

Access to literature for EAP practitioners



The British Association of Lecturers in EAP

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Outline



Part 1 (15 mins)

- Rationale (Mich)
- Research Questions (Mich)
- Participants (Yanhua)
- Methods: Data Collection and Analysis (Yanhua)
- Findings (Susie)
- Recommendations

Part 2 (10 mins)

Your suggestions

Rationale

- Accessing literature for EAP teaching and individual professional development is important (BALEAP 2022, 2024; Bruce and Bond, 2022; Hyland, 2018; MacDiarmid and MacDonald, 2021; Fitzpatrick et al. 2022).
- Lack of access can impact on knowledge production in a given field (Bernstein, 2000).
- Challenges to getting published in EAP includes 'insufficient knowledge of the literature' (Davis, 2019).

- EAP practitioners across the globe work in very different contexts often in the periphery or on precarious contracts (Ding and Bruce, 2017; Ding and Monbec, 2024).
- Known challenges accessing literature in academia: prohibitive subscription costs, complex licenses (Simkhada et al. 2014); limited availability of resources in libraries (physical and digital); limited ICT infrastructure and internet connectivity; and English-only publications (Al-Suqri, 2011).

- No existing study about EAP practitioners access to literature.

Research Questions

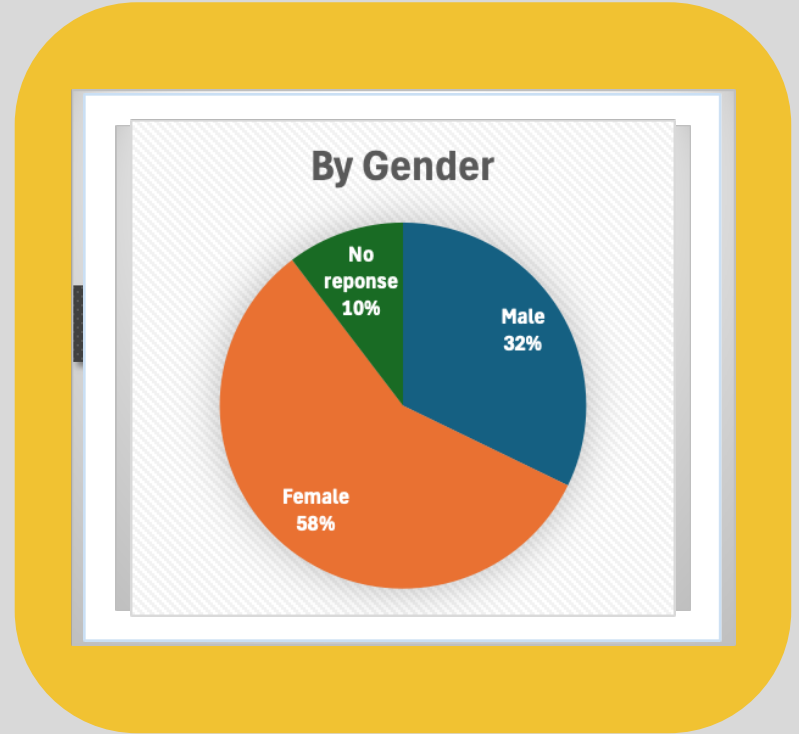
1. **What** literature do EAP practitioners feel they need to/want to access?
2. What are the **reasons why or the purposes for** wanting to access this literature?
3. Do EAP practitioners face any **challenges** in accessing literature?
4. What are the **reasons for** any access challenges?
5. What **strategies** do they employ in order to access literature or **how do they manage not having access to literature** for teaching or research purposes?
6. To what extent and in what ways can BALEAP and the EAP community **support EAP practitioners' access** to relevant and up-to-date literature?

Participants

May-October 2023

Questionnaire: 87 participants

Focus groups and interviews: 12 participants



Data Collection Methods

Mixed-method research design

Questionnaire: 43 questions (closed and open-ended, 15 on background)

Interviews and focus groups: semi-structured, 20-50 mins

List of networks contacted (See Appendix of the full report for details)

Ethically approved by the University of Leeds (FAHC 22-098).



Analysis


Three cycles

Questionnaire

- Quantitative analysis: Descriptive and inferential analysis (Chi-square)
- Qualitative analysis: 3 stages of thematic coding

Interviews / Focus groups

- Qualitative analysis: Thematic coding

Questions	11th July FG1_FG2_SCH_LM_MEV checking Susie , I've continued the coding on this one	Checking FD1_FG2	12th July FG3_FG4_SCH_YL_LM checking	FG3 checking by YL	14th July IT1_LM. SCH checking.
The questionnaire asked about what sort of literature you want to access and why? Do you want to add anything more to this or would you share with others about this.	FG1: Uses literature to inform teaching and materials writing . Accesses the literature to solve a specific teaching problem/address a need (gives the example of researching a dentistry genre because their students have to write one. Later on the interview it's clear how access to the literature is intimately linked to teacher autonomy, empowerment, identity. Without access to the literature, this dedication (to work out the best way to teach something, the genre description, etc) can't lead anywhere. (This is not said quite as explicitly but we might find general comments about the crucial importance of access). 2) needs more access to practice papers , what other PS programmes are doing etc	Accessing literature for: 1. motivated by working on something specific and visible - like an article. 2. Using literature to inform teaching and materials - payment - being paid for what. Valuable lesson, valuable activity. currency is also mentioned here somewhere. This is interesting chat about value - value of lit informing materials/teaching but also value of labour and time. There's something about recognition here too I think. 3. using literature to create subject or genre-specific teaching materials 4. use of literature linked to level of qualification? Mention of the masters and advanced use of theory and research, 5. responsibility/ accountability re students learning - guinea pigs . So responsible use of literature/ theory.	for professional development	 Research Officer 12 Dec 2023	<p>FG4: I generally read for professional development. Um. Not not in a very kind of systematic way. Getting quite an ad hoc way. Like I I subscribe to kind of feeds from say like JEAP, another related journals. Um. I would say though that I read more in the general kind of applied linguistics literature,</p> <p>Reply or add others with @</p>

Two statistically significant findings

a relationship between practitioners' contract type and types of literature they want to access

the aims of accessing the literature for the purpose of teaching a specific discipline and practitioners working with different levels of students

Findings: RQ1

What literature do EAP practitioners need to or want to access?

Table 6 The bodies of literature participants want/need to access (n=86)

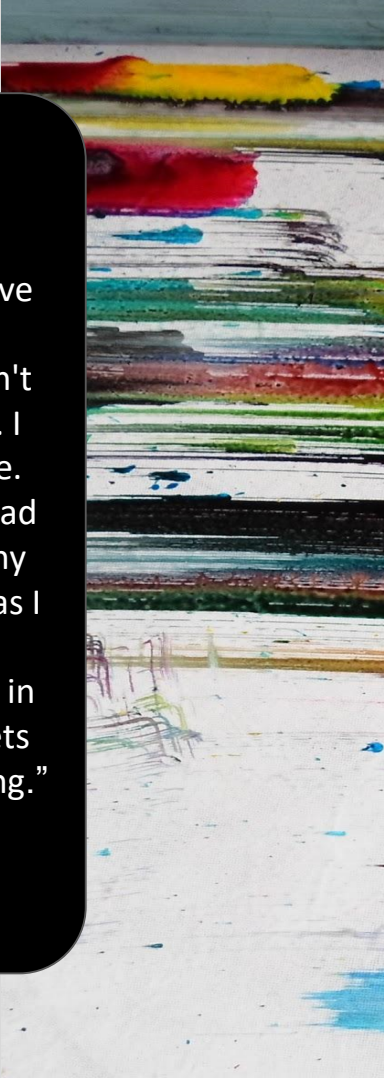
Bodies of Literature	Number of Respondents	% of Respondents
Applied linguistics	68	79.07%
Explicit-EAP literature tailored to EAP practitioners specifically	62	72.09%
Education-based	61	70.93%
Research skills	51	59.30%
TESOL/ ELT	48	55.81%
Study skills	48	55.81%
Socio-linguistics	44	51.16%
Linguistics	41	47.67%
Discipline-specific	40	46.51%
Sociological	20	23.26%
<u>Other</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5.81%</u>

“There is a current marked gap or at the very least lag in the way in which theory informs praxis within EAP and in a number of other fields. It is only with greater opportunities to engage with scholarship can this be addressed.”

Findings: RQ2

For what purposes do practitioners want to access the literature?

- Teaching, designing and materials
- Accountability, Empowerment and professional development
- Belonging to communities of practice: Giving and receiving



“I didn't really have any theoretical knowledge. I didn't have the theory. I only had practice. So, I started to read as much ..as many research articles as I found about academic writing in general and tenets of academic writing.”

Findings: RQ3

Do EAP practitioners have any problems accessing different bodies or types of literature?

Table 9. Where do practitioners access literature (n=85)

Access point	Number of respondents	% of respondents
A university library (either physical or online)	82	96.47%
Google Scholar	57	67.06%
Open access services	57	67.06%
Directly via publishers or journal websites	42	49.41%
ResearchGate or Academia.edu	41	48.24%
Via colleagues or personal contacts	27	31.76%
Shadow library or file-sharing services	5	5.88%
A public library (either physical or online)	5	5.88%
Others	4	4.71%

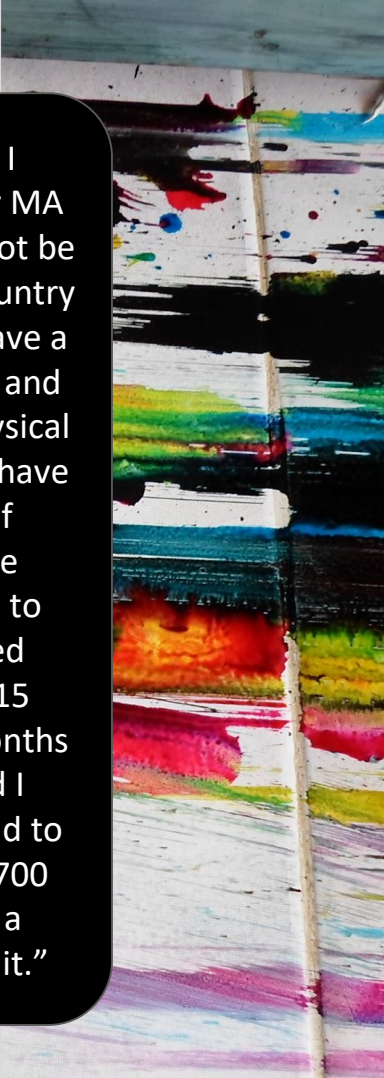
“I once applied for a job where candidates were required to find an academic article of our choice and create a lesson related to this. It was really difficult to access a full academic article... I felt that not hav[ing] easy access to academic articles for the full academic year was not considered”

Findings: RQ4

What are the reasons for these access issues?

Table 11. Reasons for difficulty in accessing literature

Reasons for difficulty in accessing	Number of respondents (n=68)	% of the respondents
Limited university subscriptions	48	70.59%
Library does not own many books in this field;	35	51.47%
Limited digitalisation of literature	18	26.47%
Limited ICT infrastructure in the country/region	10	14.71%
I have limited access to the Information Communication Technology (ICT) or the internet	7	10.29%
Limited ICT infrastructure in the university	5	7.35%
I do not have access to a library (either in person or online)	3	4.41%
<i>Others (see below)</i>	13	19.12%



“The books I needed for my MA studies could not be found in my country nor did they have a digital version and getting the physical version would have cost 100s of pounds. One module I had to study needed upwards of 15 books for 4 months of study and I would have had to spend over £700 just to read a chapter from it.”

Findings: RQ5

How do EAP practitioners try to overcome or cope with these access issues?

Table 12. How practitioners overcome the access issues

How do you overcome these issues?	Number of respondents	% of the respondents (n=71)
I don't	24	33.80%
I rely on colleagues to share sources	19	26.76%
I use open source	17	23.94%
I use a shadow library	5	7.04%
I pay	3	4.23%
<u>Other</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7.04%</u>

“Unless you can remove the paywalls or lower the prices of textbooks, I don't see how this can be solved. As a non-member of BALEAP, not much of the above would help me. 80EUR/yr is reasonable but beyond my budget.”



RQ6:

To what extent and in what ways can BALEAP and the EAP community support EAP practitioners' access to relevant and up to date literature?

Recommendations

Miro password: BALEAP25

The screenshot shows a Miro board with a grid background. On the left is a document cover for "Access to literature for EAP practitioners" by BALEAP, dated March 2025. The cover lists authors: Dr Michelle Evans, Dr Soledad Gonzalez-Hausladen, Dr Yafrouz Gao, Dr Lucilla Morabito, and Judith Gortner. It also includes contact information for BALEAP. To the right of the document is a green sticky note labeled "Post its". Further right is a black speech bubble containing the text "TASK: Help yourselves to a post it and add your suggestions". Below the speech bubble is a purple rounded rectangle containing the text "Suggestions for ways in which BALEAP can improve membership's access to literature".



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