Dissertation/Thesis Examination Report Template

CONFIDENTIAL

Examiner's Report

Degree: Master of Education

Student Name and ID: Robin Hankin 1266402

Title of Dissertation/<u>Thesis</u>:   Metaphors We Teach By

Pathway: 1

Dissertation/<u>Thesis</u> Points: 90

Name and Institute of Examiner:

*This examination report template provides space for your **detailed comments** for the criteria indicated in the **Examiners' Briefing Pack**. The criteria are provided to students, supervisors and examiners to guide the dissertation/thesis grading process.*

Please provide an indicative grade reflecting how the student performed in each assessment area. Examiners should view the overall performance of the students in relation to peers on comparable programmes. The report should be at least three pages long.

Please note: For Pathway 3, examiners should comment on how the work demonstrates a comprehensive depth in the resolution of the practice presented under each criterion below.

1.   **Formulate the research question or define the research issue.**

This thesis focusses on exploring metaphor broadly across a range of features relating to stage 1 statistics university teaching and learning. The topic is novel and the approaches appear consistent with previous similar work. A definition of metaphor is given and the opening chapters were engaging and clear and captivated my interest in understanding more about metaphor in statistics and mathematics teaching and learning. The scene in relation to metaphor is well and clearly set in chapter 1. Information about the research question is given in a range of places and although the intent of the research is clear, it could have been useful to signal the full statement of the research question/s being explored. It would be good to have included very early on some explicit indication of why this is an important area to study – I'm sorry if I missed this.

Indicative Grade for this Criterion

2. **Critically review knowledge relevant to the thesis/dissertation.**

Chapters 1 and 2 provide contextual and background information informed by the literature on the thesis topic. Critique is evident and the discussion about the reviewed literature indicated in-depth comprehension of the literature and key ideas in this area and sound knowledge of the area of the topic focus. Some claims made could have further substantiation. Where the discussion steps out of the literature to express the researcher's view and reflective thoughts, this is signaled. Bibliography seems quite suitable.

Indicative Grade for this Criterion

3. **Plan a research project that executes the selected methodology and methods/tools that address the question or issue.**

The study analysis and descriptions of results illuminate the issue of metaphor used in stage one statistics teaching and all results chapters provide answers to the overall research focus/questions. There is some background to research methodologies in section 1.3 and gaps in understanding have been identified. Each results chapter indicates literature used to inform the method used for that section of the study and indicate a range of tools from the literature were considered. The field of metaphor is not my specialist area but it appears that the method and analysis have been suitably carried out. I would have found it useful to read a complete summary of the method used with rationale/justifications for related decision making to help develop my overall picture of the study and understanding about decisions made. This section could also have included some comments on ethics, validity, reliability etc. Was there any checking by the researcher of the analysis done or checking done by anyone else, for example? Further evidence of critique in relation to method possible?

Indicative Grade for this Criterion

4. **Provide a critical commentary on the research process and outcomes.**

The thesis study encompass examination of metaphor across a wide range of aspects of the focus topic. The thesis shows innovation and originality in uncovering how specific metaphors are present, often unwittingly, in aspects of stage one statistics teaching. The findings are likely to also inform other statistical teaching, aspects of mathematics teaching and teaching outside the mathematics and statistics areas. There is thorough use of research process – with background and ideas for the method used in each chapter outlined. Clear and suitable conclusions are drawn and clearly expressed within each results chapter. Critique is evident and analysis is provided. I feel that further emphasis on limitations and recommendations could have been included through the results chapters.

Indicative Grade for this Criterion

5. **Reflect on and evaluate the significance of the research in the discipline area.**

The final chapter includes a range of suitable overall conclusions of the study which are clearly stated. The chapter is fairly brief and perhaps there could be emphasis in this chapter on discussing findings in relation to the earlier literature presented and an overall discussion of study limitations, implications, and recommendations.

Indicative Grade for this Criterion

6. **Present research thesis/dissertation at a scholarly level.**

I found the argument of the thesis to be very clearly structured and well and succinctly written – a smooth and logical read. The intent of the researcher is clearly apparent. I appreciated the use of slant type for metaphors through the text. I imagine it may have been a challenge to minimise subconscious use of metaphor (e.g., Koveses 2010 idea of "deeply entrenched, hardly noticed") in writing the thesis.

There was one persistent feature I was not so sure about – there are many quotes included throughout the thesis – some quite long – which are left for the reader to interpret in relation to the story being told in the thesis. I would have found it helpful if these had been alluded to in the text so that the researcher's intention for their inclusion is made clear rather than left to the reader to decide on, or even an overall statement somewhere which explains how they are intended to be interpreted in relation to the rest of thesis writing would be helpful.

The thesis is neatly presented and well-structured and integrated. Some statements could have been further backed up with evidence or literature as they stand more like claims or opinion as currently included – I have indicated examples of these in the annotated version of the thesis. Further attention to detail possible in some referencing, especially making sure page numbers are included for all quotes.

Indicative Grade for this Criterion

Required Amendments

Please provide a list of required amendments. Students will be required to make these amendments before their grade is finalised and being eligible to graduate.

If suitable in relation to AUT requirements and suggested requirements from the other examiner, I think the thesis could be strengthened by the inclusion of an overall summary, with justifications, of the research methods and tools and further matter in the final chapter as discussed above. I don't think either of these would be very time consuming for the researcher to include.

I have annotate the thesis with suggested corrections. As there are many I will not list them. In particular page numbers should be added for quotes using a consistent approach such as apa and the reference list should have use of capital letters checked and be included only once. Should American spelling be changed to NZ usage?

Recommendation *(please tick one box)*

After examination of this dissertation/thesis I recommend

That the student be granted the following pass grade for the dissertation/thesis subject to the student making minor amendments (as identified by the examiners) to the satisfaction of the supervisors and the faculty Associate Dean (Postgraduate) or delegated authority.

Recommended Grade:

I agree that my name can be disclosed to the student

Examiner   Date