



POSTGRADUATE PROCESS GUIDEBOOK

RESEARCH MODE

FOR

MASTER ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES
MASTER ARABIC LANGUAGE STUDIES
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY ARABIC LANGUAGE STUDIES

NEC 0231 - LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

**FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION
UNIVERSITI SULTAN ZAINAL ABIDIN**

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POSTGRADUATE PROCESS GUIDEBOOK
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ABBREVIATIONS

FBK	Faculty of Languages and Communication
JKPS	Graduate Studies Committee
GoT	Graduate on Time
NEC	National Education Code
NoS	Notice of Thesis Submission
LKP	Progress Report
TM	Unsatisfactory
SISMAS	Graduate Information Management System
PPS	Graduate School
UniSZA	Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin

PROCEDURES



1.0 REGISTRATION

- 1.1 Successful applicants may register for the academic semester either online on the PPS official website or in person at the PPS office.
- 1.2 Students are required to confirm the National Education Code (NEC) on the Student Portal to ensure that all data are accurate. The NEC code for English programmes is 0231 Language Acquisition.
- 1.3 Any errors related to NEC must be reported to the Faculty of Languages and Communication (FBK).

2.0 ENROLMENT IN RESEARCH METHODOLOGY COURSE AND TEST (PPS)

- 2.1 Students **MUST** attend the Research Methodology Course organised by PPS and **PASS** its test during their **FIRST** year of studies.
- 2.2 Students who fail the test are **ONLY** required to resit the test.
- 2.3 The certificate of attendance and the result of the test are valid for **FIVE (5)** years from the date the result is released. Please refer to PPS for further information.
- 2.4 Students must re-enroll in the course and resit the test should their certificates have passed the validity period.
- 2.5 Students who have successfully undertaken a similar or equivalent course at another institution may apply for exemption from the Dean of PPS subject to the following conditions:
 - 2.5.1 Submission of a letter requesting exemption together with the certificates and related documents as proof of evidence.
 - 2.5.2 Exemption will only be granted if students have undertaken the course within **FIVE (5)** years of registration. Please refer to the latest Graduate Academic Rules Research Mode by PPS.
 - 2.5.3 Students who fail the Research Methodology Course are **INELIGIBLE** to present for Proposal Defence and Pre Viva, and submit the Notice of Thesis Submission (NoS).

3.0 WRITING FOR PROPOSAL DEFENCE

- 3.1 Students will be guided by a supervisor(s) throughout the process of the research proposal write-up.
- 3.2 Students **MUST** adhere to the following writing requirements of the research proposal:
 - 3.2.1 The first three chapters should consist of Introduction, Literature Review and Methodology. Students are encouraged to include the findings of their pilot study.
 - 3.2.2 The length of the research proposal should be between 8,000 and 10,000 words.
 - 3.2.3 An abstract of between 200 and 250 words written in Malay, and English or Arabic. The abstract should consist of Introduction, Methodology and Expected Findings. Please refer to the template in Appendix 1.

4.0 SUBMISSION OF PROGRESS REPORT

- 4.1 Students must submit the Progress Report online through the Student Portal before each new semester begins. The submission period will be announced by PPS.
- 4.2 Students will be evaluated by the main supervisor on Graduate Information Management System (SISMAS). The result will either be satisfactory or unsatisfactory based on the evaluation.
- 4.3 Students may download a copy of the report for their own reference.

5.0 PAYMENT OF TUITION FEES

- 5.1 Students who receive **TWO (2)** consecutive unsatisfactory results will be terminated from the programme.
- 5.2 Students or supervisors who fail to submit the progress report online may submit the report manually to PPS using the Progress Report Form (PPS 14-A and PPS 14-B).
- 5.3 The forms can be downloaded from the PPS official website.
- 5.4 Failure to submit the report will result in students being barred from registering for the next semester.

- 5.5 Payment of the tuition fees **MUST** be made at the beginning of each semester based on the amount stipulated by PPS.
- 5.6 All matters pertaining to payment **MUST** be done at the Bursary Office, UniSZA.
- 5.7 Proof of payment must be attached when registering online for the new semester.
- 5.8 Students who fail to make the payment will **NOT** be allowed to register.

6.0 SEMESTER REGISTRATION

- 6.1 Students must have already submitted their Progress Report in the previous semester and pay the tuition fees to be eligible to register for the current semester.
- 6.2 The registration is only possible for students who have paid their tuition fees for the current semester.
- 6.3 Students who fail to register for the previous semester will not be able to register for the current semester.
- 6.4 Students must register for the current semester online within the stipulated duration as announced by PPS on the Student Portal.
- 6.5 Late registration will incur a penalty.
- 6.6 Unregistered students are not eligible for any application regarding their studies.
- 6.7 Students who fail to register for **TWO (2)** consecutive semesters will have their studies terminated with immediate effect.

7.0 PROPOSAL DEFENCE

- 7.1 Students who wish to conduct a proposal defence must fulfil the following conditions:
 - 7.1.1 registered for the current semester
 - 7.1.2 attended and passed the Research Methodology Course organised by PPS as stipulated in Item 2.0

- 7.2 For the purpose of Proposal Defence, students must submit the following documents:
- 7.2.1 Colloquium Declaration form (FBK- 01).
 - 7.2.2 Attendance and passing certificates of Research Methodology course organised by PPS.
 - 7.2.3 **TWO (2)** copies of ring bound thesis proposal.
 - 7.2.4 **ONE (1)** copy of the thesis proposal in PDF format sent to jkpsfbk@gmail.com
- 7.3 All the above documents must be submitted to FBK except Item 7.2.4
- 7.4 The proposal defence will be conducted during the colloquium organised by FBK. It will held in the hybrid format and is scheduled for the **THIRD WEEK** of each month. Please refer to the FBK official website for the dates of the colloquium.
- 7.5 The colloquium is open to students, academic staff and others.
- 7.6 The proposal will be evaluated by at least **ONE (1)** expert in the field of research, either from FBK, another faculty or other higher learning institutions.
- 7.7 The Examiners Committee will award one of the following results:
- 7.5.1 Pass without corrections.
 - 7.5.2 Pass with minor corrections.
 - 7.5.3 Pass with major corrections.
 - 7.5.4 Pass with major corrections and repeat Proposal Defence.
- 7.8 Upon passing (Item 7.5.1, 7.5.2 or 7.5.3), students may proceed with the data collection and the thesis write-up.

8.0 WRITING FOR PRE VIVA

- 8.1 Students will be guided by the supervisor(s) throughout the process of writing the results, discussion and conclusion chapters.
- 8.2 Students **MUST** adhere to the following writing requirements of the thesis:
 - 8.2.1 At least **FIVE (5)** chapters consisting of Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Results and Discussion, and Conclusion.
 - 8.2.2 Adhere to the thesis template provided by PPS. The template can be downloaded from the PPS official website.
 - 8.2.3 The length of the thesis is as follows:
 - a. PhD: Maximum of 80,000 words.
 - b. Master's Degree: Maximum of 50,000 words.
 - 8.2.4 An abstract of between 300 and 500 words written in Malay, and English or Arabic. The abstract should include Introduction, Methodology, Results and Conclusion. Please refer to the template in Appendix 2.
- 8.3 Should a student require a letter to appoint a research or instrument validity expert, s/he must apply to FBK either in person or through email at jkpsfbk@gmail.com
- 8.4 Should a student require an approval letter to collect data, s/he must gain the consent of the supervisor(s).
- 8.5 Upon the supervisor(s)' consent, the student must apply to FBK either in person or through email at jkpsfbk@gmail.com

9.0 PRE VIVA

- 9.1 Students who wish to undergo the Pre Viva session must fulfil the following conditions:
 - 9.1.1 registered in the current semester.
 - 9.1.2 gain the consent of the supervisor(s).
 - 9.1.3 completed at least 12 months of studies after the registration for Masters programme, or 24 months for PhD programme.
- 9.2 For the purpose of Pre Viva session, students must submit the following documents:
 - 9.2.1 Colloquium Declaration form (FBK-01).
 - 9.2.2 **ONE (1)** copy of plagiarism report that has been verified by the main supervisor.
 - 9.2.3 **THREE (3)** copies of ring bound thesis.
 - 9.2.4 **ONE (1)** copy of thesis in PDF format and send to jkpsfbk@gmail.com
- 9.3 The result of the plagiarism report must not exceed 25% and students must use the plagiarism software approved by PPS.
- 9.4 All the above documents must be submitted to FBK except for Item 9.2.4
- 9.5 The thesis will be evaluated by at least **TWO (2)** examiners who are expert in the field, either from FBK, another faculty or other higher learning institutions.
- 9.6 The Pre Viva session will be conducted during the colloquium organised by FBK. It will held in the hybrid format and is scheduled for the **THIRD WEEK** of each month. Please refer to the FBK official website for the dates of the colloquium.
- 9.7 The session will **ONLY** be attended by the Examiners Committee and the colloquium secretariat.
- 9.8 The Examiners Committee will award one of the following results:
 - 9.8.1 Pass without corrections.
 - 9.8.2 Pass with minor corrections.
 - 9.8.3 Pass with major corrections.
 - 9.8.4 Pass with major corrections and repeat the Pre Viva.

- 9.9 Upon passing (Item 9.8.1, 9.8.2, or 9.8.3), students may proceed with the corrections based on the examiners' comments.
- 9.10 Once the corrections are done, students **MUST** submit the Pre Viva Correction Form (FBK-03) that is verified by the supervisor to FBK.
- 9.11 After submitting the Pre Viva Correction Form (FBK-03), students are allowed to apply for NoS.

10.0 NOTICE OF SUBMISSION (NoS)

- 10.1 Students who wish to apply for NoS must adhere to the following requirements:
 - 10.1.1 registered for the current semester
 - 10.1.2 submit the Pre Viva Correction Form (Form FBK- 03) to FBK.
- 10.2 For the purpose of NoS, the following documents must be uploaded on the Student Portal:
 - 10.2.1 Attendance and passing certificates of Research Methodology Course organised by PPS.
 - 10.2.2 Proof of registration for the current semester.
 - 10.2.3 Proof of payment for Viva Voce.
 - 10.2.4 Abstract written in Malay, and English or Arabic.
 - 10.2.5 Proof of article publication (adhere to the publication requirements based on programme and semester registration).
- 10.3 Upon NoS approval by the university, PPS will contact the students for further action. The approval is only valid for **THREE (3)** months and students must submit the thesis for evaluation within the period.
 - 10.3.1 If students require an extension to submit their thesis, they should appeal in writing to the Dean of PPS within 14 days of the submission deadline. Students may only appeal once.

11.0 ABSTRACT VERIFICATION

- 11.1 The abstract **MUST** adhere to the following writing requirements:
 - 11.1.1 written in both Malay, and English or Arabic
 - 11.1.2 between 300 and 500 words
 - 11.1.3 consists of Introduction, Methodology, Results and Conclusion.
- 11.2 Please refer to the abstract template in Appendix 2 for example.
- 11.3 The abstract will be examined by the Faculty Postgraduate Affairs Committee before it is forwarded for further action.

12.0 OTHER RELATED PROCESSES

- 12.1 Please refer to the Academic Guidebook of PPS for further information on the following:
 - a. NoS
 - b. Thesis submission for evaluation
 - c. Deferment of Viva Voce
 - d. Appeal of Viva Voce results
 - e. Re- viva
 - f. Submission of revised thesis
 - g. Graduation
 - h. Graduate on Time (GOT)
 - i. Termination of studies
 - j. Appeal to continue studies

13.0 IMPORTANT NOTES

- 13.1 **ALL** submissions for Proposal Defence, Pre Viva and Viva Voce **MUST** have been proofread by a professional proofreader.
- 13.2 In the case of Viva Voce, students **MUST** submit a certificate with an official stamp certifying that the thesis has undergone proofreading upon submission of NoS.
- 13.3 Students wishing to apply for exemption from proofreading upon submission of NoS may do so by submitting the Thesis Proofreading Exemption Form (FBK-05).

13.4 Students are encouraged to follow the updates released by PPS and FBK from time to time.

13.5 The latest updates can be accessed through the following:

13.5.1 PPS official website (<https://pps.unisza.edu.my/>)

13.5.2 Graduate Academic Rules Research Mode by PPS.
The guideline can be downloaded from the PPS official website.

13.5.3 Official Facebook of PPS: UniSZA Graduate School (<https://www.facebook.com/ppsunisza>)

13.5.4 FBK official website: (<https://fbk.unisza.edu.my/>)

13.5.5 Official Facebook of FBK- Fakulti Bahasa dan Komunikasi FBK
(<https://www.facebook.com/fakulti.bahasa.komunikasi.unisza>)

13.5.6 Telegram Group of UniSZA PPS (Graduate School) Student Affairs and Administration
(<https://t.me/joinchat/A3a3YRVbRDdmxvXQ66ZEkw>)



13.5.7 Telegram group of FBK Postgraduates
(<https://t.me/joinchat/Hkbebh8rMOlpj5Ys>)



- 13.6 Should students have any queries to PPS, please call or Whatsapp at +609-6688795.
- 13.7 Should students have any queries to FBK, please call +609-6688960 or email to jkpsfbk@gmail.com

ABSTRACT GUIDELINES FOR PROPOSAL DEFENCE

NUM	CONTENTS	REMARKS
1	Title of Research	Maximum of 15 words, not including conjunction words. Proper noun is considered as one word (ex: Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin)
2	Introduction	Brief introduction Problem statement Purpose/ objectives of study
3	Methodology	Approach/ Research model Sampling (if related) Data collection (if related) Data analysis/ theory testing, terms, technology, product, assessment or evaluation (if related)
4	Results	Expected findings
		Total word count: 200-250 words

ABSTRACT TEMPLATE FOR PROPOSAL DEFENCE

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AMONG MINORITY THAI- SPEAKING PUPILS IN MALAYSIAN NATIONAL SCHOOLS

Introduction: Language learning is a complex, daunting journey, especially for young students because they often encounter various challenges as they navigate the language acquisition process. In contemporary societies marked by growing diversity and multiculturalism, ensuring equitable educational opportunities for all students, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, has emerged as a critical issue. This study seeks to illuminate the lived experiences of students belonging to a minority ethnic group, the Malaysian Thai, as they engage in the process of learning the English language within the context of early primary education, particularly in the Malaysian National School where Bahasa Malaysia serves as the primary medium of communication and instruction. **Methodology:** A qualitative ethnographic approach was employed to investigate the experiences of the Malaysian Thai community, with a specific focus on their English language learning journey. This research involved 37 classroom observation sessions and interviews with five Siamese students. The resulting data were subjected to discourse analysis and thematic analysis to extract relevant findings. Next, the data generated were analysed using discourse analysis and thematic analysis to extract relevant findings. **Expected Findings:** The findings are expected to reveal that the majority of the participants grapple with internal and external conflicts both within and beyond the classroom, resulting in a profound sense of isolation despite their status as Malaysian Bumiputera. In the realm of English language learning, students with a less proficient grasp of the dominant language, Bahasa Malaysia, may face marginalisation compared to those who had it as their first language or some Thai-speaking students who may exhibit better language proficiency. Consequently, these students may display a limited willingness to engage, learn from, or collaborate with their Malay-speaking teachers and peers.

ABSTRACT GUIDELINES FOR PRE VIVA AND VIVA

NUM	CONTENTS	REMARKS
1	Title of Research	Maximum of 15 words, not including conjunction words. Proper noun is considered as one word (ex: Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin)
2	Introduction	Brief introduction Problem statement Purpose/ objectives of study
3	Methodology	Approach/ Research model Sampling (if related) Data collection (if related) Data analysis/ theory testing, terms, technology, product, assessment or evaluation
4	Results	Findings
5	Conclusion	Impact of Study/Implication (if related)
		Total word count: 300-500 words

ABSTRACT TEMPLATE FOR PRE VIVA AND VIVA

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AMONG MINORITY THAI- SPEAKING PUPILS IN MALAYSIAN NATIONAL SCHOOLS

Introduction: Language learning is a complex, daunting journey, especially for young students because they often encounter various challenges as they navigate the language acquisition process. In contemporary societies marked by growing diversity and multiculturalism, ensuring equitable educational opportunities for all students, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, has emerged as a critical issue. This study seeks to illuminate the lived experiences of students belonging to a minority ethnic group, the Malaysian Thai, as they engage in the process of learning the English language within the context of early primary education, particularly in the Malaysian National School where Bahasa Malaysia serves as the primary medium of communication and instruction. **Methodology:** A qualitative ethnographic approach was employed to investigate the experiences of the Malaysian Thai community, with a specific focus on their English language learning journey. This research involved 37 classroom observation sessions and interviews with five Siamese students. The resulting data were subjected to discourse analysis and thematic analysis to extract relevant findings. Next, the data generated were analysed using discourse analysis and thematic analysis to extract relevant findings. **Results:** The findings revealed that a significant majority of the participants grappled with internal and external conflicts both within and beyond the classroom, resulting in a profound sense of isolation despite their status as Malaysian Bumiputera. In the realm of English language learning, students with a less proficient grasp of the dominant language, Bahasa Malaysia, faced marginalisation compared to those who had it as their first language or some Thai-speaking students who exhibited better language proficiency. Consequently, these students displayed a limited willingness to engage, learn from, or collaborate with their Malay-speaking teachers and peers. They acknowledged their academic challenges as a direct consequence of this language barrier. **Conclusion:** These findings underscore the immediate need for proactive measures and reflection among educational authorities, educators, and the broader school community. Addressing the unique needs of minority ethnic students, particularly in the context of English language acquisition, is imperative in order to provide them with equitable opportunities for a more effective learning experience, irrespective of their cultural or ethnic backgrounds. Recognising and rectifying these disparities in language learning opportunities will empower the concerned parties to cultivate an inclusive and nurturing environment conducive to the academic and personal development of all students.