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NEEDS ANALYSIS IN AN EAP COURSE: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract: *This case study was done to investigate academic writing at a public university, in relation to student writing needs and the context of academic writing in a writing course at a public university in Malaysia. The study employed the complementarity mixed-method design, where questionnaires and interviews were used to collect the data. The total number of respondents for the questionnaire was 157 (26 EAP lecturers, 22 engineering lecturers, 17 human sciences lecturers and 92 EAP students from the engineering and human sciences faculties). Interviews were done with 15 EAP lecturers, three engineering lecturers, four human sciences lecturers, four EAP/engineering students and four EAP/human sciences students. The objectives of the study were to investigate the EAP lecturers', the faculty lecturers', and students' perceptions of student academic writing needs and the EAP course. The results of the case study revealed that the EAP, engineering and human sciences lecturers as well as the EAP/engineering and EAP/human sciences students had similar and different perceptions with regard to student academic writing needs. Secondly, the majority of the EAP lecturers and students have a positive view towards the EAP course. The present needs (PSA) and the target needs (TSA) that have been identified from the findings can be used as a source of information for other language centres for their academic writing courses. As a start, since the findings also relate the identified needs with specific faculties (engineering and human sciences), this information can be used as a guide to determine the syllabus of a writing course for the related faculties.*

Keywords: EAP, needs analysis, PSA, TSA

1. Introduction

Academic writing in higher education has been a subject of attention especially in the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) field and composition studies at least for the last three decades (e.g., Armstrong, Dannat, & Evans, 2012; Casanave & Hubbard, 1992; Coxhead, 2012; Hansen, 2000; Harwood & Hadley, 2004; Herrington, 1985; Huang, 2010; Hyland, 2013a, 2013b; Jenkins, Jordan, & Weiland, 1993; Paltridge, 2004; Thesen, 2001; Yildirim & Ilin, 2009; Zhu, 2004).

At one of the public universities in Malaysia, students are required to take an EAP course that focuses on writing for academic purposes. Its main focus is for students to be able to use appropriate language for writing a research paper. In terms of the writing tasks, the students have to identify issues in their area of studies, formulate research questions based on the statement of the problem that derives from the issues, review related literature, describe the methodology of conducting the research, present the analysis and discussion of findings, and write a conclusion to the study. In terms of the research, they are required to conduct a survey

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using questionnaires to get people's perceptions on an identified topic, and do an analysis of the questionnaires using descriptive statistics, which involves describing frequencies and percentages of answers (Brown, 2001).

Most of the time, the course coordinator groups the students according to their faculties in the same class. This, however, is not seen as an issue by the language centre, probably because the course materials are the same for all classes regardless of the students' disciplines. On the other hand, this raises the question of whether or not the students' needs are addressed appropriately. Needs analysis is one of the ways to find the answer to this question.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Needs Analysis in EAP

In English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and/or English for Academic Purposes (EAP), needs analysis has been pivotal especially in the course design and materials development (Benesch, 2001; Flowerdew, 2013; Jordan, 1997; Long, 2005; Robinson, 1991). Hutchinson and Waters (1987) relate 'needs' to 'analysis' by defining needs as "the ability to comprehend and/or produce the linguistic features of the target situation" (p. 54), and positioning it in relation to a few concepts of analysis, with a distinction between 'target needs' (what learners need to do in the target situation – categorised as 'necessities', 'lacks' and 'wants') and 'learning needs' (what learners need to do to learn).

Robinson (1991) differentiates the meaning of needs and needs analysis. Needs can refer to: (1) what students have to be able to do at the completion of a language course; (2) what the institution or society sees as suitable to be learnt from a language course; (3) what needs to be done by the learners to really acquire the language; (4) what the learners would like to get from the language programme; and (5) what the learners do not know or cannot do in English – also referred to as 'lacks'. She refers the concept of needs in needs analysis by using the terms 'Target Situation Analysis' (TSA) and 'Present Situation Analysis' (PSA). In short, target situation analysis looks at what the students should be able to do at the end of instruction, whereas present situation analysis identifies the students abilities at the beginning of instruction (Brown, 2016).

Moreover, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) describe needs analysis as "the process of establishing the *what* and *how* of a course" (p. 121), and add another accompanying component to it - 'evaluation', which is "the process of establishing the effectiveness (of the course)" (p. 121). They also give another new addition to the concept of TSA and PSA by introducing LSA – Learning Situation Analysis – which refers to what learners already know.

Over the years, needs analysis has been conducted in numerous studies involving non-native speakers of English (NNS) in the context of second language writing (L2 writing), EAP or ESL (English as a Second Language). The following discussion of past studies consists of two parts. The first part discusses the studies that employed needs analysis for various purposes. On the other hand, the second part comprises the studies that only focused on writing needs.

Sarudin et al. (2009) conducted a needs analysis to investigate the English language problems in terms of speaking and writing skills of engineering students at a public university in Malaysia. In summary, both students and English language lecturers generally agreed that students had problems in writing and speaking, specifically in vocabulary and grammar. Additionally, students also had problems in using varied expressions and fluency in speaking. Next, Eslami (2010) carried out a need analysis to gauge students' and instructors' perceptions of their language learning needs and to analyse the perception of EAP learners from different related academic backgrounds. The findings revealed that students in humanities and engineering perceived having a low level of language proficiency as a significant problem compared to students in medicine. The majority of humanities and engineering students believed that they needed to increase their general proficiency in English. They perceived limited vocabulary, slow reading speed, poor listening, speaking, writing and reading comprehension, boring classes, access to the Internet, and instructors' lack of emphasis on the use of the Internet as their main problems. The study also discovered that students preferred a learner-centred class and wanted more involvement in class activities. In contrast, there was a difference between the instructors' perceptions and the students' perceptions. The instructors perceived all the problems as more important than how the students perceived them.

Akyel and Ozek (2010) conducted a needs analysis while planning improvements to the ELT curriculum of the preparatory school of an English medium university in Istanbul, Turkey. It aimed at getting a better understanding of the students' academic language needs. With regard to the four language skills, their findings indicated that reading and listening were the skills deemed most important for academic achievement by university instructors, in contrast to students' choice of speaking and listening. This shows a discrepancy between the instructors and the students' perceptions of the student needs. In addition, even though most of the instructors and the students agreed with the importance of student initiation in the activities and frequent participation in the lessons, some students indicated that most of the lessons were teacher-centred. A study by Liu et al. (2011) investigated EFL college students' needs in English for General Purposes (EGP) and English for Specific/Academic Purposes (ESP/EAP) at six universities in Taiwan. The findings revealed differences in perceptions of 'necessities', 'wants' and 'lacks' in different language skills among the students, and also in their perceptions of needs as compared to the courses they took. For the EGP course, the four types of language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) were not perceived as equally necessary, desirable and needed by the students. There were also discrepancies in some paired language skills. Similarly, for the ESP/EAP course, the four types of language skills were not perceived as equally necessary, desirable and needed by the students, and some discrepancies were also recorded. For instance, speaking, despite being perceived as a weaker skill, was rated as less necessary to master compared to reading. It was concluded that the students had different perceptions of necessities, wants, and lacks "not only in terms of the different language skills taught within, but also across, EGP or ESP/EAP courses" (p. 277).

In a similar study, Mehrdad (2012) investigated students' conceptions of good learning of English at a university in Iran. The participants were 52 students from the departments of Arts, Engineering, Humanities, Science and others. The findings revealed that students showed a high preference for reading and grammar. One interesting finding was that students also showed a preference for a teacher-centred classroom. Mehrdad concluded that the findings that showed students' specific preferences (e.g., pronunciation, grammar and a teacher-centred classroom) suggested that there was a need to improve the course syllabus. Overall, most students expressed their wish to improve their reading and writing skills, as well as vocabulary and grammar. On the other hand, he claimed that the existing language course was not meeting their needs. Therefore, the need to revise the content and syllabus was proposed.

Finally, the study by Abiri (2013) employed needs analysis to identify psychology students' needs in an ESP course in five universities in Iran. The results of the study indicated that the majority of the students considered reading comprehension as very important, with reading a text as the most significant needed sub-skill. Writing was ranked as the second most important skill. The students and the instructors also shared a similar view that the students lacked English language proficiency to cope with the huge amount of reading they had to do in their courses. Both students and instructors also perceived the students as lacking the speaking skills for group discussions and presentations. In addition, most respondents claimed students lacked the ability to use grammatical language even after they passed their language course.

The second part of this discussion looks at studies that specifically investigated writing needs. Casanave and Hubbard (1992) have conducted a survey to examine writing needs and problems of first-year doctoral students who were native and non-native speakers of English (NS and NNS). Questionnaires were distributed to faculty in humanities, social sciences, and science and technology departments at Stanford University. They wanted to know about the kind of writing the faculty members require of their students, the criteria they use to evaluate students' writing, and the students' writing problems. Overall, the results from 85 questionnaires suggested that writing plays an important role. All faculty members believed that writing skills became more and more important as students progressed through a graduate program. In terms of the student needs, it is interesting to highlight that one of the findings revealed that all faculty perceived global features of writing like quality of content and development of ideas as more important than local features such as grammatical accuracy and spelling. On the other hand, in terms of their students' writing problems, NNS were reported to have more problems than NS, which is not surprising. The problems were mainly related to punctuation/spelling, grammatical accuracy and appropriateness and vocabulary, but not so much at the discourse level.

The study by Jenkins et al. (1993) also studied writing needs from the faculty perspectives. Jenkins et al. carried out a study to investigate writing practices in graduate engineering programmes and faculty attitudes about writing needs and the importance of writing skills in the graduate programme and beyond. This can be related to target situation analysis (TSA), which reflected the pragmatic approach in needs analysis. The study was driven by some evidence that the engineering faculty was not happy with their graduate students' literacy. The study used questionnaires, which were sent to the engineering faculty at Cornell, Drexel, Ohio University, Ohio State, Stanford University and the University of Cincinnati. The results indicated that firstly, the engineering faculty believed that writing was more important for students to succeed after graduation than in the graduate programme. In addition, there was a

discrepancy in the standards used to evaluate the writing of native and non-native students between the faculty. Finally, there was an indication that there was a problem in terms of terminology in a dialogue between ESP and engineering faculty, since ESP practitioners did not have the expertise in the technical fields and the engineering faculty lack expertise in discourse analysis. They further discussed this in the pedagogical implications section. They stated, "the engineering faculty often seem to regard ESL faculty as 'relatively untrained people' who can correct syntax errors, but have little else to offer" (p. 63). In relation to this, they believed that there should be cooperation between the ESL and the engineering faculty.

Similarly, the study by Zhu (2004) explored faculty views on academic writing. She conducted her study on academic writing and writing instruction at a public research university in the Southeast of the United States. Interviews were done with 10 business and engineering professors. Both faculties placed a great emphasis on the importance of writing. Nevertheless, the emphasis on writing in the academic curriculum differed, which reflected differences in disciplinary cultures. The business faculty recognised the importance of writing at the policy level and worked towards integrating writing into their curriculum; on the other hand, the engineering faculty put limited efforts into doing so. In addition, both faculties generally had two views on academic writing and writing instruction. The first view represents the autonomous view of literacy, which holds that in academic writing, generalisable writing skills can be transferred across contexts and that writing instruction can be best delivered by writing or language instructors. However, the second view holds that general writing skills are the basis for the development of discipline-specific processes, but academic writing involves specific disciplinary thought and communication processes. In terms of writing instruction, they viewed content and writing instructors as sharing the same role in developing academic writing skills of the students. Moreover, in terms of the nature of academic literacy and faculty role in academic writing instruction, the findings suggested that there is a need to teach discipline-specific writing in the EAP context.

On the other hand, Huang's (2010) and Yildrim and Ilin's (2009) studies differ from the ones by Casanave and Hubbard (1992), Jenkins et al. (1993) and Zhu (2004), as they investigated academic writing needs from the perspectives of two groups of stakeholders – writing instructors and students. The study by Huang assessed how students of English as an additional language and instructors perceived language learning needs for successful completion of their course, which can be related to the target needs/target situation analysis (TSA), and examined the students' competency in the required skills, which reflects the present needs/present situation analysis (PSA). It was done at a university in British Columbia, Canada, in which 432 students and 93 instructors responded to questionnaires aimed at getting information for the initial development of EAP programs. Out of 432 students, 337 were undergraduate and 95 were postgraduate students.

The findings revealed that the skill items identified as 'very important' overlapped between graduate students and graduate instructors, and also between undergraduate students and undergraduate instructors, suggesting that the students were clear about the language skills deemed important by their instructors. On the other hand, there was a huge difference between the students' self-assessments and instructors' assessments of their students' skill status. Several implications from this study were discussed. First, since the results revealed that students need help with their writing, further studies need to be done to probe their needs.

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Second, the skills that the students identified as important may not be the same as the ones that they perceived as needing help with.

Yildrim and Ilin (2009) have examined tutors' and students' conceptions of a good research paper and whether there was any difference between the two groups. The study was conducted in the department of English Language Teaching in a Turkish university. First, 31 undergraduate students and five tutors were asked to write down individual constructs of what a good research paper should consist of (TSA). Then, they were interviewed to understand what each construct meant. The content analysis of the students' and tutors' constructs showed that mechanics of research and writing are important to produce a good research paper. In addition, most students also believed that having the skills to conduct research is also important to be a good writer. In terms of writing problems, the tutors pointed out that understanding and applying the concept of research are two main problems faced by the students (PSA). However, even though the students also perceived these problems to a certain extent, they were more concerned about the feasibility of doing research. It can be said that generally, there is a match between the students' and tutors' perceptions of a good research paper, but they had different perceptions of the problems.

In summary, the studies above show that academic writing was important among the students (Casanave & Hubbard, 1992; Jenkins et al., 1993; Zhu, 2004) and writing instructors and students shared similar and different views about student writing needs (Yildrim & Ilin, 2009; Huang, 2010).

3. Problem Statement

In Malaysia, research shows that generally, university students have issues with their proficiency in English, especially in writing (Ibrahim & Nambiar, 2012; Ismail, Hussin, & Darus, 2012; Sarudin, Zubairi, Nordin, & Omar, 2009; Shah, Ismail, Esa, & Muhamad, 2013). Some of the studies done to address these issues have identified the types of the problems mostly faced by students. Consequently, universities have taken steps to deal with the students' writing problems. However, David, Thang and Azman (2012) reveal that undergraduate students in Malaysia have not been responding well to English language courses organised by their universities to improve their standard of English, mainly because students found it hard to find time to attend language courses, and they prioritised their faculty classes if there was a clash with the language course in their timetable.

Notwithstanding the issues with time, it is believed that the content of the language courses and the language instructors can also be an issue to the students. It has been a concern of some EAP practitioners when ESL teachers teach discipline-specific discourse (Hansen, 2000). One of the ways to investigate a language course is by investigating the needs for the course, or in other words, by conducting a needs analysis. In Malaysia, however, studies that focus on writing needs among university students have been lacking (Kassim & Ali, 2010). Thus, the use of needs analysis was considered for the present study. In relation to this, the present study investigates the EAP lecturers', the faculty lecturers', and students' perceptions of student academic writing needs and the EAP course at a public university in Malaysia. The research questions are: 1) What are the EAP lecturers', the faculty lecturers', and students' perceptions of academic writing needs?; 2) What are the EAP lecturers', the EAP/Engineering students' and the EAP/human sciences students' perceptions of the EAP course?

4. Method

This study is part of the a case study in 2015 investigating EAP students' academic writing needs at a public university in Malaysia. The study employed the complementarity mixed-method design, where questionnaires and interviews were used to collect the data. Using purposive sampling, data were collected from EAP lecturers, faculty lecturers and undergraduate students who were taking the EAP course offered by the language centre at the university. The instruments used were questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

Three different sets of questionnaires were developed for the study: one for the students, one for the EAP lecturers, and one for the faculty lecturers. The questionnaire type was the self-completion questionnaire, where the respondents completed the questionnaire themselves. The questionnaires used closed-ended items, featuring the Likert scale.

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data. A semi-structured interview has an open-ended format where the interviewer's role is to guide the interviewee for responses and prompt them for elaboration on certain topics (Dörnyei, 2007). Additionally, the interviewee also has the flexibility in how to reply to the questions (Bryman, 2012). Semi-structured interviews were chosen for the present study as they were suitable for situations where the interviewer is familiar of the phenomenon being investigated; the interviewer can ask broad questions about the topic instead of ready-made response categories "that would limit the depth and breadth of the respondent's story" (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 136).

4.1 Data Collection

The questionnaires were administered by asking the respondents to visit a website and answer the questionnaire online (Bryman, 2012). The website used was SurveyGizmo. As for the interviews, appointments were set with the participants, and each interview took between 20 minutes to half an hour.

The total number of respondents for the questionnaire was 157 (26 EAP lecturers, 22 engineering lecturers, 17 human sciences lecturers and 92 EAP students from the engineering and human sciences faculties). Interviews were done with 15 EAP lecturers, three engineering lecturers, four human sciences lecturers, four EAP/engineering students and four EAP/human sciences students.

The questionnaires were analysed by calculating the frequencies and percentages of each response. This is one of the methods in descriptive statistics, where numerical data are summarised (Dörnyei, 2007) to examine frequencies (Brown, 2001), while the process of analysing the interviews involved transcribing, coding and assigning themes.

4.1.1 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are two important things that need to be considered when using questionnaires. The questionnaires were revised with the help of a senior lecturer and two PhD English students before they were piloted to achieve face validity. Bryman (2012) mentions that face validity is to indicate that the items in the questionnaire reflect "the content of the concept in question" (p. 171). In addition, Cronbach's alpha levels of the questionnaires were 0.837 for the student questionnaires, 0.757 for the EAW lecturer questionnaires, and 0.727 for the faculty lecturer questionnaires. According to Bryman (2012), alpha 0.80 typically shows an acceptable level of internal reliability, while 0.70 is considered satisfactory. Therefore, the alpha levels of all three questionnaires indicated some level of internal reliability of the questionnaire items. On the other hand, in qualitative research, validity and reliability can be achieved by conducting member checking (Brown, 2001; Creswell, 2014). This is done by letting the participants verify the accuracy of the data and the researcher's interpretations of the data. With regard to this study, member checking was done with the participants to discuss the interview data with them.

5. Results and Discussion

To answer the research questions, the results of the interviews will be presented alongside the results from questionnaires wherever necessary as a triangulation of evidence to strengthen the construct validity of the case study (Yin, 2014). The first research question is:

1. What are the EAP lecturers', the faculty lecturers', and students' perceptions of   academic writing needs?

5.1 Present Situation Analysis (PSA).

Two major themes emerged in the PSA from the interviews with the respondents: (1) student needs for research writing skills; and (2) student needs for basic language skills.

5.1.1 Theme 1: Student Needs for Research Writing Skills

This theme derived from three categories classifying students' present needs that emerged during the analysis of the interviews. The students' present needs were identified as the respondents described the problems faced by students in their writing and their needs. These three categories are what the respondents believed to be the most important research writing skills needed by students.

The first one is 'literature review', which was specifically mentioned by four EAP lecturers and two engineering lecturers. For example, one EAP lecturer said that "the problem here lies in literature review", and one engineering lecturer mentioned that the students needed to "be taught how to critically do the literature review".

The second category is 'paraphrasing and summarising'. This category was developed from responses given by three EAP lecturers, two engineering lecturers, two EAP/engineering students and one EAP/human sciences student. One EAP lecturer explained that the students "don't really understand that they need to be critical; they have to read and then take the relevant ideas and then try to sort of summarise, paraphrase." The engineering lecturers also shared the same opinion as they said: "Although they cite, but they still...they need to rephrase all the

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sentences"; and "…at the moment I think the...the students are confused even on how to actually reword or rephrase from a journal, you know, from a published paper. They don't know what is plagiarism. So what they do is normally just copy and paste".

The third category is 'citations'. All three engineering lecturers shared this perception. One of them said, "they don't know how to actually quote properly for citation purposes", and in explaining what her students needed to do in relation to academic writing, she mentioned, "… need to have a proper citation". Two EAP lecturers, two EAP/engineering students and one EAP/human sciences student also had the same perception. One of the EAP/engineering said, "… looking back right now at my Seminar report, it's full of mistakes in terms of citation".

5.1.2 Theme 2: Student Needs for Basic Language Skills

These basic language skills have been classified into three main categories. The first one is rather general, which is 'grammar', while the other two are actually specific items in grammar, which are 'tenses' and 'subject-verb agreement'. Four EAP lecturers, three human sciences lecturers, one engineering lecturer and two EAP/human sciences students specifically mentioned 'grammar' upon explaining writing problems which could be related to present situation needs. As one EAP lecturer said, "some of them are still grappling in terms of their grammar". In addition, one EAP/human sciences student said, "I have...I have problem with my writing, especially on my grammar". Two EAP lecturers and one engineering lecturer mentioned 'tenses', and three EAP lecturers revealed 'subject-verb agreement' as problems related to student needs for basic language skills. Other than these main categories, there were two other basic language skills mentioned by two respondents which could be categorised as 'connectors' and 'vocabulary', but they were not mentioned by others.

5.2 Target Situation Analysis (TSA)

The respondents also explained about their students' target needs, and the following is the result of TSA from the interviews. Three major themes were developed from the responses on the student target needs: (1) applying research writing skills upon graduation; (2) writing good research reports; and (3) having a higher level of proficiency in language.

5.2.1 Theme 1: Applying Research Writing Skills upon Graduation

Three respondents among the EAP lecturers felt that students needed to have research writing skills as their target needs as they could apply them even after graduation. They believed that the students would be able to use the research skills if they were to continue their studies, and they might also be using the skills in their work, as illustrated by the responses below:

> Because when they graduate, they have to have the ability to write as well as doing research. I mean, I think we should be able to produce those kinds of students. Not only just to, you know, know theories, but also be able to write whatever they have written academically;

> … some of the components or the skills which are included in EAP, they may use it when they're in the workforce. For example, if they... we require them to create or come up with survey questions, collect data, so even though they are not researching, maybe once they go to work, they may need to do that as well;

Because especially for those who, for those who have intentions to pursue study to higher level, especially master students and PhD. I even have many students, they actually plan to, you know, to climb higher. So yea, of course this course is totally needed.

5.2.2 Theme 2: Writing Good Research Reports

Writing good research reports is another major theme. However, none of the EAP lecturers viewed this as a target situation that their students had a need for. Faculty lecturers, on the other hand, perceived the importance of good research reports so that they could be published and enjoyed by readers reading them. One engineering lecturer mentioned that, "… the ultimate goal is that, if a student can produce a good report, that their report can be straight away transformed into an article to be submitted to journal", and another one from the same faculty said that she would expect her students "to come out with a report that is not just readable but err...I can enjoy reading.". One human sciences lecturer shared a similar view when it comes to target needs as she hoped the students "would be able to come out with a good proposal". Two students also viewed the importance of producing good research reports as their target situation needs. When asked what they would achieve from the EAP course, an EAP/human sciences student answered, "a good research paper". Furthermore, an EAP/engineering student revealed, "Probably, if I really concentrate, I probably know how to use... do a research paper, and probably know the correct format and way to cite my sources, and that will help me a lot in FYP (final year project) and IDP (integrated design project)".

5.2.3 Theme 3: Having a Higher Level of Proficiency in Language

Finally, another major theme related to TSA is 'having a higher level of proficiency in language'. One human science lecture said that students should "produce enough level of proficiency of that language that will enable them to write properly". She also added:

> And then that skill actually cannot stop there, they have to be able to produce something which is different from the common writing, common writing… just the normal writing, because they have to get into the academic or research-based writing.

Another respondent extended the notion of language proficiency to reading. She mentioned, "it is not just writing...it's academic language performance. Okay. So, perhaps also more reading, higher proficiency in language".

5.3 Questionnaire Results on EAP Lecturers', Faculty Lecturers' and Students' Perceptions Of Academic Writing

The following analyses in Table 1 and Table 2 will provide information on the subjects' perceptions towards academic writing.

Table 1. Importance of Writing to Students: EAP Lecturers', Faculty Lecturers' and EAP Students' Perceptions

			Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Row Total
1. Writing is the most important language skill for students in my faculty/most faculties.	**EAP Lecturers (n=25)**	Freq	0	0	1	**15**	9	25
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	4.00%	**60.00%**	36.00%	100.00%
	ENGIN Lecturers (n=22)	Freq	0	2	1	**13**	6	22
		Row %	0.00%	9.10%	4.50%	**59.10%**	27.30%	100.00%
	HS Lecturers (n=17)	Freq	2	2	0	3	**10**	17
		Row %	11.80%	11.80%	0.00%	17.60%	**58.80%**	100.00%
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=46)	Freq	1	9	9	**20**	7	46
		Row %	2.17%	19.57%	19.57%	**43.48%**	15.22%	100.00%
	EAP/HS Students (n=45)	Freq	0	0	5	**22**	18	45
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	11.10%	**48.90%**	40.00%	100.00%
2. Academic writing is very important for students in my faculty/most faculties.	**EAP Lecturers (n=26)**	Freq	1	0	0	**14**	11	26
		Row %	3.80%	0.00%	0.00%	**53.80%**	42.30%	100.00%
	ENGIN Lecturers (n=22)	Freq	0	0	0	**12**	10	22
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	**54.50%**	45.50%	100.00%
	HS Lecturers (n=16)	Freq	1	0	0	4	**11**	16
		Row %	6.30%	0.00%	0.00%	25.00%	**68.80%**	100.00%
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=46)	Freq	0	4	9	**22**	11	46
		Row %	0.00%	8.70%	19.60%	**47.80%**	23.90%	100.00%
	EAP/HS Students (n=45)	Freq	0	0	4	**22**	19	45
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	8.90%	**48.90%**	42.20%	100.00%
3. Research writing is very important for students in my faculty/most faculties.	**EAP Lecturers (n=26)**	Freq	1	2	2	**13**	8	26
		Row %	3.80%	7.70%	7.70%	**50.00%**	30.80%	100.00%
	ENGIN Lecturers (n=22)	Freq	0	0	0	**11**	11	22
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	**50.00%**	50.00%	100.00%
	HS Lecturers (n=17)	Freq	2	0	0	3	**12**	17
		Row %	11.80%	0.00%	0.00%	17.60%	**70.60%**	100.00%
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=45)	Freq	0	1	4	**22**	18	45
		Row %	0.00%	2.20%	8.90%	**48.90%**	40.00%	100.00%
	EAP/HS Students (n=44)	Freq	0	0	5	**20**	19	44
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	11.40%	**45.50%**	43.20%	100.10%

Abbreviations. Freq = frequency

Table 1 gives us the information on how EAP lecturers, faculty lecturers and EAP students perceived the importance of academic writing. In summary, it can be said that the majority of respondents from all five groups agreed with writing being the most important language skill for students. The majority also agreed that academic writing and research writing were very important in the faculties. However, only the majority of human sciences lecturers strongly

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agreed with all three statements. It is also interesting to note that nine EAP/engineering students were not able to decide their attitudes towards the first and second statements. This group also had the lowest percentage of respondents who agreed with the first and second statements compared to the other four groups. This may suggest that perhaps the idea of the importance of writing was less prevalent among students with the engineering background, even though their lecturers may have an opposite view to this.

Table 2. Importance of Writing Skills in EAP to Students: EAP Lecturers', Faculty Lecturers' and EAP Students' Perceptions

			Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Row Total
4. It is important for students in my faculty/most faculties to know how to cite academic sources.	**EAP Lecturers (n=26)**	Freq	2	0	0	**13**	11	26
		Row %	7.70 %	0.00 %	0.00%	**50.00 %**	42.30 %	100.00 %
	ENGIN Lecturers (n=22)	Freq	0	0	0	6	**16**	22
		Row %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00%	27.30 %	**72.70 %**	100.00 %
	HS Lecturers (n=17)	Freq	2	0	0	2	**13**	17
		Row %	11.80 %	0.00 %	0.00%	11.80 %	**76.50 %**	100.00 %
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=46)	Freq	0	1	3	**23**	19	46
		Row %	0.00 %	2.20 %	6.50%	**50.00 %**	41.30 %	100.00 %
	EAP/HS Students (n=45)	Freq	0	0	1	14	**30**	45
		Row %	0.00 %	0.00 %	2.20%	31.10 %	**66.70 %**	100.00 %
5. It is important for students in my faculty/most faculties to be able to use appropriate language to review the literature.	**EAP Lecturers (n=26)**	Freq	1	0	0	**15**	10	26
		Row %	3.80 %	0.00 %	0.00%	**57.70 %**	38.50 %	100.00 %
	ENGIN Lecturers (n=22)	Freq	0	0	0	3	**19**	22
		Row %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00%	13.60 %	**86.40 %**	100.00 %
	HS Lecturers (n=17)	Freq	2	0	0	3	**12**	17
		Row %	11.80 %	0.00 %	0.00%	17.60 %	**70.60 %**	100.00 %
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=45)	Freq	0	2	2	**26**	15	45
		Row %	0.00 %	4.44 %	4.44%	**57.78 %**	33.33 %	100.00 %
	EAP/HS Students (n=44)	Freq	0	0	0	15	**29**	44
		Row %	0.00 %	0.00 %	0.00%	34.10 %	**65.90 %**	100.00 %
	EAP Lecturers	Freq	1	0	0	**14**	11	26

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Statement	Group							
6. It is important for students in my faculty/most faculties to be able to apply appropriate language to write a research paper.	(n=26)	Freq						
		Row %	3.80%	0.00%	0.00%	**53.80%**	42.30%	100.00%
	ENGIN Lecturers (n=22)	Freq	0	0	0	5	**17**	22
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.70%	**77.30%**	100.00%
	HS Lecturers (n=17)	Freq	2	0	0	3	**12**	17
		Row %	11.80%	0.00%	0.00%	17.60%	**70.60%**	100.00%
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=45)	Freq	0	0	1	**28**	16	45
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	2.20%	**62.20%**	35.60%	100.00%
	EAP/HS Students (n=44)	Freq	0	0	0	18	**26**	44
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	40.90%	**59.10%**	100.00%
7. It is important for students in my faculty/most faculties to be able to demonstrate appropriate language to write an academic piece of writing.	EAP Lecturers (n=25)	Freq	2	0	0	11	**12**	25
		Row %	8.00%	0.00%	0.00%	44.00%	**48.00%**	100.00%
	ENGIN Lecturers (n=21)	Freq	0	0	0	8	**13**	21
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	38.10%	**61.90%**	100.00%
	HS Lecturers (n=17)	Freq	2	0	0	3	**12**	17
		Row %	11.80%	0.00%	0.00%	17.60%	**70.60%**	100.00%
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=44)	Freq	0	0	2	**28**	14	44
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	4.55%	**63.64%**	31.82%	100.00%
	EAP/HS Students (n=45)	Freq	0	0	0	20	**25**	45
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	44.40%	**55.60%**	100.00%
8. It is important for students in my faculty/most faculties to be able to apply appropriate language to present research findings or academic papers.	EAP Lecturers (n=26)	Freq	2	2	6	**11**	5	26
		Row %	7.70%	7.70%	23.10%	**42.30%**	19.20%	100.00%
	ENGIN Lecturers (n=22)	Freq	0	0	0	5	**17**	22
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	22.70%	**77.30%**	100.00%
	HS Lecturers (n=17)	Freq	2	0	0	4	**11**	17
		Row %	11.80%	0.00%	0.00%	23.50%	**64.70%**	100.00%
		Freq	0	0	1	**27**	17	45

							60. **00** **%**	100. 00 %
EAP/ENGIN **Students (n=45)**	Row %	0.00 %	0.00 %	2.20%		37.80 %	100. 00 %
EAP/HS Students **(n=45)**	Freq	0	0	1	19	**25**	45
	Row %	0.00 %	0.00 %	2.20%	42. 20 %	**55.60** **%**	100. 00 %

Abbreviations. Freq = frequency

Table 2 depicts the respondents' attitudes towards the importance of writing skills that were outlined in the EAP course objectives. In short, it was clear throughout the analysis that most respondents in all groups mainly agreed with the specific research writing skills in the EAP course objectives. The majority of engineering lecturers, human sciences lecturers and EAP/human sciences students chose the 'Strongly Agree' option, while EAP lecturers and EAP/engineering students most of the time opted for the 'Agree' category, except for once for EAP lecturers. These results were different from the results of the analysis of Table 1, as only human sciences lecturers were inclined towards the 'Strongly Agree' category. What can be said from this analysis is that most faculty lecturers from both engineering and human sciences, as well as EAP/human sciences students viewed the specific skills which were taught and expected to be achieved in EAP as important for the students in their studies. This was even more predominant among engineering lecturers as none of them throughout these statements disagreed or were undecided about their attitudes. Similarly, EAP/human sciences students also opted for the 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree' categories, except for the last statement. Even though there were some respondents in other groups who disagreed or were undecided, the number and percentage were relatively small compared to those who were in the 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' categories.

The following section will present the findings that answered the second research question. The second research question is:

2. What are the EAP lecturers', the EAP/engineering students' and the EAP/human sciences students' perceptions of the EAP course?

5.4 EAP Lecturers', EAP/Engineering Students' and EAP/Human Sciences Students'

Perceptions of EAP and Student Needs

The findings are hoped to shed light on the issue of the role of EAP in catering to the students' academic writing needs at their faculties. For the lecturers, they were specifically asked about the relevance of EAP to academic writing and the relevance of research writing skills in EAP to academic writing needed by students in their faculties, whereas for the students, they were asked whether they could apply what they learned in EAP to what they had to do in their faculties, whether EAP in any way helped them with their writing in their faculties.

Four themes emerged from their responses in the interviews. One of the themes, which emerged from the majority of the respondents' responses, represents a positive view of EAP, while the other three are more critical of the course. The themes are: (1) the student need for EAP is due to their need to do research; (2) EAP could meet student needs but only in some ways; (3) EAP caters to student needs only for some faculties; and (4) students need an EAP course that focuses more on language.

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5.4.1 Theme 1: The Student Need for EAP is Due to the Need to do Research

This theme emerged from most of the respondents' responses from both EAP lecturers and students. A total of 13 respondents - nine out of 15 lecturers and four out of eight students - shared the perception that students need EAP as they need to do research. During the analysis, four categories comprising similar responses became apparent. The categories are 'EAP for research writing', 'EAP for students to continue doing research', 'EAP for students who enjoy doing research', and 'EAP for exposure to research'.

The category that consists of most responses is 'EAP for research writing'. Responses from four lecturers and four students were grouped in this category. Below are some of the examples of responses given by the lecturers when they were asked about the relevance of EAP to student academic writing:

> First of all, I think most of the students here, they are required to write a final year project or research paper, in which, what I found is that, we have students who produce good projects. But it was written terribly. They don't know the proper key words, vocabulary, structure, so it was all over the place - based on what I have read, my students' work. So, I think, this course is very much relevant to what they are doing;

> It's a medium. It's a good medium because if you want to take academic writing per se, then you have to suit the academic writing for each. If you talk about academic writing in formal writing, right, then you have to suit formal writing according to kulliyyahs, because each kulliyyah have their own different way, ok. But if you do research, somehow or rather, everyone does research;

> Because, in their kulliyyah courses they have to do research, they have to do assignment.

> In addition, responses from four students also reflected the same idea. Three out of four EAP/human sciences students expressed this view. The other one was an EAP/engineering student. When the EAP/engineering student was asked whether the research skills in EAP were relevant to his course, he responded,

> Just for the writing of the research. Because if I'm... for my FYP I have to do a lot of simulations on computers and things, and it doesn't - EAP does not really help me with those things. But for writing the report and writing the research that I've done, it will help me a lot.

When one EAP/human sciences student was asked whether she was able to relate what she learned in EAP to what she needed in her studies, she answered, "I think just for… how to write the research. Maybe it's just the writing - how we want to develop our writing skill. Just only writing. There's no more". Another student gave examples how EAP met her needs to apply research writing techniques in her faculty subjects. She said, "I can apply the citation techniques, how to do the data analysis, the graph, the references, the introduction, what should I put, the gap, and when I cite, I have to comment. So, that really helps in my studies. Because my studies really... also concern about that thing".

For the second category, 'EAP for students to continue doing research', three lecturers shared

similar ideas in their responses which placed them in this category. In responding to the question asking about the relevance of EAP to student academic writing need, one EAP lecturer said, "… I think it's relevant and students need this, especially if we want, we intend for them to continue this study, write papers, produce... and do their own research". Another lecturer expressed a similar view as she said, "… because especially for those who erm... for those who have intentions to pursue study to higher level, especially master students and PhD. I even have many students, they actually plan to, you know, to climb higher. So yea, of course this course is totally needed".

The other two categories - 'EAP for students who enjoy doing research' and 'EAP for exposure to research' - actually represent responses from only two lecturers; one lecturer believed that students needed EAP as they could experience the excitement of doing research, and the other simply said that EAP was relevant to student academic writing as it exposed students to research.

5.4.2 Theme 2: EAP could Meet Student Needs but Only in Some Ways

This theme derived from responses from one EAP lecturer and three EAP/engineering students – the majority out of four EAP/engineering students. The lecturer, although initially claiming that EAP was relevant to academic writing, admitted that the course was only related to some of the needs but not really to research. He expressed his view as shown below:

> Research per se I would say that... that is not very much related. But what comes after that would be... or what comes before that would be much related. For example, how do you prepare, how do you plan, and then your objectives and everything. Ok. And then how you analyse... that would be very much related. But the research itself, maybe not... not very relevant to what we are doing. But of course we don't look at the research by itself. We look at... as a whole.

One EAP/engineering student found it hard to explain why she thought EAP was only helpful in some ways. In her explanation, she said, "The formatting is kind of different, but for some students, they can manage to relate. But for the degree level, you know, in the degree level you want to see something that you can relate directly. But when I take that course, I can... I can relate but I need to tweak it a little bit. It is kind of helpful, but not so much. I can't describe". On the other hand, another EAP/engineering student described EAP as not being specific to the topics in his faculty. He said, "… it is relevant but it's not specific. It's not specific to my kulliyyah. So let's say for example, if it's under the kulliyyah, then the topic will be more specific or more scientific, so will involve more numbers, and more quantitative analysis, maybe using different software for analysing. That if it is specific to my kulliyyah. But it's that, right now it's more, much, much more general".

5.4.3 Theme 3: EAP Caters to Student Needs Only for Some Faculties

Three EAP lecturers shared similar views. One lecturer responded to the question on the relevance of research writing skills in EAW to academic writing needed by students. She said

> So I believe... in term, if you look at in the general perspective... all kulliyyahs will... somehow find it important, but in certain erm... particular programs you know they may, students may not find the relevance.

On the other hand, another lecturer who shared this view gave examples of the faculties that might find the course relevant to their needs and vice versa. She said,

> In the kulliyyahs? Not all kulliyyahs though. For instance, for Human Sciences, they really, really need this. That's why also in the kulliyyah it's compulsory for them to take research methodology. But unlike students in, yes, again, Engineering, or maybe some other... some other kulliyyahs I am not aware of, ok, maybe they don't really require this. They don't really see the need to have this... this course.

5.4.4 Theme 4: Students Need an EAP Course that Focuses More on Language

The final theme emerged from responses by only two lecturers. Both of them viewed EAP as focusing on the research part more than the language bit. One of them said,

> … they have got to change some aspects of it in order to make it more relevant, you know. In the sense that erm... we're mis-shooting things, I think. Because their priority now is on the research, quite not so much on the language part. We really have to go on the language part.

The other lecturer also perceived teaching research more than language as an issue in the relevance of EAP to student academic writing needs. She asserted,

> It is not hundred per cent relevant. Maybe about fifty to sixty per cent. Well, they need... they do need some sort of a format but you don't exactly... kind of, you know, push them to follow the format of a research paper. What we should be looking at would be, you know, are supposed to use this word instead of that word, that's it, that's it basically. But we are not doing that right now.

In short, to answer this research question, EAP lecturers and students were asked how they perceived EAP as a writing course that is relevant in meeting the students' academic writing needs. It is important to stress that even though only the first theme reflects a positive view of EAP, the theme emerged from the responses of the most number of respondents. This is considered significant in thematic analysis as looking at repetition has been one of the most common criteria for establishing a theme (Ryan & Bernard, 2003, as cited in Bryman, 2012).

5.5 Questionnaire Results on EAP Lecturers and Students' Perceptions of the EAP Course

The EAP lecturers and students' perceptions of the EAP course are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. The EAP Course: EAP Lecturers' and EAP Students' Perceptions

			Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Row Total
1. The objectives of EAP are clear.	EAP Lecturers (n=26)	Freq	0	0	2	18	6	26
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	7.70%	69.20%	23.10%	100.00%
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=47)	Freq	0	1	7	33	6	47
		Row %	0.00%	2.10%	14.90%	70.20%	12.80%	100.00%
	EAP/HS Students (n=45)	Freq	0	1	4	30	10	45
		Row %	0.00%	2.20%	8.90%	66.70%	22.20%	100.00%
2. The content of EAP is in line with its objectives.	EAP Lecturers (n=26)	Freq	0	0	0	22	4	26
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	84.60%	15.40%	100.00%
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=47)	Freq	0	1	5	32	9	47
		Row %	0.00%	2.13%	10.64%	68.09%	19.15%	100.00%
	EAP/HS Students (n=44)	Freq	0	1	5	28	10	44
		Row %	0.00%	2.30%	11.40%	63.60%	22.70%	100.00%
3. The materials used in EAP (e.g., notes, books, etc.) are effective to achieve its objectives.	EAP Lecturers (n=26)	Freq	0	2	4	19	1	26
		Row %	0.00%	7.70%	15.40%	73.10%	3.80%	100.00%
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=47)	Freq	0	4	2	34	7	47
		Row %	0.00%	8.50%	4.30%	72.30%	14.90%	100.00%
	EAP/HS Students (n=45)	Freq	0	1	8	24	12	45
		Row %	0.00%	2.20%	17.80%	53.30%	26.70%	100.00%
4. The amount of materials used in EAP is sufficient.	EAP Lecturers (n=26)	Freq	0	7	4	13	2	26
		Row %	0.00%	26.90%	15.40%	50.00%	7.70%	100.00%
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=45)	Freq	1	4	5	29	6	45
		Row %	2.22%	8.89%	11.11%	64.44%	13.33%	100.00%
	EAP/HS Students (n=45)	Freq	0	1	11	24	9	45
		Row %	0.00%	2.20%	24.44%	53.33%	20.00%	100.00%
5. The time allocated for EAP per week is sufficient.	EAP Lecturers (n=26)	Freq	2	**11**	1	11	1	26
		Row %	7.70%	**42.30%**	3.80%	42.30%	3.80%	100.00%
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=46)	Freq	0	1	3	33	9	46
		Row %	0.00%	2.20%	6.50%	71.70%	19.60%	100.00%
	EAP/HS Students (n=45)	Freq	1	4	3	27	10	45
		Row %	2.20%	8.90%	6.70%	60.00%	22.20%	100.00%
6. The assessment (e.g., assignments, exams, etc.) in	EAP Lecturers (n=26)	Freq	0	4	2	19	1	26
		Row %	0.00%	15.40%	7.70%	73.10%	3.80%	100.00%

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EAP is effective to achieve its objectives.	**EAP/ENGIN Students (n=47)**	Freq	0	3	5	**34**	5	47
		Row %	0.00%	6.38%	10.64%	**72.34 %**	10.64%	100.00 %
	EAP/HS Students (n=43)	Freq	1	2	7	**24**	9	43
		Row %	2.30%	4.70%	16.30%	**55.80 %**	20.90%	100.00 %
7. I/The lecturers know exactly what to teach in EAP.	**EAP Lecturers (n=26)**	Freq	0	0	3	**20**	3	26
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	11.50%	**76.90 %**	11.50%	100.00 %
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=47)	Freq	0	0	1	**29**	17	47
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	2.10%	**61.70 %**	36.20%	100.00 %
	EAP/HS Students (n=43)	Freq	0	0	5	**21**	17	43
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	11.63%	**48.84 %**	39.53%	100.00 %
8. I am/The lecturers are able to teach EAP confidently.	**EAP Lecturers (n=26)**	Freq	0	0	1	**20**	5	26
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	3.80%	**76.90 %**	19.20%	100.00 %
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=46)	Freq	0	0	0	**25**	21	46
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	**54.30 %**	45.70%	100.00 %
	EAP/HS Students (n=45)	Freq	0	0	2	**22**	21	45
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	4.40%	**48.90 %**	46.70%	100.00 %
9. EAP is relevant to my studies in my faculties/the students' academic studies in their faculties.	**EAP Lecturers (n=26)**	Freq	0	2	3	**13**	8	26
		Row %	0.00%	7.70%	11.50%	**50.00 %**	30.80%	100.00 %
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=46)	Freq	0	1	3	**36**	6	46
		Row %	0.00%	2.20%	6.50%	**78.30 %**	13.00%	100.00 %
	EAP/HS Students (n=42)	Freq	0	0	6	**23**	13	42
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	14.30%	**54.80 %**	31.00%	100.00 %
10. EAP and academic studies in faculties should be related.	**EAP Lecturers (n=26)**	Freq	0	0	1	**13**	12	26
		Row %	0.00%	0.00%	3.80%	**50.00 %**	46.20%	100.00 %
	EAP/ENGIN Students (n=47)	Freq	0	1	5	**31**	10	47
		Row %	0.00%	2.10%	10.60%	**66.00 %**	21.30%	100.00 %
	EAP/HS Students (n=44)	Freq	0	1	3	**25**	15	44
		Row %	0.00%	2.30%	6.80%	**56.80 %**	34.10%	100.00 %

Abbreviations. Freq = frequency

In Table 3, the first statement was 'The objectives of EAP are clear'. The results revealed that all three groups had the majority of the respondents choosing 'Agree' as their answer. There were 18 (69.20%) EAP lecturers who chose this option. The second statement was 'The content of EAP is in line with its objectives'. Similarly, the majority of respondents in all three groups chose 'Agree'.

The third statement was 'The materials used in EAP (e.g., notes, books, etc.) are effective to achieve its objectives'. The results were again similar to the previous two statements. The majority in all groups still chose the 'Agree' option. Nineteen EAP lecturers or 73.10% of them were in this category, together with 34 or 72.30% EAP/engineering students and 24 or 53.30% EAP/human sciences students.

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The next statement, 'The amount of materials used in EAP is sufficient', revealed more diverse results in all the groups. The results showed that, similar to the previous items, most of the respondents chose 'Agree' in all groups. From the EAP lecturers' group, 13 of them or 50% were in this category. Twenty-nine or 64.44% of EAP/engineering students together with 24 or 53.33% of EAP/human sciences students felt this way.

The fifth statement was on time allocation. For this statement, interestingly, the pattern of response from EAP lecturers changed. There was the same number of respondents who agreed and disagreed.

The next statement was on the assessment. For this statement, the majority of all groups chose 'Agree' as their answer. The results generally show that most respondents felt that the assessment managed to reflect the objectives of EAP, but the number of respondents who did not think so or were undecided suggests it may be worth reviewing.

The next two statements were about what EAP lecturers thought of themselves, and what the students thought of EAP lecturers with regard to EAP. For the first statement, out of 26 lecturers, 20 lecturers (76.90%) agreed and 3 lecturers (11.50%) strongly agreed with the statement.

The majority in all three groups also agreed with the statement 'I am/The lecturers are able to teach EAP confidently'. This indicates that a large number of lecturers were comfortable in delivering the lessons in the course. All EAP/engineering students perceived EAP lecturers as confident in teaching the course.

The last two statements were to determine the subjects' attitudes towards EAP and its relationship to the students' studies. Although the majority of all respondents agreed with the first statement, there were also a small number of responses that expressed disagreement and uncertainties. Among the EAP lecturers, 13 (50%) and eight (30.80%) were in the 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' categories respectively. Even though they might not have a concrete knowledge of what their student writing needs in their faculties were, they believed that what was being taught in EAP was able to fulfill the needs of their students in terms of writing in their faculties. On the students' side, a majority of 36 students (78.30%) from the EAP/engineering group agreed with this statement. Furthermore, the EAP/human sciences group had a majority of 'Agree' (23 students/54.80%) and quite a large number of 'Strongly Agree' (13/31%) responses. If we compare the three groups, EAP/human sciences students were the group that showed the most positive attitude towards the statement.

The last statement also had the majority of respondents in all groups choosing 'Agree' to represent their attitudes. Most of them agreed that EAP should be related to the students' academic studies in their faculties.

The findings from the needs analysis on academic writing in EAP have revealed that generally, the majority of the EAP lecturers and students had a positive view towards the course. With regard to the importance of academic writing and research writing (research question 1), the EAP lecturers, faculty lecturers as well as the students felt that they were important skills in the faculties (TSA). This can be compared to the studies by Casanave and Hubbard (1992),

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Dehnad et al. (2010), Jenkins et al. (1993) and Zhu (2004) that found that academic writing was important for the students.

Most of the EAP lecturers, engineering lecturers, EAP/engineering and EAP/human sciences students perceived research writing skills as their present situation needs (PSA), with specific needs for the skills to write the literature review, paraphrase, summarise and write citations. In addition, there was a consistency between their present needs and their target needs (TSA), which are writing good research reports (engineering lecturers, EAP/engineering and EAP/human sciences students) and applying research writing skills upon graduation (EAP lecturers).

However, the findings from the interviews revealed that, unlike other stakeholders, human sciences lecturers did not perceive research writing skills as the most important skills. On the other hand, they believed that students needed more improvement in their basic language skills due to their current writing problems (PSA) to achieve a higher level of language proficiency (TSA). This finding is interesting because the questionnaire findings indicated that HS lecturers were among the majority of the respondents who strongly agreed with the importance of research writing in the faculties. With regard to student present needs, human sciences lecturers felt that the main problems among the students were grammar, tenses and subject-verb agreement. In comparison, grammar was also perceived as an important need in the studies by Sarudin et al. (2009), Mehrdad (2012), Abiri (2013), Casanave and Hubbard (1992) and Huang (2010).

The discrepancies between the stakeholders' perceptions can be compared with several studies. It was evident in the studies by Yildrim and Ilin (2009) and Huang (2010) that writing instructors and students had similar and different views about student writing needs. Moreover, the faculties in the studies by Casanave and Hubbard (1992), Jenkins et al. (1993) and Zhu (2004), albeit acknowledging the importance of writing, differed in their emphasis on writing. Furthermore, Dehnad et al. (2010) also found that the stakeholders in their study had similarities and differences in their perceptions of student needs.

Needs analyses in other contexts with a non-writing focus also revealed different perceptions among their subjects. Eslami (2010) found that humanities and engineering students' perceptions of language proficiency problems differed from medical students' perceptions, whereas Akyel and Ozek's (2010) study indicated a discrepancy between instructors' and students' perceptions of student needs. Liu et al. (2011) also discovered that listening, speaking, reading and writing needs on an ESP/EAP course were not equally perceived by the students. On the other hand, there were stakeholders in some studies who shared the same perceptions regarding student needs, such as the ones by Mehrdad (2012), Abiri (2013) and Sarudin et al. (2009).

The main findings have provided evidence from the stakeholders' perspectives indicating that academic writing is the most important skill in the engineering and human sciences faculties. The EAP course, which focused on research writing, has also been acknowledged as fulfilling its objectives. All of the stakeholders agreed with the importance of research writing for students, except for some lecturers from the human sciences faculty who perceived basic language skills as more important.

6. Conclusion

The results of the case study revealed that the EAP lecturers, engineering lecturers, human sciences lecturers, EAP/engineering students and EAP/human sciences students had similar and different perceptions with regard to student academic writing needs. The identified present needs (PSA) were: (1) student needs for research writing skills; and (2) student needs for basic language skills. In addition, the student target needs (TSA) were identified as: (1) applying research writing skills upon graduation; (2) writing good research reports; and (3) having a higher level of proficiency in language.

Secondly, the majority of the EAP lecturers and students have a positive view towards the EAP course. In terms of academic writing needs in the EAP course, the study identified four target needs (TSA): (1) the student need for EAP is due to the need to do research; (2) EAP could meet student needs but only in some ways; (3) EAP catered to student needs only for some faculties; and (4) students need an EAP course that focuses more on language.

The present needs (PSA) and the target needs (TSA) that have been identified from the findings can be used as a source of information for other language centres for their academic writing courses. As a start, since the findings also relate the identified needs with specific faculties (engineering and human sciences), this information can be used as a guide to determine the syllabus of a writing course for the related faculties. On the other hand, the study only involved two faculties (engineering and human sciences) other than the language centre. It is believed that including more faculties would have contributed to better findings.

Finally, the present study was done in the context of a public university in Malaysia. Other than one language centre, only two faculties were involved: the engineering and human sciences faculties. Therefore, future research can consider conducting similar research in a different context, and/or involve more faculties. The selection of faculties can also be made to represent different disciplines.

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