BALEAP Conference 2019

‘Bridging the EGAP’: Improving pre-sessional students’ use of subject-specific lexical discourse through personalised corpora

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Outline

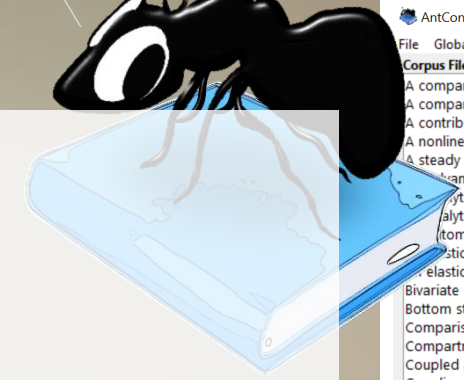
a) Rationale

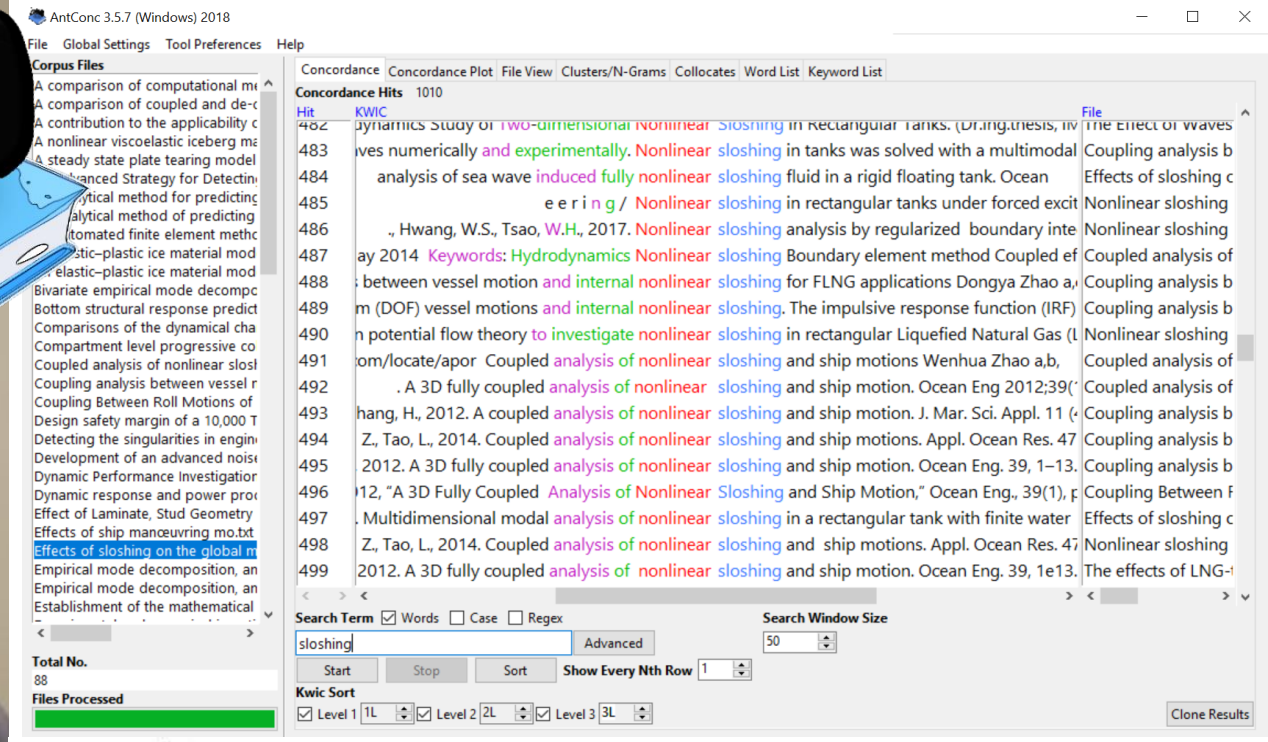
b) Background

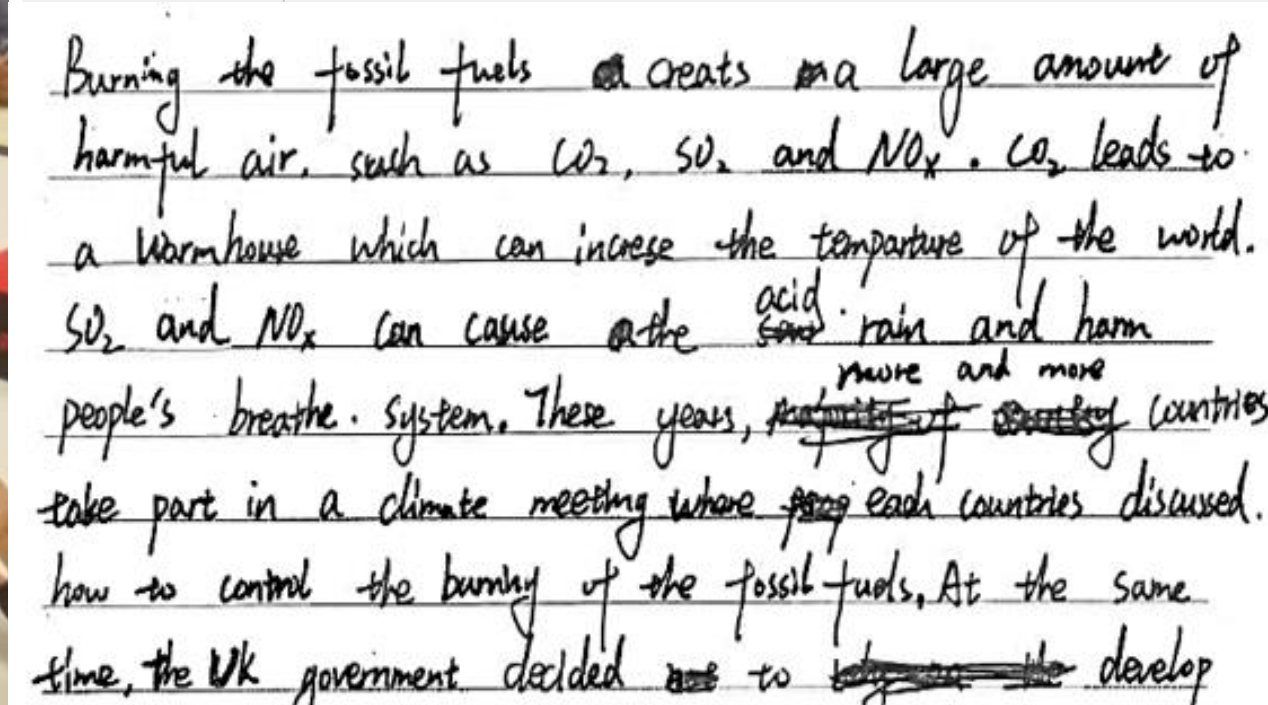
c) Methods

d) Results

e) Discussion and Conclusions



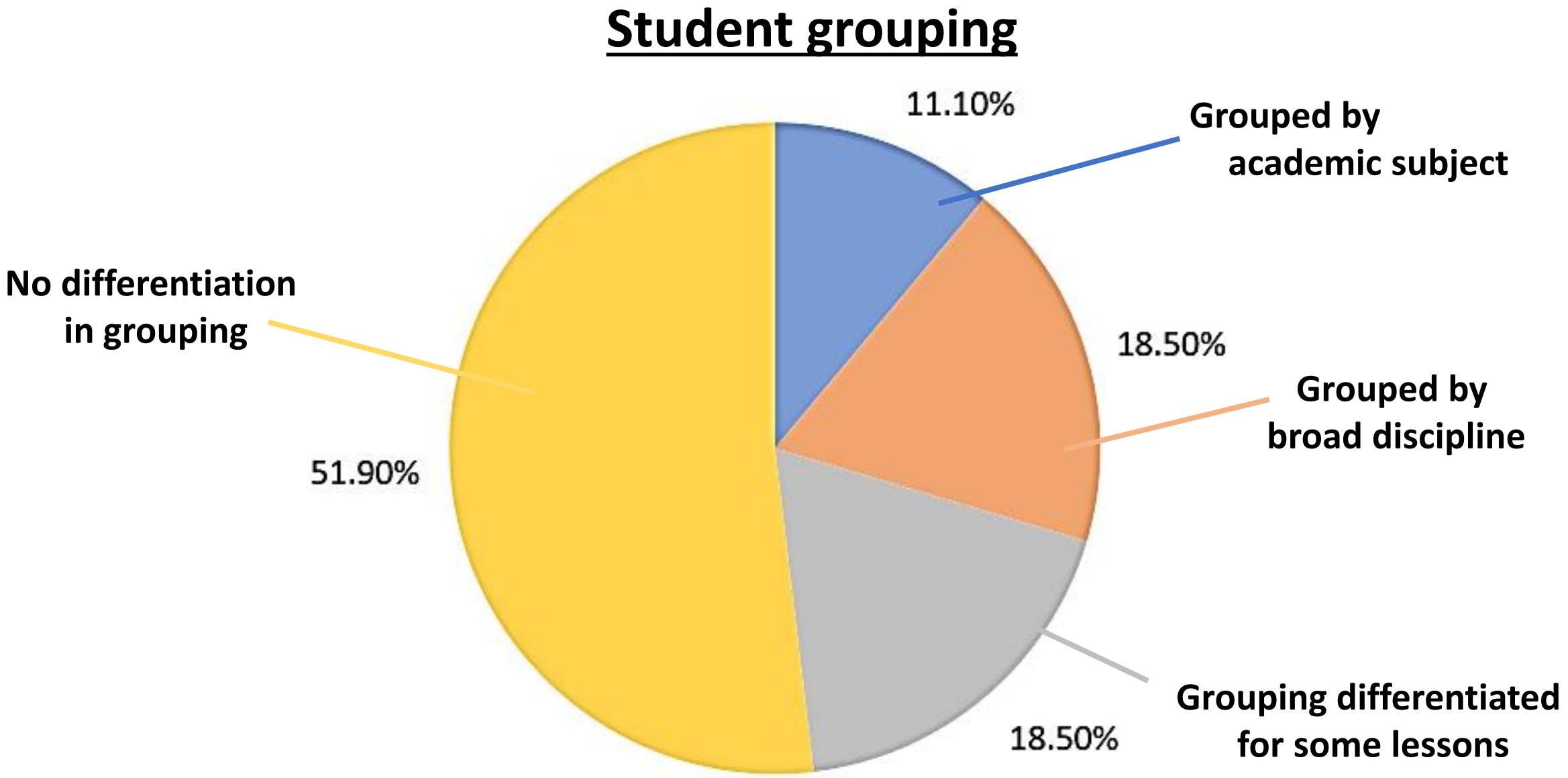




1. Rationale

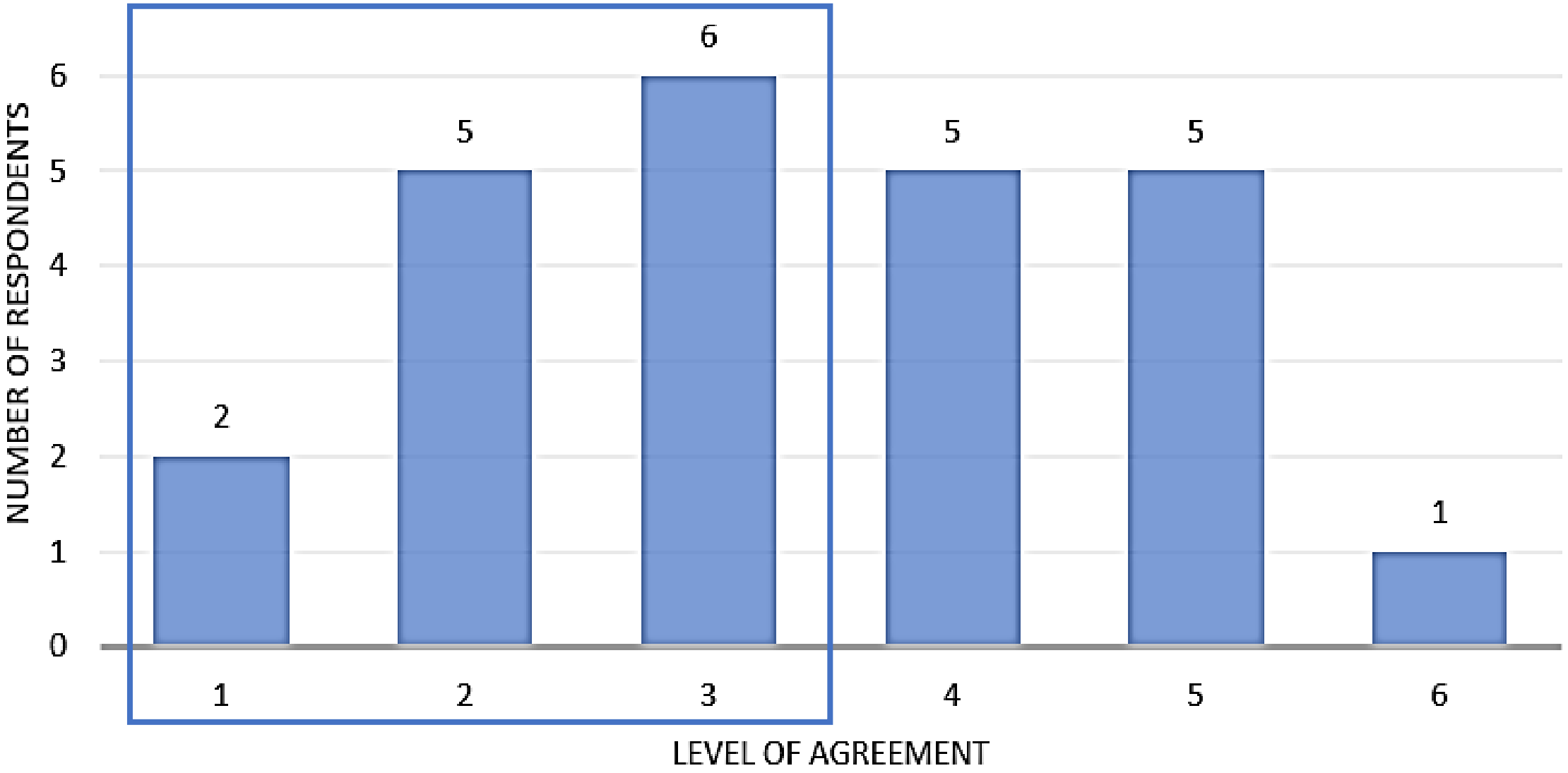

Mechanical Engineering
Geotechnical Engineering
Mechatronics
Transport Planning
Environmental Engineering
Chemical Engineering
Pipeline Engineering
Geology
Naval Architecture

1. Rationale

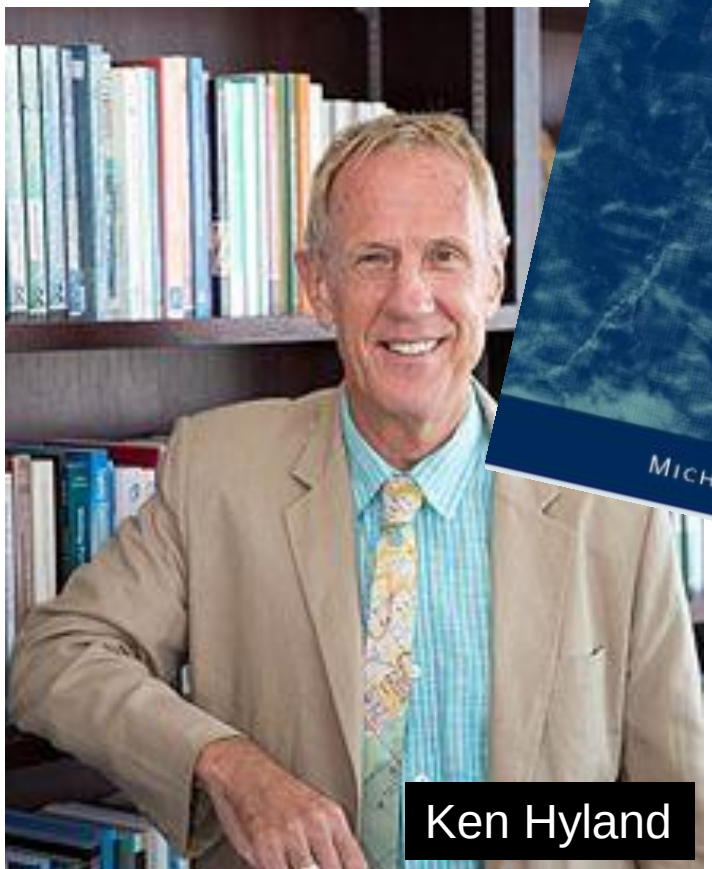

Student grouping
11.10%
Grouped by academic subject
18.50%
Grouped by broad discipline
18.50%
Grouping differentiated for some lessons
51.90%
No differentiation in grouping

1. Rationale

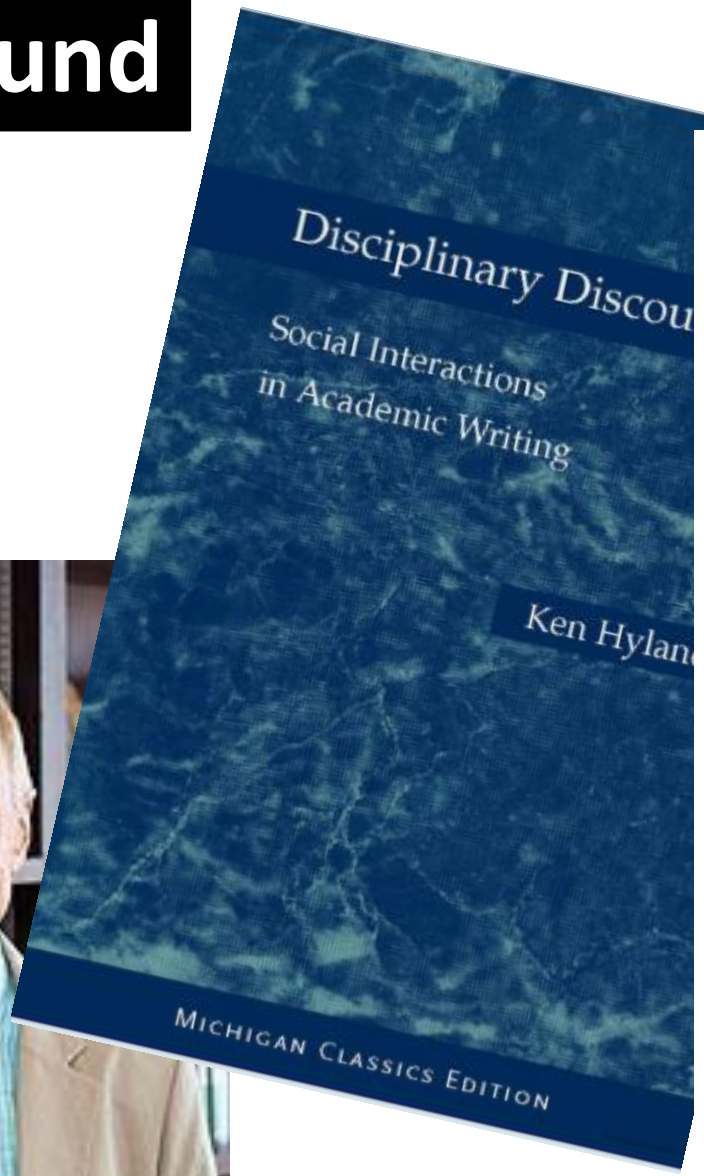
"Within the constraints of the course, I feel I am able to teach the lexical items my pre-sessional students require for their destination courses."

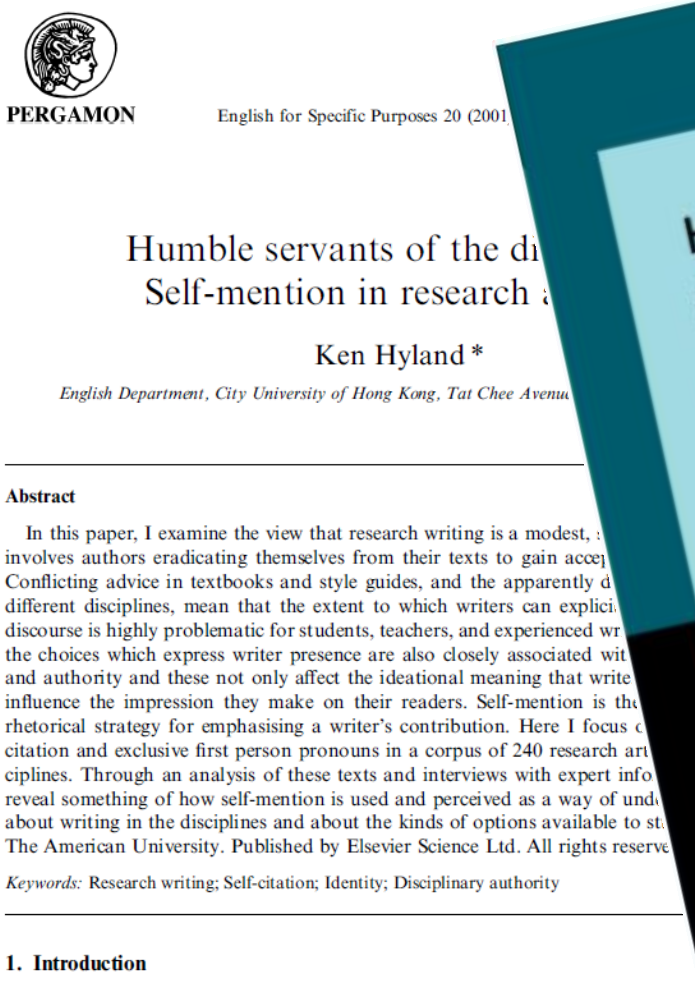


2. Background



Ken Hyland




PERGAMON

English for Specific Purposes 20 (2001

Humble servants of the di
Self-mention in research

Ken Hyland *

English Department, City University of Hong Kong, Tat Chee Avenu

Abstract

In this paper, I examine the view that research writing is a modest, s
involves authors eradicating themselves from their texts to gain accep
Conflicting advice in textbooks and style guides, and the apparently d
different disciplines, mean that the extent to which writers can explici
discourse is highly problematic for students, teachers, and experienced wr
the choices which express writer presence are also closely associated wit
and authority and these not only affect the ideational meaning that write
influence the impression they make on their readers. Self-mention is the
rhetorical strategy for emphasising a writer's contribution. Here I focus o
citation and exclusive first person pronouns in a corpus of 240 research art
ciplines. Through an analysis of these texts and interviews with expert info
reveal something of how self-mention is used and perceived as a way of und
about writing in the disciplines and about the kinds of options available to st
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Keywords: Research writing; Self-citation; Identity; Disciplinary authority

1. Introduction

EAP tutors need to teach "the literacy skills which are appropriate to the purposes and understandings of particular communities" (Hyland 2002)

2. Background

EAP teachers should focus on "the skills, language forms and study activities thought to be common to all disciplines"
(Dudley-Evans and St John 1998)

"The teaching of writing in the disciplines should be left to the teachers of those disciplines and … L2 composition teachers should focus on general principles of inquiry and rhetoric…"
(Spack 1988)

"students [being] primarily responsible for learning subject-specific conventions reflects a student-centred approach"
(De Chazal 2012)


Ken Hyland

EAP tutors need to teach "the literacy skills which are appropriate to the purposes and understandings of particular communities"
(Hyland 2002)

2. Background

Contents lists available at SciVerse ScienceDirect

English for Specific Purposes

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/esp

'Proper vocabulary and juicy collocations': EAP students evaluate do-it-yourself corpus-building

Maggie Charles *

Oxford University Language Centre, 12 Woodstock Road, Oxford OX26HT, UK

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Available online 20 January 2012

Keywords:
EAP
Academic writing
Corpus construction
Corpus pedagogy
Concordancing
Learner autonomy

ABSTRACT

This paper reports on the feasibility and value of an approach to teaching EAP writing in which students construct and examine their own individual, discipline-specific corpora. The approach was trialed in multidisciplinary classes of advanced-level students (mostly graduates). The course consisted of six weekly 2-h sessions. Data were collected from initial and final questionnaires, which provided background information and asked students to evaluate the corpus work. Data from 50 participants are presented and show generally positive results. Over 90% of students found it easy to build their own corpora and most succeeded in constructing a corpus of 10–15 research articles. Most students were enthusiastic about working with their own corpora: about 90% agreed that their corpus helped them improve their writing and intended to use it in the future. This suggests that even corpora of this size and type can provide a useful resource for writing discipline-specific texts. The paper discusses the data on participants' attitudes and experiences and considers

positive results. Over 90% of students found it easy to build their own corpora and most succeeded in constructing a corpus of 10–15 research articles. Most students were enthusiastic about working with their own corpora: about 90% agreed that their corpus helped them improve their writing and intended to use it in the future. This suggests that even

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a) Advanced level PhD and Master's students

b) Weekly 2-hour sessions for 6 weeks

c) Discourse analysis / corpus building combined approach

d) Purpose-built AntConc corpora 

e) Questionnaire-based

2. Background

Can students on a predominantly EGAP pre-sessional course improve their ability to use subject-specific lexical discourse in academic writing by building their own personalised corpora

- Can they use semi-autonomous learning to develop their personalised corpus?
- Can they use their personalised corpus to identify and record relevant multi-word units?
- Do they use more subject-specific multi-word units in their academic writing after building their personalised corpora?

3. Methods

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'Proper vocabulary and juicy collocations': EAP students evaluate do-it-yourself corpus-building

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1. Introduction

The use of corpora and concordances by students taking EAP writing courses was pioneered by Johns (1991, 2002) and has been increasingly described and investigated over the last two decades. Researchers have reported on the direct use of corpora in relation to several different aspects of academic writing, including, for example, lexis (Thurstun & Candlin, 1998; Wu, Witten, & Franken, 2010), grammatical and lexico-grammatical features (Boulton, 2010; Cresswell, 2007; Granath, 2009), error correction (Gaskell & Cobb, 2004; Gilmore, 2009) and genre (Weber, 2001).

One of the issues that arises from this work is the type of corpus employed. There seems to be something of a divide between those, often teachers of language or translation students, who use large general corpora (e.g., Estling Vannestål & Lindquist, 2007; Varley, 2009) and others, often teaching single-discipline classes, who compile relatively small purpose-built

a) Advanced level PhD and Master's students

b) Weekly 2-hour sessions for 6 weeks

c) Corpus investigation / Discourse analysis combined approach

d) Purpose-built AntConc corpora 

e) Questionnaire-based

3. Methods

a) B2 level pre-sessional (pre-master's) students

b) Weekly 2-hour sessions for 6 weeks

c) Corpus investigation / Discourse analysis combined approach

d) Purpose-built AntConc corpora

e) Pre-Test / Post-Test Essays + Questionnaire-based

3. Methods

Experimental Group

19 Students

Engineering

CEFR B2

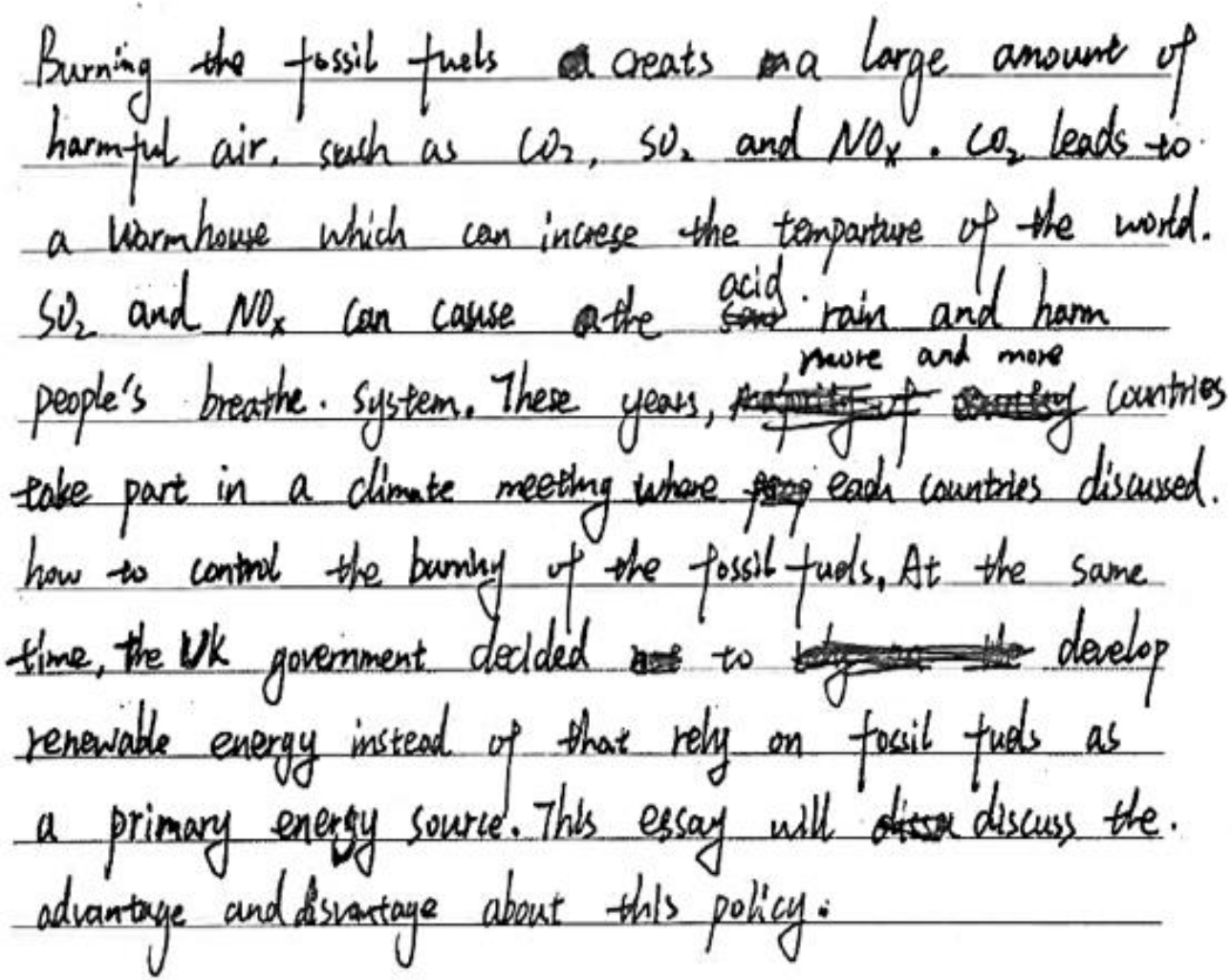
Control Group

19 Students

Engineering

CEFR B2

3. Methods


Burning the fossil fuels creats a large amount of harmful air, such as CO_2, SO_2 and NO_x. CO_2 leads to a warmhouse which can increse the temparture of the world. SO_2 and NO_x can cause the acid rain and harm people's breathe system. These years, more and more countries take part in a climate meeting where each countries discussed how to control the burning of the fossil fuels, At the same time, the UK government decided to develop renewable energy instead of that rely on fossil fuels as a primary energy source. This essay will discuss the advantage and disvantage about this policy.

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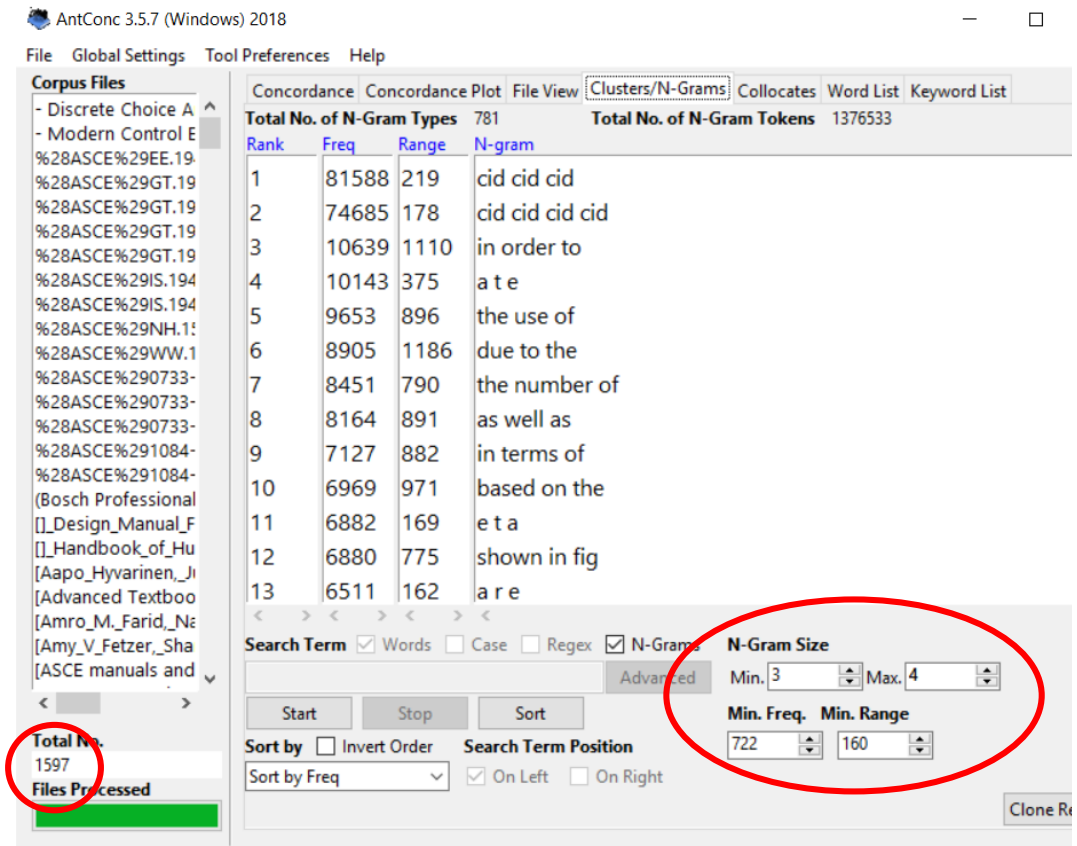
3. Methods

- Subject-specific Engineering Corpus
- Texts from students' corpora
- 1597 texts
- 36,093,588 tokens
- 100 most common 3-4 word MWUs



	Common Multi-Word Unit	Tokens in corpus of published texts	Tokens in control group pre-test	Tokens in control group post-test	Tokens in experimental group pre-test	Tokens in experimental group post-test
1	in order to	10639	6	3	2	5
2	the use of	9653	3	6	4	5
3	due to the	8905	2	6	0	5
4	the number of	8451	2	1	1	0
5	as well as	8164	0	0	0	0
6	in terms of	7127	0	1	1	8
7	based on the	6969	0	1	0	0
8	one of the	6385	5	5	3	4
9	a number of	6152	1	0	1	1
10	the effect of	5962	0	0	0	0
11	can be used	5290	2	3	1	1
12	the case of	5171	0	0	0	0
13	it can be	5142	1	2	1	3
14	part of the	4895	0	0	1	0
15	be used to	4850	0	1	1	0
16	there is a	4746	3	4	5	5
17	the presence of	4430	0	0	0	0
18	with respect to	4143	0	0	0	0
19	a function of	4136	0	0	0	0
20	in this case	3868	0	0	1	0
21	the development of	3775	6	9	6	5
22	some of the	3613	0	1	2	0
23	the value of	3596	0	0	0	0
24	is given by	3459	0	0	0	0
25	used in the	3431	0	0	0	1
26	as a result	3372	3	4	2	2
27	can be seen	3364	1	1	0	3
28	the amount of	3274	7	5	1	1
29	such as the	3197	0	0	0	0
30	according to the	3190	0	1	1	0
31	in which the	3113	0	0	0	0
32	on the other	2912	2	9	3	2
33	need to be	2901	0	1	0	1
34	there is no	2873	4	7	3	1
35	that can be	2847	0	1	0	1

3. Methods

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4. Results

1. What was the percentage change in MWU use between the pre-tests and post-tests?

Control Group = 31.3% increase / Experimental Group = 27.9% increase

2. Was the difference in individual students' MWU use

Control Group Participant	Tokens in pre-test	Tokens in post-test	Change in use of MWUs per participant
1	6	7	1
2	1	3	2
3	8	8	0
4	4	8	4
5	7	3	-4
6	3	5	2
7	3	4	1
8	8	13	5
9	2	1	-1
10	5	5	0
11	3	7	4
12	1	4	3
13	4	4	0
14	2	0	-2
15	2	5	3
16	4	8	4
17	5	4	-1
18	10	12	2
19	2	4	2
SUM	80	105	25
MEAN	4.2105	5.5263	1.315789
SD	2.57291	3.30603	2.334586

Experimental Group Participant	Tokens in experimental group pre-test	Tokens in experimental group post-test	Change in use of MWUs per participant
1	3	5	2
2	7	3	-4
3	4	4	0
4	4	5	1
5	0	3	3
6	4	3	-1
7	0	1	1
8	2	5	3
9	3	5	2
10	1	2	1
11	4	7	3
12	9	5	-4
13	2	5	3
14	5	5	0
15	2	1	-1
16	1	6	5
17	4	11	7
18	5	1	-4
19	1	1	0
SUM	61	78	17
MEAN	3.2105	4.1053	0.894737
SD	2.29925	2.49209	2.941933

Control group

- 12 students' MWU use increased
- 4 students' MWUs decreased

Experimental group

- 11 students' MWU use increased
- 5 students' MWUs decreased

Independent-samples t-tests:

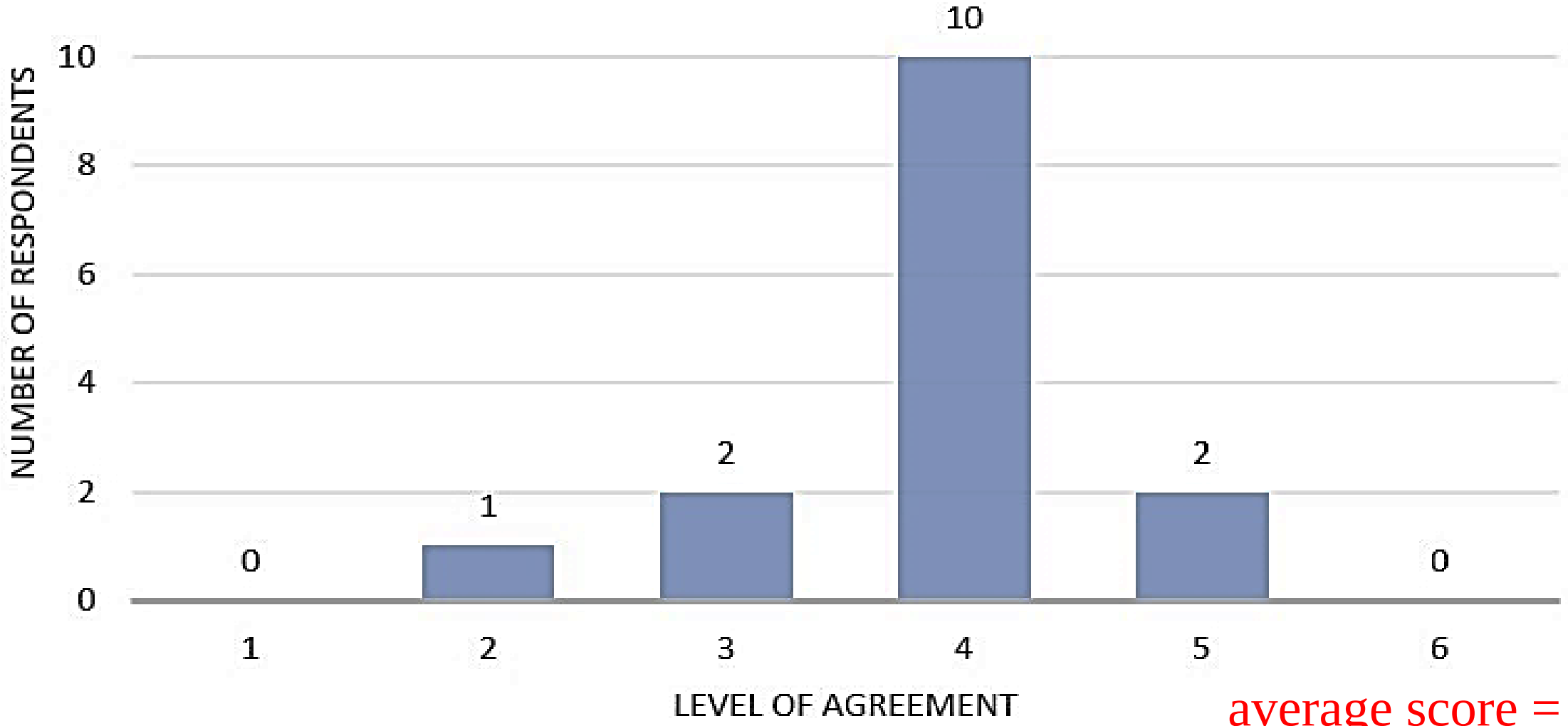
- No significant difference in means of experimental and control groups

4. Results

But…it wasn’t all bad news…

4. Results

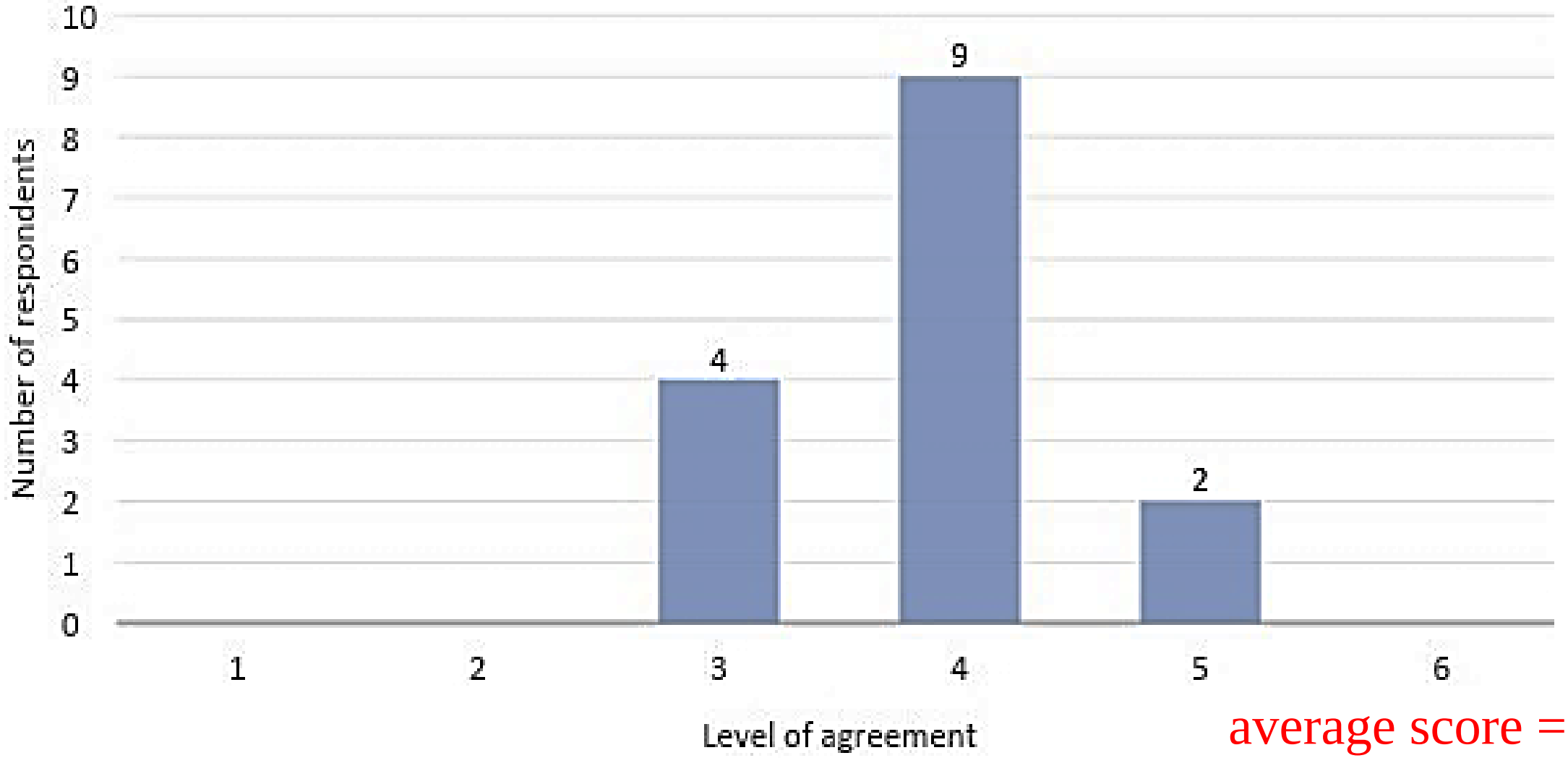
“I feel that my pre-sessional lessons taught me the vocabulary I need for my future academic course.”



average score = 3.9

4. Results

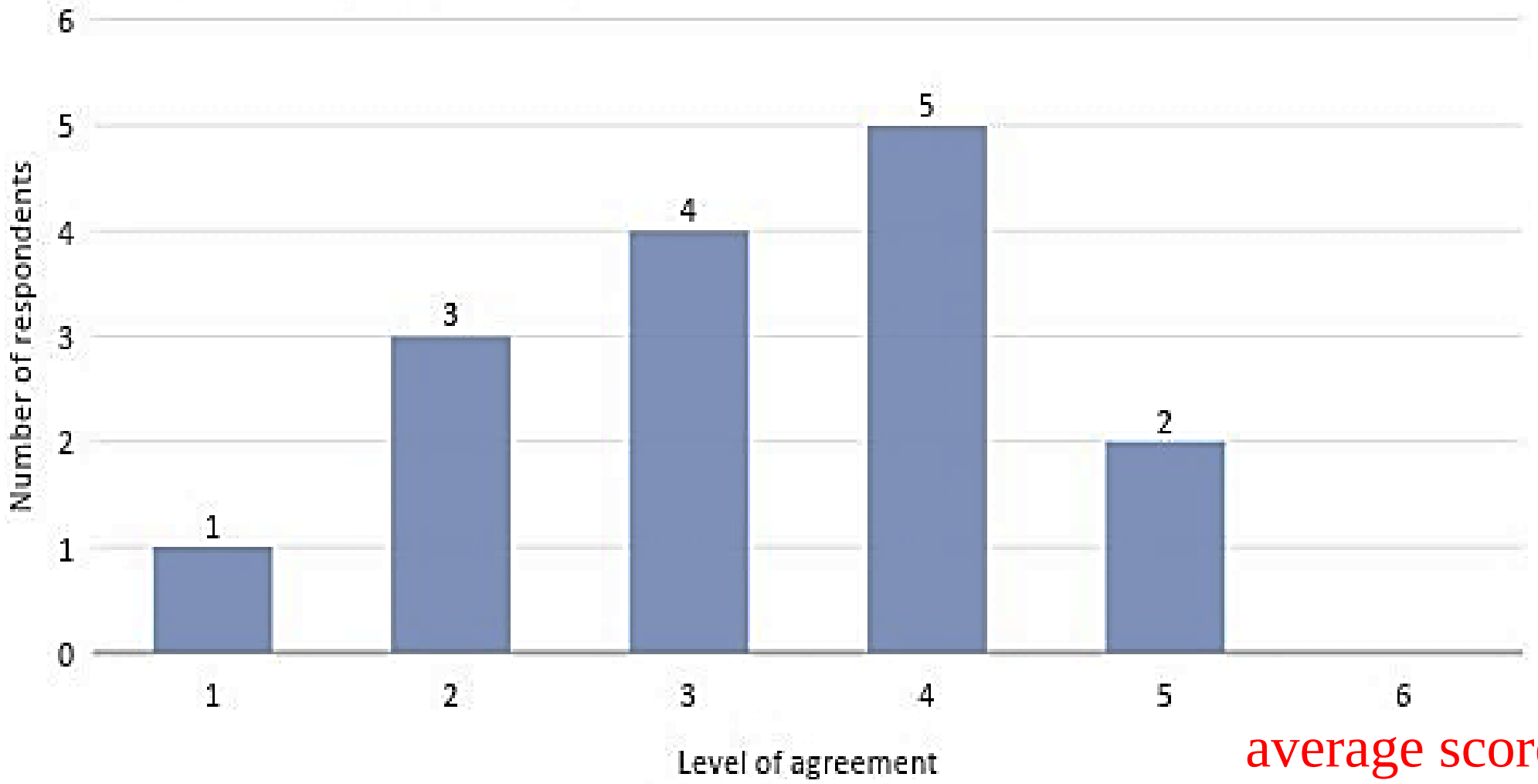
"Using my corpus helped me understand the meaning of multi-word units and collocations in academic texts."



average score = 3.9

4. Results

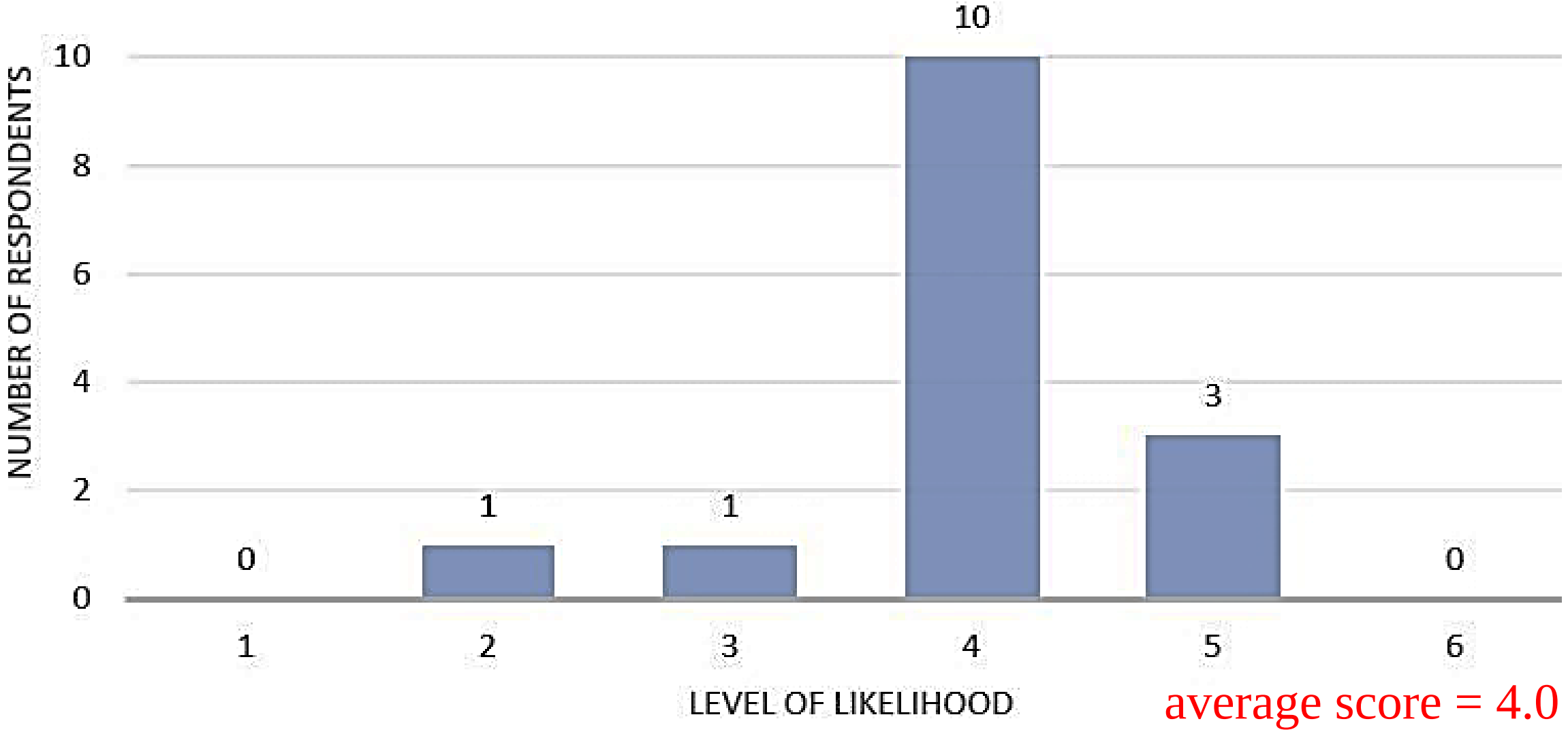
"I feel I am able to learn the vocabulary and collocations I need to use on my future academic course autonomously, without specific language input from a teacher."



average score = 3.3

4. Results

"How likely are you to continue using your AntConc corpus during your master's course?"



average score = 4.0

4. Results

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Can students on a predominantly EGAP pre-sessional course improve their ability to use subject-specific lexical discourse in academic writing by building their own personalised corpora

- Can they use semi-autonomous learning to develop their personalised corpus?
- Can they use their personalised corpus to identify and record relevant multi-word units?
- Do they use more subject-specific multi-word units in their academic writing after building their personalised corpora?

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Explanations:

- Lack of active reading
- Lack of active use of MWUs
- Students' level (of proficiency and experience)
- Tech issues
- Size of group
- Length of intervention

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Future Research:

- Level of teacher support / learner autonomy
- Awareness vs Production
- Fully EGAP groups
- Longitudinal studies
- Repeat quantitative studies tweaking variables

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