee Findings

An overall analysis of each supervisory subdomain showed common and distinct areas for both advisors and their advisees. Both groups showed similar views on skills-related tasks, mainly with Instructional Support and Planning & Structure. Advisees and advisors both agreed that advisors were organized, responded quickly and provided useful guidance throughout the process. Nonetheless, many difficulties arose in the relational and developmental fields. Regarding Trust & Belief, advisors and advisees pointed out similar flaws, yet advisees explained them in terms of feeling ignored or not getting enough support. Advisees noticed how uncertain advisors were, yet many said advisors seemed too detached for them to connect with. In Modeling & Mentoring and Professional Integration, advisors mostly rated their experiences as neutral to moderate, but the advisees found everything lacking and attributed it to the lack of modeling, support or involvement in professional environments. The combined analysis

highlighted that Instructional Support is a common example of alignment, whereas Modeling & Mentoring, Relational Quality and Advisor Pride / Image had partial agreement as typical examples. Trust & Belief, Emotional Safety and Professional Integration all emerged as the most varied themes in the study. These results highlight that tutorial intentions and views are sometimes not the same as what advisors directly experience within the emotionally and developmentally rich areas of postgraduate supervision. The outcome of this comparison suggests that strengthening both technical and interpersonal skills in supervision is needed. With the cultural and communication issues that exist in ELT postgraduate programs, some extra support in supervision may be useful. Getting advisees to pay more attention to their supervisors and mentors could help them deal with many different responsibilities.

Table 5. Combined Subscale Averages Comparing Advisor and Advisee Perceptions

Subscale	Advisor 1	Advisor 2	Advisor 3	Advisee Avg
Trust & Belief	2.0	2.3	2.0	1.8
Emotional Safety	1.4	1.6	1.3	1.6
Relational Quality	2.5	3.3	2.7	2.0
Advisor Pride / Image	3.0	2.5	3.2	2.4
Modeling & Mentoring	3.0	2.5	3.2	2.2
Academic Identity	3.3	2.7	3.0	2.2
Professional Integration	3.5	2.8	3.2	2.0
Planning & Structure	4.3	4.0	3.7	4.2
Instructional Support	4.0	3.8	3.2	3.8
Accessibility	3.3	3.7	4.0	3.5

Table 6 . Cross- Case Comparison of Advisor and Advisee Perceptions

Subscale	Advisor Avg	Advisee Avg	Interpretation
Instructional Support	3.67	3.80	Strong alignment
Planning & Structure	4.00	4.20	Strong alignment
Trust & Belief	2.11	1.80	Shared weakness
Emotional Safety	1.40	1.60	Shared weakness
Relational Quality	2.83	2.00	Partial mismatch

Subscale	Advisor Avg	Advisee Avg	Interpretation
Advisor Pride / Image	2.83	2.40	Variant theme
Modeling & Mentoring	2.89	2.20	Moderate mismatch
Academic Identity	3.00	2.20	Significant mismatch
Professional Integration	3.17	2.00	Notable mismatch
Accessibility	3.67	3.50	Partial alignment

4. Conclusion

The dynamics of supervisory alliance in ELT postgraduate programs were explored in this study within two different perspectives of advisors and advisees based on AWAI--A framework and Consensual Qualitative Research (CQR) approach. The results support the argument that supervisors are highly effective in the task-focused areas, including planning, organization, and providing instructional support, but severe discontinuities are found in relational and developmental sub-areas. The aspects of emotional safety, trust, mentoring, and formation of academic identity invariably emerged as areas of weakness when viewed through both lenses, but advisees more strongly indicated a lack of connection or emotional distance. Offering a more polished and weighted perception of postgraduate supervision, this study comes up with a systematic comparison of self-reported practices of advisors and the experiences of advisees with regard to ten specified subdomains. Significantly, it presents empirical support that affective aspects of supervision which are mostly neglected in task-oriented models need to be given specific consideration, especially in linguistically and culturally diversified ELT contexts. This is unlike the previous investigations that immediately look at either the cognitive or procedural feedback, but this research is unique in the sense that it demonstrates how incongruences in the emotional support, relational engagement, and identity scaffolding may influence the quality of the supervisory relationship as a whole. Being among the few existing studies to deploy the complete AWAI--A scale in the ELT setting and integrate it with cross-case CQR examination, it broadens the methodological repertoire of supervision research and presents a replicable example to other intercultural academic sectors. The findings have led to demand of a more thoughtful and integrated mode of supervision- which is to say, one which balances academic guidance with emotional and professional growth. The practical implications involve incorporation of the training of supervisors encompassing the aspects of empathy, rapport-building, and culturally responsive mentoring. To continue, the future study may focus on the other variables, like the institutional culture, gender relations, intensity of workload of the supervisor, etc. to comprehend the way they mediate the supervisory effectiveness in the multilingual setting. Eventually, this study helps to support the notion that postgraduate supervision in ELT is not another relay race of academic knowledge but a complex, relational, and developmental practice. ADCs should not only support the intellectual and emotional needs of their advisees, but it is necessity.

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Appendix A

The table below specifies the ten subdomains included in the AWAI-A (Advisory Working Alliance Inventory - Advisor Version) framework to be used as weight in advisor self-assessment and as an interview question to advisors and advisees. These dimensions indicate the cognitive, relational and structural aspects of the advisor and advisee supervisory alliance.

No	Subdomain	Brief Description
1	Trust & Belief	Confidence and trust in the advisor advisee relationship
2	Emotional Safety	Establishing an atmosphere of easiness to display confusions or weaknesses
3	Relational Quality	Mutual respect and depth of communication between the advisor and the advisee
4	Advisor Pride / Image	The view of the advisor regarding the commitment and pride towards the supervision by advisee
5	Modeling & Mentoring	The role of Advisor as a mentor, academic role model
6	Academic Identity	Assistance in the establishment of an academic self-image in the advisee
7	Professional Integration	Help in relating with academic communities and professional environments
8	Planning & Structure	Transparency in planning thesis processes, schedules and demands
9	Instructional Support	Academic feedback and guidance efficacy
10	Accessibility	Availability and responsiveness of advisor to the needs of advisee