Access to literature for EAP practitioners

The British Association of Lecturers in EAP

March 2025

Authors: Dr Michelle Evans, Dr Susie Cowley-Haselden, Dr Yanhua Liu,
Dr Laetitia Monbec and Judith Gorham.

BALEAP was founded in 1972. It is registered as a charity (1139147) and registered as a limited company incorporated in England and Wales (07330723). For further information about BALEAP, please see the BALEAP website https://www.baleap.org.

Permission is granted to copy and distribute this document in unaltered form only, for the purposes of teaching, research, private study, criticism and review, provided that the original author and publisher is acknowledged.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of BALEAP.

Contents

List of Tables and Figures

Introduction and Literature Review

With the (problematic) advent of English as the lingua franca of academia (as summarised within Hyland, 2018 and Jenkins, 2014), the teaching of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is a global concern. While there are multifarious differences in the contexts in which EAP is taught there is a shared experience, in some contexts, of EAP practitioners often being marginalised in comparison to academics in other disciplines (Ding & Monbec, 2024). In some contexts, particularly in the UK, the reasons for this may relate to precarious employment contracts, lack of visibility and academic credibility in the academy as well as the perceived status of language centres or academic skills service-providers within universities (Ding & Bruce, 2017; Hadley, 2015).

Another important difference between EAP practitioners and other academics is the fact that there is no formalised or specialised professional route into the field. With the exception of perhaps more tailored MA TEAP programmes, this means that many enter the field with a sense of having a limited or parochial grasp of what EAP actually is (Campion, 2016) and the knowledge base that can inform it. In order to 'learn on the job' (as many of us do) Campion's (2016) small-scale study highlighted the importance of more informal developmental opportunities, with reading being one such activity. There is further evidence that engaging with literature is key to developing one's EAP practice (Alexander, 2010; Ding & Bruce, 2017; Fitzpatrick et al, 2022). Over half of the interviewees in one recent study (Fitzpatrick et al. 2022:6) commented on the importance of reading for developing as an EAP practitioner, with one participant advising peers to "*read about EAP, investigate the literature, …. – if this doesn't make you interested to find out more, then perhaps EAP isn't for you*."

Indeed, the importance of engaging with literature and having an evidence or knowledge base for EAP practice and pedagogy are essential elements of the BALEAP Teaching English for Academic Purposes (TEAP) individual accreditation scheme (BALEAP, 2022) and the institutional BALEAP Accreditation Scheme (BAS) (BALEAP, 2024); both of which are increasingly valued as professional development and quality assurance measures in the UK context (and beyond).

However, it is already well established that deciding what literature informs *the* or *an* EAP knowledge base is not straightforward as 'EAP practitioners employ different streams of theory and research in their work' (Hyland, 2018: 390). Although Hyland (2018: 390) and others suggest that there is an overarching focus on discourse and communication within 'social practices, disciplinary epistemologies and ideological beliefs', there is still a multi-faceted nature and breadth of practice across and within contexts (Bruce & Bond, 2022; MacDiarmid & MacDonald, 2021). Taken together with the diversity of practitioners' academic backgrounds, an attempt to arrive at a definitive literature would be troublesome. So, while *what* to read may be contested, there is general agreement that reading literature plays an important role in the development of the EAP practitioner and EAP provision. For some (e.g. Hyland 2018; Walková 2021), it is this access to literature and corpus research that has facilitated the move towards a more confident EAP that is grounded in a more secure and evidence-based understanding of disciplinary rhetoric and communicative behaviours.

In addition to these EAP-specific matters, there are historical and contemporary discussions about inequitable access to knowledge, the 'knowledge economy' and knowledge production opportunities internationally. For example, in relation to healthcare research in 'low-income countries', Boudry et al. (2019) outline the implications of paywalls on access to current research and clinical practice. Fosci et al (2020) also summarise the impact on access to literature and full participation in research in low and middle-income countries due to: rising economic inequality internationally; a growing digital divide; research funding gaps; imbalances in research collaborations, as well as the politicisation of science. The consequences of inequitable power dynamics and legitimation of certain agendas, values and practices (over others) have also featured in this discourse (e.g. as noted within Kajumba, 2023; Mills et al, 2023). Some of these matters are discussed further below. In response, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (e.g. in UNESCO 2007, 2019) and various other government and non-government organisations state that they are working towards more equitable access to research and scholarly collaborations or opportunities.

Given the irrefutable importance of engaging with literature then, the question needs to be raised as to how accessible literature is for those working in the field of EAP in a global context. In 2023, the BALEAP Executive committee agreed to fund a collaborative research study to investigate and explore this matter further as an EAP community.

Barriers to access

Little has been written about EAP practitioners' access to literature. As noted above however, the issue is a broader concern within academia and there is some literature outlining the barriers to access and how these are navigated in some particular contexts. Access to literature, for many in academia, is at the mercy of the for-profit publishers of international journals (Łuczaj & Łuczaj, 2020). Within the literature, this means that for those who have identified themselves as being somehow on the periphery of 'global centres of academic production' (Łuczaj & Łuczaj, 2020: 716) or on the periphery of academia itself (Ding & Bruce, 2017; Spack 1998 cited in Hyland, 2018) access to academic literature is highly variable. Simkhada et al (2014) explored Higher Education (HE) teachers' knowledge and practices of accessing research literature in the Nepalese context. Simkhada et al. highlight the necessity of evidence-based practice in the field of health and medical sciences in developing countries. They cite complex licence agreements and prohibitive subscription costs as the main factors behind the inability of medical schools and HE institutions to afford subscriptions to health-science related journals. Al-Suqri (2011) integrated information-seeking behaviour models developed by Ellis (1989), Kuhlthau (1991) and Wilson (1996) and found that the synthesised models formulated to assess information-seeking behaviour (in the 'global north') also suited the analysis of such behaviour in a Middle Eastern context (specifically in Oman). Al-Suqri (2011) found that while academic information-seeking behaviour may be typical across the globe, there are barriers faced by academics in some contexts in the form of limited availability of resources in libraries, limited internet connectivity and speed, and the barriers of language and culture in places when literature is published in English only.

It is an oversimplification to state that access to literature is geographical in nature and not helpful to suggest that there is a global north/south divide. Indeed, Walters (2019: 2) highlights that 'evidence suggests that even the foremost research universities [in the US] cannot provide immediate access to all the scholarly resources their faculty require' and that the inability to access some journal articles was a considerable obstacle for academics. Indeed, despite some of the authors of this report working for Russell Group universities in the UK, we were unable to access some literature on English for Research Publication Purposes (ERPP) to include in this literature review (articles which appeared to be relevant in terms of discussing access to literature). It can be argued then, that a lack of access to literature (whether that is physical access, technological access, or linguistic access) impacts on recontextualising and pedagogic fields (Bernstein, 2000). It seems important to ask then how our curricula and pedagogy be informed by an evidence base when we cannot access it?

A lack of access also has the potential to impact on knowledge production in a given field (Bernstein, 2000). There have been some studies exploring access to literature in wider academia with a focus on access for the purposes of publishing. Bardi (2015) highlights researchers' challenges with access to key resources like international peer reviewed journals in which they are expected to publish (in the Romanian context). However, Bardi (2015) provides very little further information and does not proffer solutions. Davis (2019: 81) cites an editor's perspective on challenges to getting published in EAP which includes 'insufficient knowledge of the literature'. There may be many reasons for this deficiency, including access to the literature. Elshafei (2022) discusses the importance of continued access to libraries post- teacher training to ensure the progression of the field with the dwindling number of permanent posts in the Canadian context. While for some authors (Alexander, 2010; Campion, 2016; Ding & Bruce, 2017; Fitzpatrick et al., 2022), reading is seen as a way to develop professionally as an *individual*, there are those who see it as a necessary activity for driving the *field* forward. Ding (2022) argues that 'reading in academia has no or very little capital' when compared to the wealth of capital bestowed on writing. Ding also posits that the reading we do is not made visible enough and calls for EAP practitioners to 'make our public engagement with reading more visible and

[thus] valued.' Ding makes this an issue of ethics, a rally cry for the profession to develop collectively rather than to be consumed by the advancement of the individual.

Given the detriment that lack of engagement with literature can have on pedagogical practices and knowledge production in the field, it is essential to gain greater insight into the accessibility of literature for EAP practitioners.

It is with this in mind that this study aims to address the following research questions:

1. What literature do EAP practitioners feel they need to/want to access?

2. What are the reasons 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 EAP practitioners 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?

Methodology

Overview

This section outlines the research methods and approaches to data analysis undertaken throughout the study. The research stages are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Overview of research stages

Period	Research stage
Jan-Feb 2023	Research team established
Feb-March 2023	Pilot questionnaire
March-April 2023	Literature review, designing research questions and deliverables.
April-May 2023	Confirm research design and data collection tools
May-Aug 2023	Data collection stage 1: Questionnaire
July - Oct 2023	Data collection stage 2: Focus groups + questionnaire
Sept 2023 - March 2024	Cycle 1. Data coding and analysis of questionnaire (qualitative & quantitative analysis)
August 2023 - March 2024	Cycle 2. Data coding and analysis of Focus groups
March 2024 - May 2024	Cycle 3 triangulation of themed findings across questionnaire, interviews and focus groups.
May 2024- Jan 2025	Preparation of report.

A mixed method research design was used to capture relevant quantitative and qualitative data (Table 2). An online questionnaire (Microsoft Forms) was shared via a range of professional and academic networks that connect people who identify as EAP practitioners or practice a form of EAP. Please see Appendix 1 for the networks contacted. The networks identified were largely international and were used with the intention to gather information from different contexts globally.

Table 2. Overview of research design

Research question	Data Collection	Data analysis
RQs 1-6.	Questionnaire (Microsoft Forms)	Quantitative analysis (descriptive and inferential) plus Qualitative analysis (thematic coding)
RQs 1-6.	Interviews/ Focus groups	Qualitative analysis (thematic coding)

Ethics

The study was ethically approved by the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Cultures Research Ethics Committee, University of Leeds (FAHC 22-098). A participant information document and consent form were shared with questionnaire respondents and interview participants before they agreed to take part. Access to literature is regarded as a social justice issue by some and so the focus of the study was treated as a sensitive subject.

Data collection methods

Questionnaire design and analysis

The questionnaire was co-designed by the research team with the aim of gathering relevant contextual information about the respondents' individual teaching circumstances alongside their perceptions of their access to literature. With the support of a librarian at the National University of Singapore, we reviewed a selection of questionnaires that were related in some ways to our aim (e.g. Lawrence et al, 2020) to ascertain the most effective designs and question types for our purposes. Following feedback from an initial pilot of the questionnaire, we finalised the questions and shared the call for respondents via a range of networks and online platforms to gather insights from different contexts internationally (Appendix 1). The call for participants used other labels or names to explain the type of practitioners who could contribute. This included, for example, asking whether people taught EAP or whether they work with students and others to understand any form of academic communication (in English) and academic cultures.

The design of the questionnaire was intended to reduce the demand on respondents by offering closed and multiple selection options as well as open-ended items for more detailed responses or responses that may not have been covered in the multiple-choice items (Cohen et al 2018). The questions were designed to gather different scales of data for insightful statistical analyses. The use of rank ordering questions can be challenging in this type of questionnaire, so this was limited to one question only and followed up by an open-ended question for further explanation. Relatively large matrix questions were used to find any patterns in the types of literature most commonly accessed. Please see Appendix 2 for the questionnaire items. The questionnaire was also used to identify individuals who would be willing to take part in further interviews or focus groups.

Questionnaire respondents who agreed to take part in an interview or focus group were contacted via their email address and chose whether they would prefer to take part in an interview or focus group. Qualitative data from open questions were analysed thematically and were triangulated with the interview and focus group data.

Quantitative data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. While the majority of the analyses involve the use of raw frequencies and percentages, attempts were made to explore the relationship between items of interest (e.g. how participants rated their access to the literature and their teaching context, contract type, and the type of EAP courses they are teaching). To this end, a series of chi-square tests were used to investigate if there was any meaningful association between two categorical variables.

Interviews and focus groups: design and analysis

The online interviews and focus groups (see Appendix 3) took place after participants had completed the questionnaire. They were intended to extend and delve deeper into matters raised in the questionnaire. The interview and focus group questions were used to keep discussions focused while also allowing more open and extended discussion that participants wanted to raise in relation to the topic.

Transcripts were prepared consistently by the research team including removal of identifying information and personal details. An inductive coding approach was used to create codes from the data rather than having a pre-prepared code system (Cohen at al, 2018). Each transcript was analysed by two members of the research team followed by a third inter-coding stage. This helped to standardise the level and detail of the analysis across the transcripts. In the next stage, the initial codes were synthesised and further analysed, with the recurring and related codes grouped together to identify recurring themes. In the final stage of analysis, the qualitative themes of the questionnaire were triangulated with the themes from the interviews and focus groups. This helped to identify similar patterns but also differences in data gathered from the different methods. There could be scope for a multiple analysis approach to also be taken (e.g. as suggested in Sechelski & Onwuegbuzie, 2019).

Participants

Details about the survey respondents and those who took part in focus groups or interviews are given below.

Profile of questionnaire participants

There were 87 questionnaire respondents. Table 3 shows the represented countries and regions.

Eleven of the questionnaire respondents also participated in focus groups and/or interviews. Less than half (46% of the participants) were based in the UK, whereas over half were based outside the UK, including 28% from China and the rest from a range of other countries or regions. It was important to try to capture a range of contexts and individual circumstances within the study.

When respondents were asked to tell us about their gender (open question), 64% of respondents who answered this question stated female compared to 36% that stated male. Most respondents were aged between 40-59 (total of n65). In terms of educational background,

over 70% of participants had a postgraduate qualification and 37% had a doctorate. 52% had a teaching qualification.

Regarding current teaching status and current contract types, Table 3 shows that most participants held full-time permanent contracts but with a significant number working part-time or holding a temporary contract. This is an important consideration because practitioners often rely on their university/ contract access to libraries.

Table 3. Participant by country/region, age, gender, teaching status and contract type

	Number of Respondents (*n*=87)	% of Respondents
Country/Region*		
UK	40	45.98%
China (inc. Hong Kong)	24	27.59%
Europe (Italy, Poland, Austria, Luxembourg, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and The Netherlands)	10	11.49%
Africa (South Africa, Algeria and Ghana)	6	6.90%
Asia (Japan, Pakistan, Uzbekistan)	5	5.75%
Middle East (Iran, Israel, Saudi Arabia)	3	3.45%
North and South America (Mexico, Barbados, Colombia)	3	3.45%
Australia	1	1.15%
Self-identified Gender		
Female	50	57.47%
Male	28	32.18%
No response	9	10.34%
Age		
20-29	1	1.15%
30-39	15	17.24%
40-49	32	36.78%
50-59	33	37.93%
60-69	5	5.75%
70-79	1	1.15%
Educational Background **		
Undergraduate	24	27.59%
Postgraduate	64	73.56%
Doctoral	32	36.78%
Teaching certificate (e.g. PGCE, CELTA)	45	51.72%
Other	5	5.75%

Current teaching status		
Full-time	62	71.26%
Part-time	24	27.59%
Not working	1	1.15%
Current contract		
Permanent	55	63.22%
Temporary	30	34.48%
N/A	2	2.30%

* The number of countries added up to 92 (instead of 87) because some respondents indicated that they were working in more than one country at the time of data collection.
**The Educational background category includes all the qualifications each respondent held.

As shown in Table 4, most participants had between 15-19 years of teaching experience in total with 16% having 30 or above years of teaching experience. Most had been teaching EAP between five and fourteen years with 9% teaching EAP for over 25 years.

Most participants (71%) had experience of teaching general standalone EAP. Half of them had taught both discipline-specific EAP which was not fully embedded in a subject and had also taught embedded EAP/ESAP within faculties. Although, there may have been differences in how respondents interpreted these types of EAP, the information indicates a variety of EAP/ESAP teaching experiences overall. Most participants had taught either undergraduate (87%) or Masters students (62%) with a smaller number having experience of teaching pre-university (29%) or doctoral students (28%).

Table 4. Participant by teaching experience, EAP teaching, type of EAP course teaching, and level of students taught

	Number of Respondents (*n*=87)	% of Respondents
Years of teaching experience		
0-4 years	5	5.75%
5-9 years	11	12.64%
10-14 years	8	9.20%
15-19 years	20	22.99%
20-24 years	17	19.54%

25-29 years	12	13.79%
30 + years	14	16.09%
Years of teaching EAP		
0-4 years	12	13.79%
5-9 years	25	28.74%
10-14 years	18	20.69%
15-19 years	14	16.09%
20-24 years	10	11.49%
25 + years	8	9.20%
Type of EAP courses taught in the past 3 years		
General EAP standalone (not embedded)	62	71.26%
Discipline specific EAP standalone (not embedded)	44	50.57%
Embedded EAP/ESP (within faculties)	43	49.43%
Other	9	10.34%
Level or type of students taught		
Pre-university	26	29.89%
Undergraduate	76	87.36%
Masters	54	62.07%
Doctoral	25	28.74%
Others	3	3.45%
Main teaching mode		
Offline	58	66.67%
Online	14	16.09%
Equal amount of online and offline	15	17.24%

The majority of participants (66%) taught offline. A similar portion taught either online (16%) or equal amount of online and offline teaching (17%).

Participants also reported their reading habits in terms of average time spent on reading for work (Figure 1) and when they read for work (Figure 2). Most of them (62%) spent 1-5 hours per week on reading for work. Others spent 6-10 hours (14%) or less than 1 hour (13%) reading for work.

When asked when they usually read for work, the majority reported to read during working days (63%), and evenings or weekends (57%). Nearly 40% also spent their holidays reading for work.
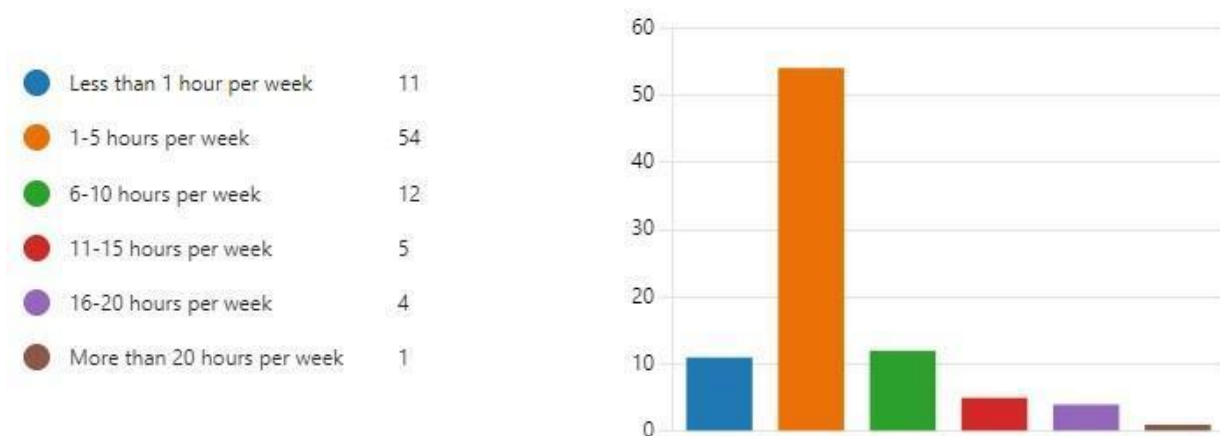
Figure 1. Average time spent on reading for work
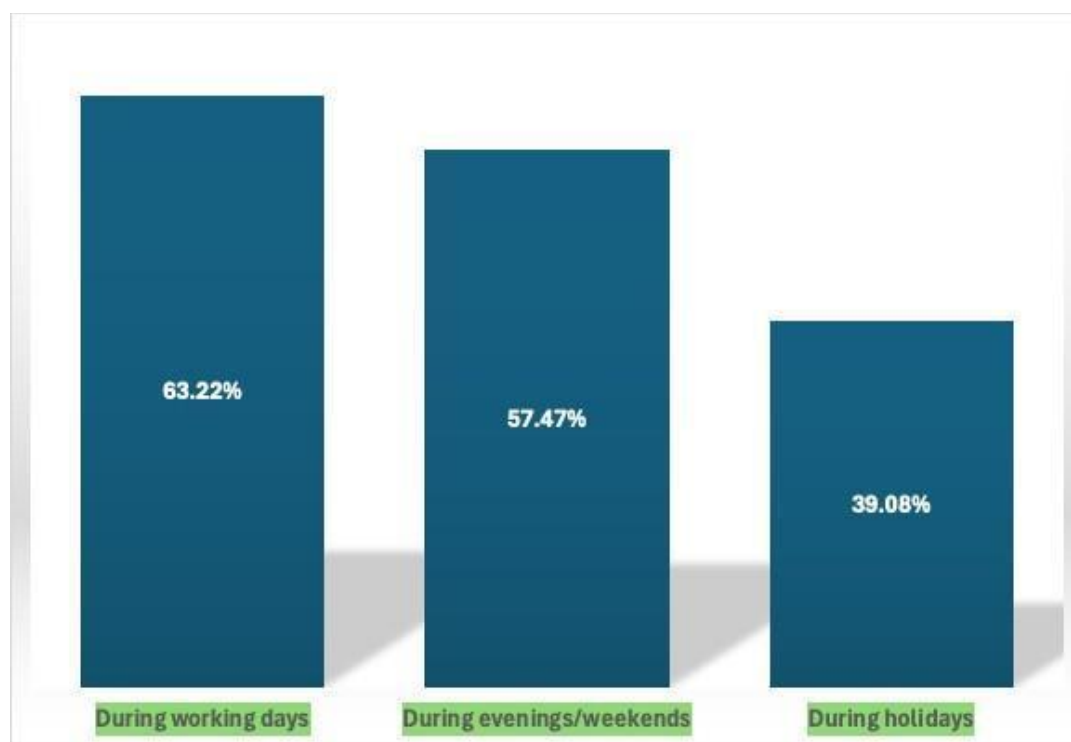
Figure 2.When do EAP practitioners tend to read for EAP?

Profile of focus group and interview participants

Of the 42 questionnaire respondents who volunteered to be interviewed, twelve agreed to participate in either focus groups or an interview (one-to-one). These participants (see Table 5) were purposefully selected from a range of teaching contexts and experiences as a stratified

sample (Creswell, 2014). The purpose is to represent as closely as possible the wider survey population in key criteria, including where they teach, their teaching status (2 part time, 10 full time), current contract (7 permanent, 5 temporary), EAP teaching experience (ranging from 0 to 20 years) and EAP course type (e.g., general EAP, ESAP). Further participant details are given in Table 5.

Table 5. Profile of focus group and interview participants

Participant	Age	Education	Country	Teaching Status	Contract	Year Teaching EAP	Type of EAP Taught
FG1	30-39	Masters/ teaching cert.	UK	P-T	Temporary	0	N/A
FG2	30-39	Doctoral/ Teaching cert.	UK	P-T	Temporary	7	General EAP standalone; Discipline specific EAP standalone; Embedded EAP/ ESAP
FG3	50-59	Masters/ teaching cert.	UK	F-T	Temporary	2	Discipline-specific EAP standalone; General EAP standalone
FG4	50-59	Doctoral/ Teaching cert.	UK	F-T	Permanent	10	Discipline-specific EAP standalone; Embedded EAP/ ESAP
IT1	40-49	Doctoral/ Teaching cert.	UK	F-T	Permanent	15	General EAP standalone; Discipline specific EAP standalone; Embedded EAP/ ESAP
IT2	50-59	Masters/ teaching cert.	Barbados	F-T	Permanent	15	General EAP standalone
IT3	40-49	Doctoral	Spain	F-T	Permanent	10	Embedded EAP/ ESAP
IT4	40-49	Masters	Pakistan	F-T	Permanent	5	General EAP standalone
IT5	50-59	Doctoral	Israel	F-T	Permanent	23	Discipline-specific EAP standalone
IT6	40-49	Doctoral/ Teaching cert.	Ireland & China	F-T	Temporary	7	General EAP standalone Embedded EAP/ ESAP; Discipline-specific EAP standalone
IT7	30-39	Masters	China	F-T	Permanent	10	Embedded EAP/ ESAP
IT8	30-39	Masters	China	F-T	Temporary	1	General EAP standalone

Results and Discussion

This section outlines the key findings in relation to each of the research questions. It is therefore structured around the research questions but offers a synthesis of key findings and themes from the questionnaire, interviews and focus groups. This means that each section draws on both quantitative and qualitative data. In addition, there are also 'practitioner insights' segments that have been shared to highlight some of the individual circumstances of those participants who had concerns about their access to literature. These insight segments are not intended to make any generalisations as they contain the personal views and experiences of the individual participants. These segments do aim however to represent the heterogeneity of voices and issues in different contexts.

In terms of inferential statistical analysis, an important key finding was that there were only two statistically significant relationships found between the associations or factors we chose to investigate. The first of these was a relationship between practitioners' contract type and types of literature they want to access. The second relationship was found between the aims of accessing the literature for the purpose of teaching a specific discipline and practitioners working with different levels of students. These two correlations are discussed within this results section. A further discussion of this is also found towards the end of the report in the section, 'Comments on the study and further research'.

Before the main research questions are discussed below, we asked interview and focus group participants why they wanted to take part in the study. The reasons given included: wanting to help the EAP community, being interested in the findings; having personal experiences related to accessing literature and wanting to learn about research i.e. how to undertake research. Two participants said it was because the matter of accessing literature tends not to be discussed in the field. Many of these reasons for participation are embedded in the key findings below.

RQ1: What literature do EAP practitioners need to or want to access?

The first questionnaire item asked respondents whether they accessed or wanted to access literature for their EAP role. This question aimed to avoid the assumption that accessing literature for practice is deemed necessary or a priority for all practitioners. Of the 87 practitioners who completed the survey, 94% considered it important to access literature as an EAP practitioner. Most questionnaire respondents felt as though access to literature was 'vital', 'necessary' or otherwise very important for their EAP role. As indicated below,

> *"Keeping up to date with findings from the literature, helps to inform, innovate and offer quality teaching in the classroom.   Teaching is constantly developing along with the world and we need to make our courses relevant to each new cohort of students, this can best be done through continuous education*."

A simple analysis of concordances within the qualitative responses for this question revealed that *staying up to date* with *latest* or *current* information, trends, developments, thinking, findings, research, and teaching was a key reason given. Responses indicated that practitioners wanted to learn, know or understand *new* research, insights, approaches, innovations and ideas. Responses indicated a desire to *better understand* or to be *well-informed* and there were recurring mentions of accessing literature for *personal and professional development.* The role of *research* within EAP (described in many cases as a *field*) and in other disciplines was a frequent aspect of literature noted; as was the focus on *student* needs, experience, and learning. When referring to the role of literature on 'good' or informed *practice or practices,* responses largely focused on either practices within the field or specific teaching and classroom practice, as well as curriculum design. There was also some focus on exploring or supporting *student practices.* Respondents referred to *EAP knowledge* and aimed to widen, update or develop their knowledge.

One respondent noted that,

> *"Yes, I think it is very important for me to access EAP literature because of two major*
> *aspects: (1) to keep up with the latest theories and practice in EAP; (2) to better*
> *understand certain practice, for example, a particular need of a certain student group or*
> *a particular aspects for teaching or testing purposes."*

Another respondent stated that,

> *"If I want to develop myself as a teacher, I need to have access to the relevant literature."*

A third respondent said that,

> *"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."*

Of the two respondents who answered negatively, one respondent stated that they were in an administrative role and the other person was in a temporary pre-sessional role. Their respective responses can be found below,

> *"I'm employed in a grade 5 admin role as an eap tutor. I think that implies my employer*
> *doesn't expect me to be engaged in scholarship unless I choose to be. If I was in an*
> *academic role then I would have answered yes."*

> *"My role is a temporary Pre-sessional role on an intensive course so I don't have time to*
> *read other literature."*

In both cases then, it appears that both respondents may not have actually been stating that they did not access or want to access literature for their role. Instead, these responses offer two important insights related to the perceived role of literature and the type of EAP work or grade

of practitioners. These responses also raise questions about the status of continuing professional development for some EAP practitioners.

Four participants chose the option of "maybe" wanting to access literature and one considered it not important. The latter respondent explained that,

> "*My role mainly involves teaching and learning support using in-house materials. Any literature I access is by my own discretion and my desire to delve into issues of interest or do research*."

One 'maybe' respondent noted that,

> "*It depends whether teachers consider research to be a part of their role. I don't believe this is necessary to be an EAP teacher, and it would also be possible to simply access resources second hand via conferences and community of practice events*'.

Another explained that,

> "*It [i.e. accessing literature for EAP role], can be useful to engage in current developments, but it is important not to get too bogged down in it*."

For two participants, accessing literature for teaching purposes had been regarded detrimentally within their working communities. One practitioner felt excluded for accessing / referencing literature in a previous job and was told they were over-complicating course and assessment design by doing so.

From the outset then, the survey findings highlighted some general themes but also different attitudes towards the use of literature for EAP teaching and research purposes. This reflects many of the discussions about the perceived roles and status of EAP practitioners including opinions regarding the use of theory and research within EAP learning and teaching (Cowley Haselden, 2020).

RQ1: Type(s) of literature EAP practitioners (want to) access

EAP practitioners access or want to access a wide range of literature types (see Figure 3). Among the 16 types of literature given in the survey, the most widely chosen were books or chapters (86% of participants) and journal papers (78%) that focused on EAP research or pedagogy, followed by books/chapters (74%) and journal papers (73%) that focused on language teaching or research. Bell's (2022) paper suggested an apparent lack of research articles about classroom methodology and practical pedagogical matters in EAP, so it is interesting to find that these were the preferred choices overall. It is worth noting that subject specific pedagogy books or chapters were also mentioned by 73% of the practitioners. Education or education technology related journal papers and books or chapters were chosen by 68% and 63% of the participants respectively. About 60% of the participants also access or want to access subject-specific research papers and conference proceedings such as BALEAP conferences. Both EAP course books and online course materials were chosen by 49% of the participants. One respondent stated that,

> "*Textbooks and pre-planned electronic materials also remain a necessary staple for busy EAP teachers.*"

This may be referring to course books or course materials online which were sought by just under 50% of respondents (see Figure 3 below). Regarding EAP course books, this number may or may not be surprising in light of those corpus-based studies and critical approaches, within ELT and EAP, that have raised concerns about the cost, authenticity, relevance and usefulness of EAP textbooks for different purposes and in different contexts (Bondi, 2016; Feak & Swales 2014; Harwood, 2005; Kaivanpanah et al, 2021; Wang & Chan, 2024). In more recent accounts, Wang & Chan's (2024) study of formulaic language in seminars demonstrated noticeable differences between the advice in EAP textbooks and authentic language use in English as a Lingua Franca settings. Kaivanpanah at al's (2021:7) study of Iranian EAP practitioners found that analysing texts to create learning materials was a key aspect of the role and there was also some criticism of locally published textbooks; especially those 'not being based on

comprehensive needs analysis, lacking practical exercises, ignoring listening and productive skills, and overemphasizing translation.' Nevertheless, it is clear that access to textbooks for EAP teaching is a priority for many practitioners in this study.
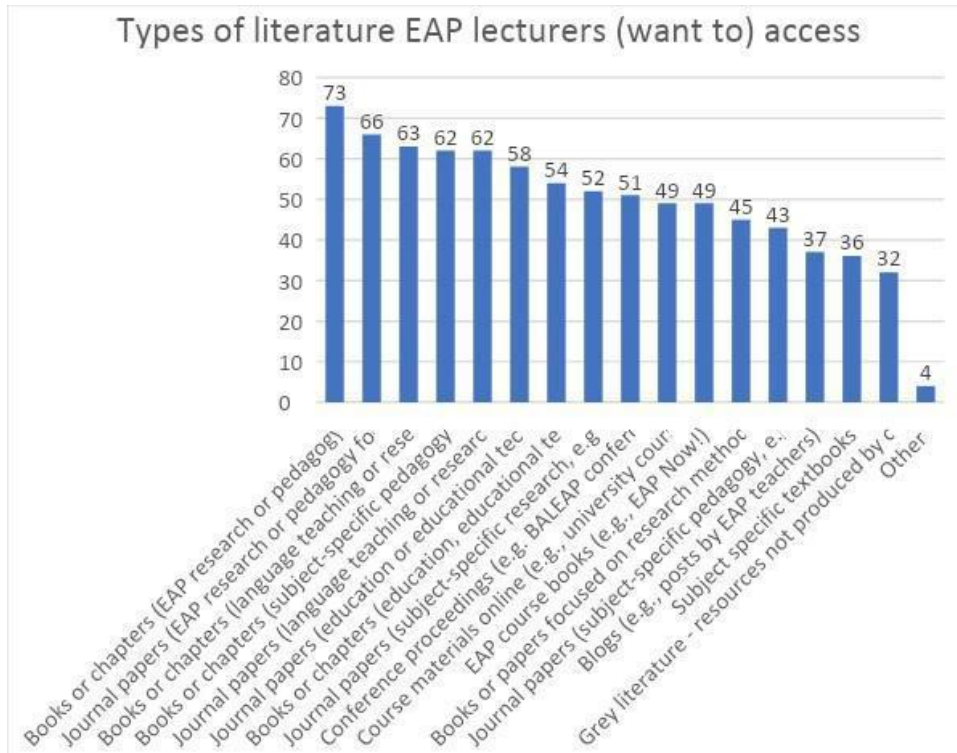
Figure 3. Types of literature EAP practitioners (want to) access

There seemed to be relatively less interest in the literature on research methodology, subject specific textbooks, pedagogy papers, or blogs. Far fewer respondents (n32) stated that they wanted to access 'grey literature' (which was defined as 'resources not produced by the commercial or scholarly publishing industry e.g. Theses, policy documents, reports etc'). This is interesting given the value of and influence that PhD theses can have in the field of EAP. Indeed, BALEAP continues to gather a repository of PhD and MA theses. This general finding is in contrast to the work of Ashiq, et al (2022) who found that academics working in university libraries of Punjab Province and Islamabad did have access to grey literature which included theses/dissertations, annual reports and catalogues (albeit there were some challenges in raising awareness of these). When focusing on our respondents from Pakistan, the results indicate that there may be good access to much grey literature including theses and dissertations. Later we

will see that 42% of respondents agreed that the EAP community could create more grey literature.

In qualitative responses, one respondent below noted that it is not always possible to know what literature will be required because it is based on student cohorts.

> "*Depends on students' needs. Don't always know before [name] course starts, which discipline students will be studying*."

The literature types reported by practitioners were analysed using chi-square for associations with practitioners' job status (full time or part time), contract type (permanent or temporary), and types of courses or students they teach. No significant associations were found except one case involving contract type (X2 =5.218, df=1, p <0.05). Specifically, practitioners on permanent contracts (50% of those within the contract type) were less likely than those on temporary contracts (75.9% within the contract type) to want to access course materials online (e.g., university course syllabi, CELTA materials, MOOCs). The observed difference is interesting but difficult to unpick partly because this could relate to student-facing course materials or professional development materials. One possible explanation is that, compared to practitioners on permanent contracts who may be better supported, those on temporary contracts may want to access these materials such as CELTA and MOOCS for their own professional development. Practitioners on temporary contracts may also not have been able to build up course materials over time or they may want to take the opportunity to gather materials while they are in position. It might also be the case that they may not be expected to create materials on temporary contracts (which is the case for many pre-sessional courses in the UK for example) and therefore they access pre-prepared materials more than permanent staff.

The surveyed practitioners were also asked to choose up to five of their most often read journals from a list of 24 top EAP journals that focus on EAP practice or practitioners. The list was compiled from previous research (Hyland & Jiang, 2021). Figure 4. shows the most frequently read journals chosen by at least 10 practitioners (11%). Unsurprisingly, topping the list were the

two flagship EAP journals, Journal of English for Academic Purposes and English for Specific Purposes. The leading journal of the broader field, Applied Linguistics was also frequently mentioned, together with ELT journal and TESOL Quarterly. The latter two were also found to be most often read by English language teachers (Hall, 2023), indicating the overlapping of the interest of EAP and language teachers.
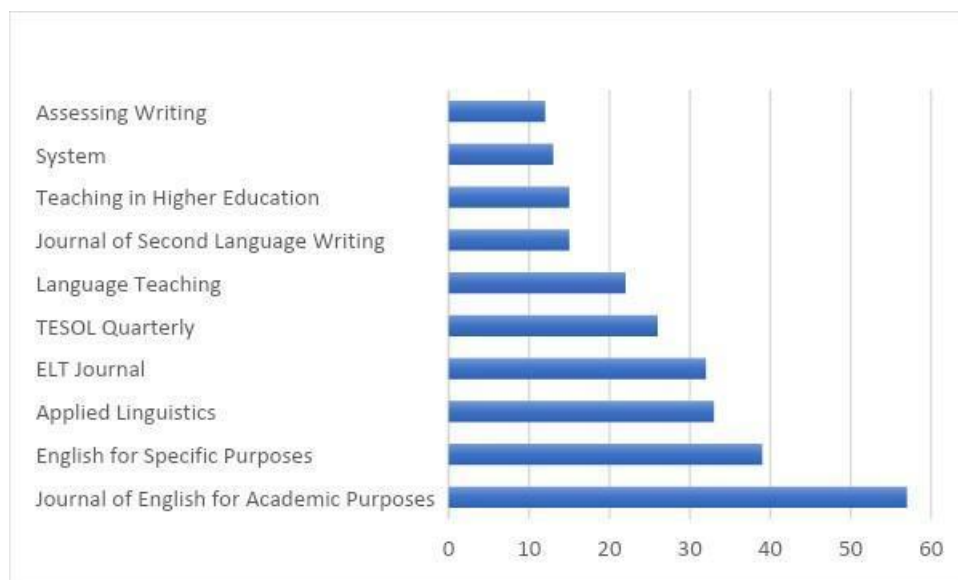
Figure 4. The most frequently read journals reported by practitioners (n=87)

Practitioners were also asked about the bodies of literature that they need to or want to access, which may represent the knowledge base needs of the surveyed EAP practitioners. As Table 6 shows, applied linguistics (79% of participants), EAP literature tailored to EAP practitioners specifically (72%) , and education-based literature (70%) were the most widely chosen. While applied linguistics represent perhaps the academic "home" of many EAP practitioners, the practical needs of EAP teaching necessitate knowledge about day-to-day teaching practices, hence the need to access EAP literature as well as study skills. It is also worth noting that practitioners are also interested in accessing literature on research skills (59%) and TESOL/ELT (55%), which may reveal their professional development needs in terms of scholarship and teaching. An interesting finding is that far fewer respondents wanted to access sociological literature. This resonates with Ding & Evans' (2022) call for the EAP community to reconsider the potential affordances of exploring social theory for EAP purposes.

In terms of the general bodies of literature that EAP practitioners reported to access, many of these are evident in some of the most frequently explored research in Hyland & Jiang's (2021) bibliometric study of EAP research; possibly with the exception of our inclusion of 'research skills', which do not seem to appear explicitly in Hyland and Jiang's study. In some ways the typologies speak to one another i.e. in the way our 'discipline-specific literature' may be related to the 'discipline' in Hyland & Jiang's categorisation but in other ways the broad-brush nature of both sets of categories, with their inherent areas of overlap, make both sets problematic and any direct comparison difficult.

Those respondents who added notes about the 'Other' bodies of literature included: 'digital environments', 'applied technology', and 'teaching disabled students'.

Table 6. The bodies of literature participants want/need to access

Bodies of Literature	Number of Respondents (*n*=86)	% of Respondents
Applied linguistics	68	79.07%
Explicit-EAP literature tailored to EAP teachers 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%
Other	5	5.81%

In terms of the language of the literature that practitioners (want to) access, the majority of the respondents stated English (97.6%), whereas a smaller number stated Chinese (8.2%) and

Spanish (5.9%). The rest gave other languages such as German, French, Portuguese, Polish and Japanese. One participant expressed an interest in more local readerships because of the insights it might provide in topics around English Medium Instruction (EMI).

Practitioner Insight 1

- Female aged 40-49
- Teaching EAP in Austria. Part-time, permanent contract.
- Teaching EAP for 10 years; teaching for 21 years in total.
- Has a Teaching Certificate (e.g. PGCE or CELTA or DELTA) and Postgraduate level qualification.
- Reads 16-20 hours per week during working days and holidays.

Reads Journal of English for Academic Purposes, ELT Journal and TESOL Quarterly.

She wants to access literature for "*Personal development and appropriate and relevant materials*" and she uses literature 'to teach a specific discipline e.g. engineering; to learn about an aspect of language learning and teaching and to learn about ways of analysing language.'

She has access to a university library (either physical or online) all year round as a staff member and also uses a shadow library or file-sharing services.

Rated level of access to literature as 'good' because,

"I generally can access all my university has to offer both on and off campus- with a VPN. eBooks in the form of textbooks are hard as the university has to buy the licences which is problematic, I am told by the library. It is an area they are working on."

Although accessing books and e-books can be difficult, she feels she can 'maybe' stay up to date with developments in the field via webinars and blogs however,

"EAP is just one of the fields I teach in. I also teach general and business English so keeping up with all 3 can be time consuming."

Thoughts about improving access to literature for EAP practitioners,

"This is a very difficult question to answer. I used to work on short term contracts and retained my right to access documents. This is also possible via a VPN at my university which is really helpful and as a teacher on a short-term contract I always had access to a university computer, so access was not an issue. With regard to resources this is always something I have discussed with my head of dept and if it is possible within the budget."

"My students often want to work with texts from their own fields and it can be very overwhelming esp. when teaching a general ESP course to find literature relevant to everyone it can be very hard to combine this. I therefore try and put the onus on the students to find them and use them to carry out homework, presentations etc. I also teach on a subject specific course, and it is a challenge here too as they all have different interests- I get them to send me literature relevant to their fields..."

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

Almost all EAP practitioners in the study felt as though accessing literature was important for their role. There was some discussion however about other people's expectations regarding the use of literature for some practitioners in some contexts or for those on particular contracts. This was taken to reflect wider discussions about the status of EAP as an academic endeavour and the credentials and capital that research-informed practice can bring to individuals and the field. There were clear patterns in the type of literature EAP practitioners want to access with a preference for book and journal publications that are EAP-tailored (including EAP research and pedagogy), followed by publications related to language teaching and subject-specific pedagogies. EAP course books or textbooks, blogs and grey literature were less in demand but still important sources of information for some participants. In terms of broad disciplinary influences; applied linguistics, Education, and TESOL featured more than discipline-specific or sociological influences. These preferences were partly reflected in choices of journals with JEAP, JESP and Applied Linguistics taking the top 3 go-to journals.

RQ2: For what purposes do practitioners want to access the literature?

Practitioners wanted to access literature for a variety of purposes. This included: for research informed teaching, for professional development and for engaging with communities of practice. Table 7 presents the questionnaire respondents' overall purposes of accessing literature. It shows that teaching, assessment and feedback was ranked top among the purposes, with over 80% of the participants making it their first or second choice. Curriculum or materials design was the second priority for accessing literature with over 70% of the practitioners considering it their first or second choice. The higher ranking of these two purposes suggests that pedagogical concerns are the most important reasons for these practitioners to access literature. This finding was extended and echoed in the qualitative questionnaire responses as well as in the interviews and focus groups.

Table 7. Purposes of accessing literature

Purposes of accessing	1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice	4th Choice
Teaching, assessment and feedback	39%	44%	18%	/
Curriculum or materials design	34%	36%	25%	5%
Research and scholarship	27%	19%	41%	13%
Management or leadership	/	1%	16%	82%

(*n*=85)

In their questionnaire comments some participants described accessing literature to provide the best possible learning experience for students. These participants read about curriculum development and pedagogy but also to select discipline-specific texts for classroom materials, especially when preparing ESAP materials for unfamiliar disciplines. In commenting on accessing literature for scholarship, some participants mentioned studying for a PhD or EdD. Accessing literature for leadership or management purposes seems to have been absent from many participants' experience, one of them commenting:

> *"I'd actually not thought about literature for management or leadership before."*

Others indicated that this was not of interest because their current roles were not in management.

The fact that most participants did not want to access literature for leadership and management purposes is interesting given the lack of literature about leadership and management in EAP. This may have been related to the sample and the fact that there are likely to be fewer opportunities for leadership and management roles in many EAP contexts. At the same time, however, leadership in EAP is clearly an important issue evidenced by the existence of courses on this matter (e.g. The University of Bristol's, 'Leading in English for Academic Purposes' course or modules on leadership in MA TEAP courses) as well as a good range of contributions at a BALEAP PIM in June 2021 that was designed to explore aspects of Leadership and Management in EAP. As of 2025, there is also now a new BALEAP SIG about Leadership in EAP. Although investigations into EAP leadership and management in different contexts do exist (e.g. Cui, 2024; Hadley 2015), they are underrepresented in the literature about EAP practitioners and EAP practice. This finding may indicate an area of scholarship and research that could be further explored within the field.

Teaching, designing and materials

Research-informed teaching was an overarching theme that included being inspired or stimulated by literature. This is reflected in the following quotes:

> *"Be informed of recent research results and find guidance or inspiration for teaching practice".*

> *"I also want to be stimulated by the findings and insights of EAP researchers so that these can inform my teaching."*

> *"To gain fresh informed perspectives".*

Practitioners wanted to access literature to help them to design new provision, modules, courses, sessions, syllabus, curriculum and for the design of materials. This included: using or adapting previously published materials to suit students' specific needs; accessing authentic material or designing materials for students who are reading academic literature as part of their studies; to provide authentic sources and examples for students; to find sources of teaching material and accessing samples of written and spoken texts that may serve as benchmarks in the areas their students' study. This pragmatic approach and the focus on teaching and material design is in line with many reports of EAP practitioner priorities in different contexts (e.g. Ding & Bruce, 2017; Hadley, 2015; Harwood, 2005).

In one focus group a participant added that,

> "It's just part of our job. You know, I was teaching some dentistry students and they mentioned this, this genre, professional audit report. So I spent the afternoon just Googling it and then finding out that it's actually a real genre. And then I just used Google Scholar to kind of find a whole bunch of articles and figure out what that genre looked like. But then the only thing that that turned into was.. well, a lesson.. a kind of worksheet and a PowerPoint. I didn't tell anyone about it or publish it other than the materials in the worksheet. So it's kind of a bit of a silent, non-visible thing."

This seems to echo more recent discourses noted in the introduction about the value of making reading visible within EAP.

Research and scholarship came third in the ranking of purposes for accessing the literature. Indeed, accessing literature may be a form of research or scholarship that is intended to inform curriculum design and classroom teaching practices.

Table 8 reveals practitioners' specific aims for accessing the literature. A majority (84%) accessed the literature to learn about an aspect of language learning and teaching, showing the

importance of accessing literature to inform and develop pedagogical practices. One respondent stated that,

"The latest thinking on language learning is very useful in informing classroom practice."

Another participant noted that:

"There is too much assumption that being a university teacher one has enough knowledge about the methodology and materials that can be used to teach EAP."

The fact that learning and teaching is such a high priority is not a surprise, given the fact that teaching is our foremost activity.

The second most popular aim for accessing literature (68% of respondents) was for learning about research methods for individual scholarship purposes. In terms of learning about research methods for one's own scholarship purposes, this finding parallels much of the literature about EAP scholarship, dissemination and publication behaviours. Although some argue there has not been a strong publishing culture by EAP practitioners (Blaj-Ward, 2014; Davis, 2019), practitioners in some contexts have noted a shift in the need to evidence scholarship-informed practice, and many are increasingly motivated to disseminate their work for various purposes (as noted in Webster, 2022). However, Davis (2019) outlined how EAP practitioners may not have the research skills or research writing experience that are often established via PhD pathways. Webster (2022) also found that scholarship writing and writing for publication was often regarded as a form of personal and professional development but some practitioners in his study noted a lack of doctoral training to design a robust research methodology. Amongst other concerns (such as the exposing nature of writing), this impacted on practitioners' sense of self-efficacy.

Table 8. Aims of accessing literature

Aims of Accessing the literature	Number of Respondents (n=85)	% of Respondents
To learn about an aspect of language learning and teaching	72	84.71%
To learn about research methods for my own scholarship or research	58	68.24%
To learn about ways of analysing language	54	63.53%
To teach a specific- discipline	47	55.29%
To learn about leadership and management	14	16.47%
Other	8	9.41%

Following learning about language learning and teaching, and research methods for individual scholarship, learning about ways of analysing language was also a popular goal of accessing literature (63%). In terms of analysing language, having the knowledge and skills to analyse academic disciplinary texts within contexts is essential for EAP practitioners (Alexander et al, 2008). However, the actual approaches to language analysis, and the underpinning theoretical assumptions within these, may not be discussed in as much depth as we would expect in a language and discourse-based field (Monbec & Ding, 2024). The fact that 63% of the respondents in this study wanted to learn about ways of analysing language is an indication that EAP practitioners would like to know more about language analysis, or at least alternative approaches to the ones they already employ. It may be the case that practitioners want to extend their expertise in analysing language, for example by learning about different approaches to this for particular academic contexts. There is perhaps scope to unpack this further in a future study.

It is also worth mentioning that over half of the practitioners access the literature to teach a specific discipline, revealing the concerns of developing content knowledge for their teaching, or at least the discourse practices and genres of specific disciplines.

To explore the issue further, a significant correlation was found between the aims of accessing the literature for the purpose of teaching a specific discipline and practitioners working with

different levels of students (X^2 =4.792, df=1, p <0.05). Specifically, practitioners working with pre-university students (n=26) were more likely to want literature for teaching a specific discipline (75.1% within the group) than those who are not (47.5% within the group). This is surprising because we might assume that access to specific disciplinary literature would be needed *more* when teaching degree-level students. It is an interesting finding worth exploring further. Here we offer some tentative interpretations of the observed difference. Pre-university students could be International Foundation Year or 'Pathway' students, including those who access higher education via private providers like Study Group in the UK. These students may not have access to university libraries in the same way as other levels of students (i.e. undergraduates and postgraduates) who may have more access to their discipline texts. This means that practitioners may need to access these texts for pre-university students. This may also be related to the level of EGAP/ESAP i.e. how general or discipline-specific pre-undergraduate courses are or not. It may also be the case that practitioners working with students who are on their degree courses may be using the texts that students are already accessing and therefore there is less need for the practitioners to seek these discipline-specific texts.

Qualitative responses also indicated the use of literature to understand the needs of a certain student group or a particular aspect for teaching or testing purposes. This could include, for example, developing and delivering in-sessional EAP support tailored to business and accounting programmes or understanding expectations lecturers will have of their PG students. One participant noted that they were

> *"working with science research students and early career researchers in HE and (so) need access to papers in their fields as well as those in my own"*.

This finding features in many discussions about teaching insessional embedded EAP in which practitioners undertake needs analyses and are often required to respond to students' needs autonomously in the way indicated in the quotes about working with Dentistry or Science

students above. This type of reading and design work is often opaque, as noted in Chapman & Tibbetts (2023).

Related to this 'informed-teaching theme' other recurring messages from participants related to accountability, empowerment and professional development. These are discussed in more detail below.

Accountability, Empowerment and professional development

Many responses highlighted the responsibility of the EAP teacher to ensure curriculum and practice is the best it can be, as illustrated in the comments below:

> "*To ensure informed practice and to avoid - when possible - passing on unhelpful or inccurate content to students.*"

> "*I co-ordinate and design EAP modules and am responsible for quality assurance. Ensuring that my syllabi etc are research-informed is one way of ensuring that I am pitching them appropriately.*"

There are also messages of accounting for, justifying or evidencing, to others. As indicated below:

> "*Finally we need to provide evidence - to ourselves, our students, other stakeholders - to support what we are doing: literature provides this.*"

> "*I believe the more up-to-date information you bring in the classroom, the more useful and usable, as well as credible and 'convincing' for the students.*"

Another interview participant stated that,

> "*what I read the most would be research articles, because, mainly, to provide my students with evidence that what I am saying is true, because I get the feeling very often that they…. they you know, they ….. would look down on me like….. you know…… is this really the case?*"

Such responses suggest that there was a strong sense of using the literature to develop one's understanding, to inform and challenge existing practices and beliefs. The sentiments about having to be accountable or to somehow prove or evidence the basis of our knowledge and expertise to others is an important insight. Arguably, this might be related to the idea of practitioners 'working on the edge of the academy' or not quite having academic status or credibility in the same way as other academics teaching across the disciplines (Ding &Bruce, 2017). This connection between access to the literature and practitioner agency and empowerment is made in practitioners' accounts such as Winiarska-Pringle & Rolińska's (2024).

Drawing on the literature for teaching purposes was also related to concepts of 'value' and 'recognition'. For example, in one focus group the participants discussed the value and recognition of using literature for teaching purposes. One participant was keen to use the literature for 'visible' or 'concrete projects' such as a research article. Another noted that use of literature informing teaching learning materials is less visible or not necessarily shared with others. There was also a sense of the economics of the time and effort invested in accessing and using literature. This was particularly important for a participant on hourly pay. They noted that,

> "*That would have been good, like just to have that recognised and say, yeah, here's here's, you know, this is a valuable lesson that you've created. Here's 4 hours of pay. And. So yeah, I guess I see it as a valuable activity*."

Regarding professional development, an interview participant explained,

> "*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.*"

"the discipline evolves - we need to know and understand new approaches (to teaching, to linguistic/ EAP knowledge). We are academics, scholars, researchers, professionals - reading literature is a key part of that; how else will we continue to learn and develop?

"to learn and develop without recourse to literature would be myopic"

Another participant described an inspiring teaching colleague who had a Masters degree, who used to draw on theory and research to teach students. The colleague would share these pedagogical insights in teacher development sessions. The participant commented on the challenge of feeling confident in one's understanding of the literature and then being able to use this for teaching purposes. This signals the value of teacher-development sessions to help practitioners to use literature in practice. Colleagues were very frequently cited as a source of knowledge in the questionnaire.

This professional development theme included keeping up to date with theories, research findings, current issues, debates and thinking in the field. These findings reflect the concerns of those EAP practitioners in Fitzpatrick et al (2022:7) who were said to recognise 'the need to engage with EAP research and to ensure that time was available in individuals' workloads/working weeks to be able to read and access up-to-date information'. Another similarity related to the "sense that colleagues felt that the field moves at pace and that they feel under (professional) pressure to keep up." Indeed, there was an overall message of constant change and developments in the field that required ongoing engagement and sometimes having to '*keep up with colleagues*', as noted below.

"EAP is taught differently in various countries. The way EAP is being taught is changing, and although one may have experience, it is important to consult literature to keep abreast of developments and to vary methods of teaching EAP in the classroom."

For a smaller number of respondents, there was also a sense of staying alert to what others are doing and what might or might not be acceptable practice in the field over time. As indicated below

> *"EAP is a rapidly evolving field. The practices I remember from five years ago would be poorly received today. The kind of literature I require access to is also constantly changing."*

This emphasis on 'research-informed teaching' is clearly reflected in the EAP literature. Other practitioners and researchers have helpfully shared advice and guidance about the ways of accessing and using research for teaching purposes. For example, as Curry (2021:21) explains, 'There is a wealth of research available to us that we can use to guide our practice. However, we must make sure that we always approach it critically. Informing our practice with research means critically reflecting on how we can embed it within our own teaching contexts'. The challenge of knowing what research to access and how best to use it for teaching purposes was not quite reflected as well in our responses as we might have expected. Unpacking details about how practitioners recontextualise research for teaching purposes was beyond the scope of this study but would be worthwhile exploring in future research.

Belonging to communities of practice: Giving and receiving

In the qualitative responses, accessing literature seems to be regarded as a way of being part of the field, *'feeling part of the communities'* or used to '*make connections beyond our institution*'. While many responses painted respondents as consumers of literature, a significant number also signalled the importance of making contributions to literature. Indeed, some practitioners said they needed to access literature for their own grant writing, articles or book chapters. One questionnaire respondent who is an academic editor stated that,

> "*academic editing is constantly being informed by new information and as an editor - I need to stay as up to date as possible with the latest information*."

This resonates with the acknowledgement at the beginning of this report regarding the impact of access to literature on knowledge production and development of the field, in addition to serving individual needs. The role that the EAP community and other networks play in supporting practitioners with limited access to literature and resources is discussed later.

Summary: For what purposes do practitioners want to access the literature?

EAP practitioners wanted to access literature for a variety of reasons but there was overall priority for literature that informs teaching and the design of materials. Although different types of literature may be used, the fundamental purposes for accessing literature (the themes above) were shared to a large extent. One matter also enveloped within many responses related to use of 'off-the-shelf materials' and testing vs subject-tailored materials. There was a preference for literature exploring aspects of language learning, research methods, language analysis and teaching students within a specific discipline with less preference for literature being used for EAP leadership and management purposes. Here then, practitioner responses seem to be touching on some core EAP issues. These relate to professional identity of EAP practitioners and discourse of EAP in some contexts which positions EAP as pragmatic, student centered and research-based but also involving rather ad hoc (i.e. not very systematic) professional development and use of literature within this.

Another issue embedded here related to a sense of accountability, empowerment and professional development provided by access to literature. In many cases, research and literature gave practitioners some confidence in what they were teaching and, in some cases, how they were teaching it. Alongside this, there was a balancing of individual needs and boundaries (i.e. economic balancing of time, effort, confidence, with value and recognition) and institutional or course-level CPD needs (knowledge and skills needed to design effective learning). The matters raised within this research question thus indicate a complex interplay of individual, contextual and institutional factors that play a role in the reasons or the purposes for accessing literature.

RQ3: Do EAP practitioners have any problems accessing different bodies or types of literature?

A summary of the findings and discussion for research questions 3 and 4 is synthesised at the end of the following discussion of these two research questions.

The survey shows that all but one of the participants have access to a university library as a staff member (94.1%) and/or a student (11.8%). Most participants (90.6 %) had access all year round. Although there was no statistically significant relationship between contract type and access to literature, this may have been due to sampling issues. However, there were some qualitative comments about the impact of temporary contracts on access to literature. For those (n=8) who did not have access all the time, their length of access varied from 2 to 6 months. Reasons for the limited access concerned mostly the contracts they had (e.g. a fixed term pre-sessional contract). One participant commented,

> "*When working for international pathway colleges, I have not always had access to university libraries as it depends on the contract between the college and the university which they are providing EAP courses for.*"

Another mentioned,

> "*I have access to literature as part of a pre-sessional course, which is about two months long. At other times, I have access via JEAP*. However, it would be beneficial to have wider access to discipline specific literature as access as an individual is very costly.*"
> *Access to JEAP is given to all BALEAP members.

Feeling excluded

At the same time, 35 questionnaire respondents said they have felt or currently feel excluded or disadvantaged due to their level of access to literature. Respondents who felt excluded were from a wide range of contexts including the UK, China, Hong Kong, Slovakia, South Africa, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Japan, the Netherlands, Iran and Columbia.

The reasons for limited access vary; from access to physical libraries and limited e-resources or subscriptions, to precarious contracts, the impact of paywalls, firewalls and national or regional

censorship. For practitioners in the UK in particular, precarious employment contracts feature in many responses to this exclusion question. As indicated in the quotes below,

"Yes. 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 at a point at which I was not working at a university. It was really difficult to access a full academic article and I ended up writing the lesson plan by referring to the abstract only. I felt that the fact that some people might not have easy access to academic articles for the full academic year was not considered, though I did actually get the job."

"When I did not have an on-going contract, I could not access literature during my 'nonworking' months."

"...when I was a precarious worker. I didn't have access to a variety of literature of interest all year round and this was frustrating when wanting to dig deeper into a topic or do research. My BALEAP membership, however, gave me access to JEAP."

"One of the reasons why I am staying in my job rather than moving to the voluntary sector is the benefits this role brings, particularly access to literature. If I were only working in the voluntary sector, I would struggle."

However, even continuous work did not necessarily lead to full library access, with some institutions either restricting access or having a limited range of resources:

"Sometimes, no matter how good the library is, it can't contain everything."

"Yes, I understand that publishing houses need to pay for resources, but I equally feel that information should not be kept behind a paywall. Especially if that information can benefit and better society. If it is, then the paywall should consider the exchange rate between first and third world countries."

> *"..between jobs when I was trying to write a PhD proposal I could only access literature*
>
> *by visiting the physical library of my alumni institution, which was a 60 mile round trip,*
>
> *so quite expensive and time-consuming when I had no income."*

Owing largely to financial constraints and the affordability of subscriptions and e-resources (as noted in Clamon et al, 2022), the reality that many universities across the globe are unable to offer a full range of resources is well established. This can lead to limited research and have a detrimental impact on knowledge generation (Dei & Asante, 2022). It can also 'dent the university's image in terms of its rankings' (Ayree & Apronti Tetteh, 2024:2).

Some participants described feeling excluded for not publishing, sensing a divide between those who did and did not publish. The issues related to EAP practitioner publication practices have been highlighted elsewhere (e.g. Davies, 2019). Inequalities in academic publishing across contexts has been discussed largely in material (or 'non-discursive'), financial, social and linguistics terms in the existing literature (e.g. Canagarajah, 2006; Curry & Lillis, 2010).

As seen above, another participant described feeling excluded *for* accessing and referencing literature, when they were told this "was over-complicating the course and assessment design".

While it is difficult to unpack this type of thinking without further investigation, this issue seems to be related to discussions about: 1) expectations of EAP practitioners and their status within the academy 2) access pathways and professional development opportunities and 3)practitioners' role in the scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). On the matter of EAP practitioners undertaking and using research, Hanks (2022: 2) suggested that 'traditional notions of research are often shrouded in the mysteries of power, creating a nimbus which excludes the uninitiated' and makes EAP practitioners feel excluded. Bruce (2021:24) has also highlighted how the idea of learning through practice is particularly prevalent in EAP as evidenced in many case studies of practitioner pathways and trajectories. He further argues that 'research in EAP needs to be solidly needs-based, applied, and applicable so that there can be useful uptake of the findings by practitioners in their actual practice'. Thus, the situation evident in the quote above may be related to an uncertainty or undermining of the use of empirical work or theory-informed practice.

Continuing with our research findings, there seemed particular difficulty in accessing literature in some non-UK and non-European contexts. For some respondents in Chinese contexts for example, internet firewalls or censorship was noted as an obstacle. Responses indicate that some practitioners used a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to bypass this whereas others do not. As noted by one respondent below,

> *"My location sometimes makes access more difficult or inconvenient, so sometimes this affects what's available."*

The impact of internet firewalls as well as internet speed and performance in contexts like China has been outlined in earlier studies and guidance (e.g. Taylor, 2020). For UK universities, this matter became more apparent during the shift to emergency remote teaching in 2020-2021.

Practitioner Insight 2

- Female, aged 50-59. Teaching EAP in China.
- Full-time, permanent contract.
- 30 years teaching experience in total; 5 years teaching EAP.
- Accesses material in English and Chinese.

Interested in Research skills, TESOL/ ELT, Applied linguistics, Linguistics and Socio-linguistics. Has access to a university library but limited university subscriptions and the library does not own many books in this field. Would like to *"learn about research methods for my own scholarship or research and to learn about ways of analysing language. Would also like to improve my own language ability*."

Difficulty accessing audio-visual materials, blogs, commercial and marketing research. Feels excluded due to "*not having enough material to help me understand some techniques*."

Uses open access and online seminars.

Practitioner Insight 3

- Male, aged 30- 39. Teaches EAP in the UK and Mexico.
- PhD candidate teaching on part-time, temporary contract.
- Has been teaching 20 years in total, teaching EAP for 6-7 years.
- Reads 6- 10 hours per week, weekdays, evenings and weekends.

"I currently have exceptionally good access to journal articles and book chapters through my doctoral programme. Previous institutions (particularly in the Global South) have had very limited access. It can be incredibly frustrating to spend hours trying to access articles and feeling locked out of the conversation. Resources like Oasis summaries, Twitter thread summaries, TESOLGraphics, and multimodal content sometimes helps level the playing field in this regard – not to mention open access articles.

Webinars have been incredibly useful. Online conferences helped connect with future collaborators. Video Calls particularly helpful for research – though sometimes something of a headache at work. Face-to-face meetings and conferences remain the most meaningful forums for discussion, learning and networking. Things are moving very fast. AI and its influence on academia remain a mystery / taboo to many colleagues. Difficult to identify genuine experts. Relevant MOOCs often locked behind a paywall.

At one institution where I worked for four years, I only officially had access to open-source literature. I used shadow libraries and without these would never have advanced my academic career. Use of these platforms was and is endemic in the Global South context for ambitious academics.

I would worry that a centralised EAP budget for open access fees might be prohibitively expensive. Access to literature is a structural and social justice issue. A co-ordinated activist approach is needed to redress the monopoly of academic publishing, both top-down (as in Spain) and grass-roots.

Working with scholars from Global South contexts, it is frustrating to see the many layers of obstacles they face in accessing and using literature. As an ally, I am keen to explore ways in which I can offer further support. I am delighted to know that BALEAP takes this issue seriously and is researching possible solutions."

What could help?

More open access literature. Accessible multimodal alternatives, as mentioned earlier. More platforms whereby academics can share PDFs of their own work easily with interested parties.

Where do practitioners access literature?

Regarding the question "Where do you access literature?" (Table 9), the vast majority (97%) accessed literature through their university, either physically or online. Additionally, Google Scholar and open access services were identified as the next most popular access points (both at 67%). Nearly half of the practitioners also accessed literature directly through publishers' or journal websites, as well as via ResearchGate or Academia.edu. 32% obtained access through colleagues or personal contacts. It is important to note that some individuals also utilised shadow libraries or file-sharing services, a point that was reiterated in the interviews.

Table 9. Where do practitioners access literature

Access point	Number of respondents (n=85)	% of respondents
A university library (either physical or online)	82	96.47%
Open access services	57	67.06%
Google Scholar	57	67.06%
Directly via publishers or journals	42	49.41%
ResearchGate or Academia.com	41	48.24%
Via colleagues or personal contacts	27	31.76%
Shadow library or file sharing services	5	5.88%
A public library (either phyical or online)	5	5.88%
Other	4	4.71%

In terms of the quality of their access, 58% of the practitioners considered their access to be 'good', while 38% rated it as 'average', and 5% deemed it 'poor'.

We further investigated the type of materials participants were having difficulty in accessing. Figure 5 visually presents the ease of access for different types of materials as rated by the participants, whereas Table 10 below provides raw frequencies and percentages of this data. As the data shows, data sets (e.g. government or research, including corpora) was chosen by most participants as the most difficult type of materials to access (23 participants or 30.67%). It is also a type of data highlighted by some interview participants. In terms of percentage, most

(35.71%) had difficulty in accessing legal and court documents. Other types include Evaluations (24%) and Commercial and market research (20%). Audio-visual materials (17.57%) were also mentioned by some interview participants.
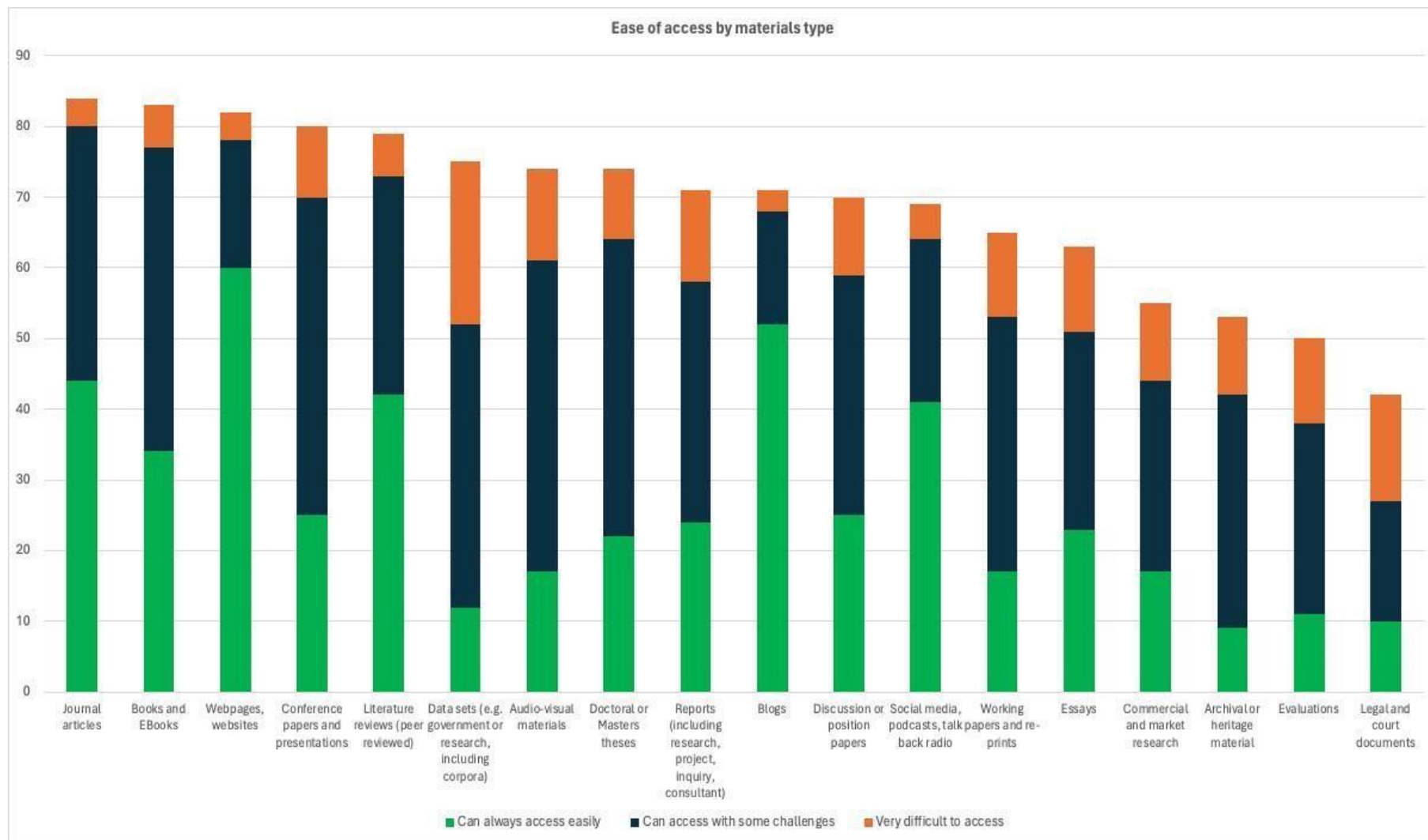
Figure 5. Ease of access by type of material

Table 10. Type of literature by ease/ difficulty of access (ranked by total *n* of respondents)

Type of materials with difficulty in accessing	Can always access easily	% of respondents	Can access with some challenges	% of respondents	Very difficult to access	% of respondents	Total *n*
Journal articles	44	52.38%	36	42.86%	4	4.76%	84
Books and EBooks	34	40.96%	43	51.81%	6	7.23%	83
Webpages, websites	60	73.17%	18	21.95%	4	4.88%	82
Conference papers and presentations	25	31.25%	45	56.25%	10	12.50%	80
Literature reviews (peer reviewed)	42	53.16%	31	39.24%	6	7.59%	79
Data sets (e.g. government or research, including corpora)	12	16.00%	40	53.33%	23	30.67%	75
Audio-visual materials	17	22.97%	44	59.46%	13	17.57%	74
Doctoral or Masters theses	22	29.73%	42	56.76%	10	13.51%	74
Reports (including research, project, inquiry, consultant)	24	33.80%	34	47.89%	13	18.31%	71
Blogs	52	73.24%	16	22.54%	3	4.23%	71
Discussion or position papers	25	35.71%	34	48.57%	11	15.71%	70
Social media, podcasts, talk back radio	41	59.42%	23	33.33%	5	7.25%	69
Working papers and re-prints	17	26.15%	36	55.38%	12	18.46%	65
Essays	23	36.51%	28	44.44%	12	19.05%	63
Commercial and market research	17	30.91%	27	49.09%	11	20.00%	55
Archival or heritage material	9	16.98%	33	62.26%	11	20.75%	53
Evaluations	11	22.00%	27	54.00%	12	24.00%	50
Legal and court documents	10	23.81%	17	40.48%	15	35.71%	42

.

Practitioner Insight 4

- Female. Aged 30-39. Teaching EAP in Japan.
- Has been teaching EAP for about 4 years and teaching for 16 years in total.
- Reads 6-10 hours per week during evenings, weekends and holidays.
- Reads ELT Journal, Applied Linguistics, Assessing Writing, English for Specific Purposes, Language Teaching; Language Learning, Journal of English for Academic Purposes, System and TESOL Quarterly.

Has access to University library as staff member but access rate as 'Average'.

"My current university in Asia, where I work, provides access to some resources online, as do some publishers and journals. However, I find that I am missing a much wider access to literature, which I used to have in my UK university as a post-graduate student. I am feeling a bit excluded and disadvantaged now. Limited access to literature and conferences is the culprit. I can read some of the newer materials, but not many."

Stays up to date by:

"Sometimes I try to use personal finances to access the material behind the paywall. Webinars, attending some conferences in person, chatting with colleagues and students, following researchers on social media."

What could help?

"Providing access to the events online, live or recorded, and open access to journals and books. At least more than it is being done at the moment."

RQ4: What are the reasons for these access issues?

Regarding the causes of their access difficulty (refer to Table 11), a majority (71%) cited

"limited university subscriptions", with nearly half indicating a lack of books in the library

holdings.

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%
Others (see below)	13	19.12%

One participant commented that,

> *"I haven't really noticed it in my current university. However, you know in one of my*
> *previous universities I couldn't access anything by Taylor and Francis for example. So*
> *even universities won't subscribe to everything."*

Another interview participant noted that the university in which they teach was originally set

up as a science and engineering university and so there were always fewer resources directly

related to EAP. Others indicated limited resources related to EAP or academic literacies in

their university with either limited budgets to buy more or difficult procurement procedures

(for example, having to demonstrate students' continued use in order to maintain

subscriptions.)

.

In the qualitative comments related to this question, respondents stated that some types of texts were more difficult to access than others including 'law articles' (*more complicated to access than others*), paper copies of theses *(only available at the library)*, essays (possibly *related to copyright restrictions*) and some 'archival and government material' (*inaccessible from the UK*). One respondent stated there was, *'limited access to resources at some international pathway colleges or accessibility is not made clear."* For others, a lack of time and not knowing what literature exists or how to find it were also mentioned. This echoes the message by Curry (2021) and other EAP practitioners who have acknowledged the challenges of knowing which literature to access and how best to use it. In summary, practitioners reported that issues may also arise due to other factors, such as legal restrictions (e.g., copyright, data protection, national regulations) or personal constraints (e.g., lack of time or knowledge). These latter reasons are recurring issues that are revisited later in our presentation of the findings.

Importantly however, 14% of respondents identified barriers related to limited ICT infrastructure in the country or region and 10% reported that they had limited access to ICT or the Internet**.** All of these respondents were based either in China, Ghana (n1) or South Africa (n3). Respondents from other contexts did not select these options. Of the six respondents from the African context, four noted this issue; with another respondent reporting that they do not have access to any library. The under-resourcing of university libraries in Ghanaian contexts has recently been noted elsewhere (e.g. Aryee & Apronti Tetteh, 2024). The sixth respondent (from South Africa) however rated their access as good and did not report any barriers accessing any type of literature. Most respondents to the survey across all contexts tended to note access challenges with at least some types of literature so this is an interesting finding or anomaly. Overall, these findings indicate regional differences in access to ICT infrastructures and the Internet (as noted in Helsper, 2021 for example) , although there may be some individual differences that could be investigated further.

A second respondent without access to a library was based in China, although they had a full-time permanent job teaching EAP. They relied on colleagues sharing sources and watching Youtube via a VPN. The third respondent without access to a library was unemployed at the time of the survey.

26% of respondents reported that limited digitisation of literature was one challenge in accessing literature. For some respondents relying on online libraries for work and study purposes, this could mean costly trips to physical libraries or paying for books to be delivered. One EAP practitioner in Saudi Arabia, who was undertaking a Masters degree overseas, stated that,

> *"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 £700s just to read a chapter from it."*

The findings here indicate that important non-linguistic factors such as financial and material resources can lead to inequitable access to literature for some academics in some contexts, as noted many years ago (e.g. by Canagarajah, 1996 and Flowerdew, 2001) and more recently (e.g. Abusalim, 2021). Although the first two authors were writing about publishing opportunities (rather than access to literature *per se*), many of the issues noted are evident in the findings we report here. Although online networking and communications have improved the situation for many EAP practitioners, there is still a sense of 'periphery' and 'centre' whereby practitioners want to keep up with latest developments that are otherwise 'elsewhere'. There was also the matter of differences in teaching workload and having time to access the literature.

.

Practitioner Insight 5

- Female, aged 40-49.
- Teaching general EAP standalone (not embedded in faculties) with first year undergraduates in Pakistan on full-time, permanent contract.
- Teaching EAP for 5 years, teaching for 8 years.
- Reads 1- 5 hours per week during working days.
- Recent reading titles include: The St. Martin's Guide to Writing (2015, Bedford St. Martin); Interact (communication skills).

Wants to access literature 'to obtain material for teaching students EAP.'

"I believe the only way to teach writing is to inculcate the habit of reading amongst students. A poor reader cannot identify poor writing."

Access challenge: Limited university subscriptions

"Accessing foreign literature from a developing country - the issues are economic as well as cultural."

I google best course books for courses then obtain the ones I can through shadow library/file sharing services. This means I don't have access to test banks, answer keys, teachers' guides etc. Budget constraints prevent further access."

What could help?

"Low price publications for local market on the Indian model. Online English faculty discussions across countries. Possible partnerships between universities to exchange information on available material and enable book donations."

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

Although most survey participants did have access to a university library there was an important acknowledgement that access was intermittent for staff on fixed-term contracts. 50% of survey respondents rated their access as good, 38% rated their access as average and 5% rated it as poor. It was also the case that many libraries did not have full access to some types of texts, particularly a wide range of journal subscriptions. Practitioners who reported feeling excluded as a result of limited access to literature noted limited e-resources or subscriptions, the impact of paywalls, firewalls or national/ regional censorship.

In addition to university libraries, practitioners accessed literature via Google Scholar, Open Access sources, Research Gate and Academia. They accessed literature via personal contacts and colleagues and via shadow libraries.

Types of literature that were most easily accessible included blogs, websites and webpages, social media, podcasts and talk back radio, literature reviews and journal articles. However, there were between 4%-7% of respondents who noted these were very difficult to access. This indicates another type of inequity even in accessing literature that is likely to be free at the point of access. Other text types that were very difficult to access included (in order): data sets
e.g. government and research, including corpora; legal and court documents; audio-visual materials; reports (including research, project, inquiry); working papers; essays and evaluations.

For those who reported difficulties in accessing literature, the following reasons were given (in order): limited university subscriptions, the library not owning own many books in the field; limited digitalisation of literature; limited ICT infrastructure in the country/region and limited access to the Information Communication Technology (ICT) or the internet. There

.

were relatively clear indications that the latter two reasons affected practitioners in some contexts (Africa and China) and not in others. Although there may be important individual differences, this is a significant finding. Other reasons for limited access to literature included limited ICT infrastructure in the university or having no library access at all (n1).

RQ5: How do EAP practitioners try to overcome or cope with these access issues?

As shown in Table 12, when confronted with access issues, a significant portion (33.80%) of practitioners did not take any specific action. In congruence with other research findings (discussed below), some sought alternatives, such as relying on colleagues to share sources or utilising open-source materials. In terms of the role of colleagues and networks, in their investigations into the publishing experiences of multilingual scholars in non-Anglophone context, Curry & Lillis (2010: 281) found that 'strong, local, durable networks are crucial to enabling scholars' participation in transnational networks, which support their publishing in both English and local languages'.

Regarding open-source materials, there were no comments suggesting a critical engagement with the Open Access movement (e.g. as within Knöchelmann, 2021; Siler & Frenken, 2021; Zhang et al, 2022). A few practitioners (4%) chose to purchase their own access. For example, one interviewee stated that they paid monthly to Perlego for access and they share these resources with colleagues. Others said they try to subscribe to relevant journals, but they can not really afford this. Others made interlibrary loan requests, searched for alternative available sources or downloaded literature when they did have temporary university access. Additionally, there were attempts to access literature through shadow libraries, a service with potentially contentious legal and ethical implications. These libraries, such as Sci-Hub and Zlibrary, provide "unauthorized digital copies of books and articles" (Karaganis, 2018: 1).

Table 12. How practitioners overcome the access issues

How do you overcome these issues?	Number of respondents (n=71)	% of the respondents
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%
Other	5	7.04%

These findings resonate with Luczaj & Holy-Liczaj's (2020) study of academics in Central and Eastern Europe. Their interview-based study found that, in addition to using open-source material, downloading or 'poaching' materials; the use of Schi-Hub is, for some people, related closely to a type of activism against academic capitalism and imperialism. This was taken to suggest a need to re-assess inequitable access to 'global knowledge production'. At the same time however, Segado-Boj et al (2022) noted that using a 'scholarly piracy site' is less common for 'older' and 'better-established scholars' and for those in high-income countries. They also captured people's ethical and legal objections to the use of such sites and noted that many were not aware of these libraries. Segado-Boj et al's (2022) study also indicated disciplinary differences in the use of these sites with fewer being used in Life & Health Sciences and Social Sciences. In contrast, in this study of EAP practitioners, no respondents in the age bracket 20-39 (the youngest age group) stated that they used a Shadow library but 4 respondents in the age bracket 40-49 years selected this option. These respondents were based either in China (n2), Austria (n1) and Pakistan(n1). In the 50-59 age bracket, two respondents (one teaching in China and the other in Slovakia) reported using a shadow library. These were also the only two respondents in that age group who rated their access as 'poor'. One respondent wrote that,

> "*There is very little in our university library on teaching EAP. To get a hard copy (of what is most likely an out-of-date resource), I have to submit a request and then go pick it up at the library which is not easily accessible. I can request that a resource be*

.

ordered for the library. More often than not, there are no finances for everything I'd use. Our uni does not have access to all the journal articles relevant for me, so I use shadow libraries." Regarding the possible support options noted in the questionnaire, this respondent stated that,

"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."

Overall, this finding also relates to Geng et al's (2022) comparative study of Sci-Hub and Springer downloads in different countries at different times of the working day and working week. Although most of the comparative findings about the differences between countries in this study are methodologically unreliable, they did indicate that academics working overtime at home access 'pirate' platforms for many reasons including issues with off-campus access (e.g. authentication protocols, VPNs, proxy server logins, website regulations log-ins etc). Taken together, these findings suggest an important interplay of factors that influence the use of shadow libraries and other accessing strategies in different contexts, disciplines and individual circumstances. It is an ethical matter in terms of inequitable access to knowledge production alongside issues related to copyright and intellectual property.

As a result of their access to literature and time available to engage with the literature (Table 13), only 61% of the teachers felt that they were able to stay up to date with developments in the EAP or related fields. In contrast, 11% felt unable to stay up to date, with an additional 29% unsure of their ability to do so.

Table 13. Staying up to date with the field

Stay up to date with developments in the field	Number of respondents (n=85)	% of respondents
Yes	52	61.18%
Maybe	24	28.24%
No	9	10.59%

One of the main reasons presented for feeling unable to stay up to date through access to literature was the broadness of the field, which made it difficult to know where to start or who to ask for advice. "*Being aware of the areas to look at*" and a difficulty "*to identify genuine experts*" were mentioned. Some frustration was expressed and a perceived need to try harder. "*It's frustrating not to know what we don't know*". This frustration was also mixed with feelings of inadequacy:

> "*I often feel I don't know enough or am not up-to date enough.*"

Alternative ways of staying updated included conferences, online events and social media, which were often connected to BALEAP (SIGs, PIMs and the mailing list). Discussions with colleagues was also very frequently mentioned and valued.

.

Practitioner Insight 6

- Female aged 30-39. Teaching EAP in Iran on a part-time, temporary contract.
- Has taught EAP for 6 years; teaching 9 years in total.
- Teaching all types of EAP/ESAP. Teaching undergraduates online and offline.
- Reads 16-20 hours on average per week during holidays. Reads JESP, System and JEAP.

No access to university library so uses ResearchGate or Academia.com; Google Scholar; Via colleagues or personal contacts; Open access services; or directly via publishers or journal websites ;

Stays up to date via Webinars, MOOCs, and online conferences. *"I rely on colleagues to share resources."*

"EAP teachers need to have easy access to the research sources and materials for the purpose of facilitating their pedagogical content knowledge (ongoing professional development) and improving the quality of instruction in EAP courses in the context of higher education. We need a community of EAP teachers, scholars, and researchers sharing, critically evaluating, and discussing the latest EAP literature."

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?

In terms of improving practitioners' access to literature, the most favoured choice (79% of the participants) was that publications tailored for the EAP community should be open access whenever this is financially possible (Table 14). Participants were keen to see a more equitable access to literature, with several mentioning the present monopoly of academic publishing and the need for more open access journals and platforms. One interview participant stated that any discussion about Open Access needs to be feasible 'i.e. the cost not borne by authors'.

The possible benefits of and challenges with Open Access publishing are worth noting in more detail here. The question of who pays to provide open access is one of several challenges,

including different levels of open access and cost depending on journal, with many journals choosing to remain 'closed' (Fleming et al., 2021). The average cost of open access publishing fees in the UK is around £2,000, with the range typically falling between £600 and £3,000 depending on the journal and publisher involved. Although many UK-based researchers can access funding from bodies like UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) or the Wellcome Trust (for example) to cover open access publication costs, it is not always clear whether EAP practitioners are eligible to apply or know how to access these types of funds. Although many universities or libraries within universities have an institutional open access fund, these are often highly competitive. It also may not be clear to what extent EAP practitioners are eligible to apply for this fund in situations where practitioners are not expected to make contributions to the university Research Excellence Framework (REF) for example.

In terms of searching for open access literature, BALEAP may play a role in sharing guidance and tools that practitioners may be able to use in their search for literature. For example, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill draws attention to the benefits of using tools such as 'Open Access buttons', which search for versions of the paper that can be accessed immediately. This tool can also email the author and search for more information about the paper. In addition, the use of the 'Unpaywall' browser extension for Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox is also encouraged. This uses embedded metadata in scholarly sources to locate any (legal) open version of the article.

However, there are other implications to consider when advocating open access publishing. When taking a wider conception of accessibility, open access can also be perceived as offering only a narrow form of accessibility, more a kind of redistribution, whilst bigger questions around democratisation of knowledge are ignored, and Global North/South inequities even reinforced by an increased exposure to open access content (Knöchelmann, 2021). In a University of Cambridge blog about their new open access fund, Sutton (2022) stated that,

.

> "*We are very conscious about the wider challenges with author-pays models of open access, for example for unaffiliated researchers and those in institutions without access to funding of this sort, and especially of the global equity issues that arise.*"

Two other popular choices included making BALEAP conference proceedings free for all BALEAP members as part of their membership and EAP-teaching departments or language centres having a budget for resources that staff might need to access in their role. Budgets for purchasing library resources for EAP professional development needs are likely to differ across contexts. This matter has not been represented well in EAP literature to date to our knowledge.

Just over half of the participants also agreed that it would be useful for reference lists being discussed in BALEAP forums (PIMS, ResTES, and other [online] meetings) to be shared with the audience beforehand. This could work in a similar way to some inclusive teaching practices where students are given access to learning materials at least one day before class. 50% of respondents also agreed that teachers on short-term contracts (including summer pre-sessional contracts) should maintain library access throughout the academic year. This does not seem to be a consistent practice across institutions. Despite the detrimental impact of precarious EAP teaching contracts being discussed within the EAP community (e.g. Joubert & Clarence, 2024; BALEAP SIG, 'EAP for Social Justice'), in the UK context, it is not clear whether any attempts to support year-round library access for summer pre-sessional tutors or fixed-term staff have been successful. The issues involved in this endeavour are not really evident in EAP literature although they may be known to those colleagues who have tried to address this in their own institutions. It could be helpful to share these individual efforts more widely with the EAP community either in writing, conferences or other platforms.

Two interview participants suggested that inter-library loans could be free or that institutions or programme leads could provide relevant literature (as well as materials) but at least sample genres for their role.

Table 14. Ways of improving access to literature

Ways to improve access to literature for EAP practitioners	Number of respondents (*n*=85)	% of respondents
Publications tailored for the EAP community should be open access whenever this is financially possible.	67	78.82%
BALEAP conference proceedings should be free for all BALEAP members as part of their membership.	59	69.41%
EAP-teaching departments, language centres etc should have a budget for resources that staff might need to access in their role	55	64.71%
Reference lists being discussed in BALEAP forums (PIMS, ResTES, other [online] meetings) should be shared with the audience beforehand so they can inform organisers if they do not have access to the resources	48	56.47%
Teachers on short-term contracts (including summer pre-sessional contracts) should maintain library access throughout the academic year.	43	50.59%
Teachers on short-term contracts (including summer pre-sessional contracts) are given time to find and download literature while they have library access.	37	43.53%
The EAP community could produce more grey literature i.e. blogs, theses, policy documents.	36	42.35%
There should be a centralised EAP budget for open access fees.	34	40.00%

Many participants praised the inclusive community offered by BALEAP,

> "*I think BALEAP and the SIGs are really great communities to access EAP resources and helps me stay in the loop of EAP. I find it really useful when I started the BALEAP membership.*"

.

Others mentioned the inequity of those without institutional access to BALEAP needing to pay an individual annual subscription, sometimes finding this beyond their budget. Suggestions for future initiatives that BALEAP could support included: recommendations for literature, perhaps an article of the month or a section of the website that points to key resources. However, one interview participant had some concerns about the curation of these resources and questioned whose view (of useful literature) would be embedded in this.

Some suggestions pointed to activities that already exist in some places such as reading groups, information sharing, online access to events, and links to open resources, but requested either extending them or making their existence more visible to those with limited time or those new to the field.

Some felt that BALEAP had a role/responsibility to be active in pressurising institutions to improve library access for temporary staff, to push publishers to expand their open access literature, to petition for fairer pricing or charges for databases, lexicographers and corpora that university libraries can afford. The extent to which BALEAP, as an organisation, would like to have an advocating role or responsibility in this area could be further explored as suggested in the recommendations below.

Summary How do EAP teachers and researchers try to overcome or cope with these access issues and to what extent and in what ways can BALEAP and the EAP community support EAP practitioners' access to relevant and up-to-date literature?

Many EAP practitioners reported that they were unable to overcome some access issues. However, others either rely on colleagues, open-source literature and shadow libraries. A small number try to pay for access, but this is difficult. The use of shadow libraries is a complex matter worthy of further discussion within the EAP community. Our findings resonate with and refute existing findings related to academic users of shadow libraries.

Although most participants felt as though they could stay up to date with the field, 10% felt as though they could not. When access to published literature was limited, working with colleagues, accessing conferences, online events and use of social media helped people to stay up to date.

In terms of how BALEAP and the EAP community could support access to literature for all EAP practitioners, in all contexts, a list of suggestions and recommendations have been included below.

Comments on the study and further research

In this study, we adopted a mixed methods approach, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data. Using descriptive statistics, we were able to provide a quantitative view of the issues related to EAP practitioners' access to literature. Together with the qualitative findings within the questionnaire, interviews and focus groups, we were able to address our research questions, including the type of literature practitioners (want to) access for their role, their purposes for accessing literature, problems or difficulties encountered for accessing, and ways of improving the access. However, we note that we sampled an EAP practitioner population which was overwhelmingly in stable employment in Higher education institutions. This is linked to the channels used to circulate the survey (given in Appendix 1). Further research should attempt to reach the practitioners who are less represented in this study.

We also attempted to draw correlations between participants' responses with specific items such as their teaching context, their employment contract types, or the types of provision they taught. We noted above that these chi-square tests did not produce significant associations except in two instances. While our sample size might provide an explanation for this absence, it is also possible that the categories which we used (geographical location,

.

contract types, etc) are too broad to capture the nuanced ways in which our participants' experiences, trajectories, dispositions and orientations might influence their responses. In other words, it might not be the type of current contract, or the immediate context which mostly impacts practitioners' relation to the literature, but rather, less visible (and less immediately visible through thematic analysis) dispositions, values and legitimation practices, towards the literature, theory, professional development for example. Future research could engage theoretical frameworks such as legitimation code theory, specifically Specialisation (Maton, 2014), which might enable better understanding of these elements.

Conclusions

87 EAP practitioners responded to this survey about their access to literature. Twelve of the questionnaire respondents also took part in focus groups or interviews with the research team. The overall conclusion is that access to literature for EAP purposes can be problematic for many practitioners but for different reasons. The findings suggest that the challenges raised in this study should be further explored, as a social justice matter, across the international EAP community.

As detailed within this paper, the findings indicate that EAP practitioners, on the whole, do want to access various types of literature for various EAP purposes. For most of the participants in the study, access to literature was a vital requirement. Participants also referred however to less helpful attitudes towards accessing literature in their contexts or experiences. For example, some practitioners reported to have been actively discouraged to access literature for teaching purposes or felt as though this was not really an expectation of them. This is another clear indication of variation in the perceived roles and status of EAP practitioners not only across different educational and cultural contexts but also within a single institutional culture (Davis, 2019; Ding & Bruce, 2017).

Practitioners require access to a range of text types from very broad (e.g. Applied linguistics, Education, TESOL) but also very subject-specific bodies of literature. This reflects the role of multi-disciplinary influences within the field and the type of reading and analyses required in much EGAP (English for general academic purposes) and ESAP (English for specific academic purposes) work. The findings indicate that sociological literature has perhaps been less influential or less in demand by most of the questionnaire respondents. This could have important implications for the knowledge base of practitioners and is a matter that could be explored further. These findings were further reflected in practitioners' choice of journal articles; with the most popular journals being the Journal of English for Academic Purposes (JEAP), English for Specific Purposes (ESP), TESOL Quarterly and Applied Linguistics.

EAP practitioners wanted to access literature for a range of purposes largely related to teaching, designing curriculum, assessment and feedback, and creating materials. In many responses, it was deemed important to draw on literature for accountability purposes i.e. to be designing and facilitating good quality, informed learning opportunities for students. The findings suggest a sense of practitioner empowerment via access to literature and appreciation of the opportunity to develop professionally through access to recent research and discourses. Many participants were very clear in the ways their knowledge and practice depended on access to contemporary research and insights. Accessing literature and having the opportunity to contribute to relevant literature was also related to a sense of belonging in communities of practice. EAP practitioners also wanted to access literature for research and scholarship purposes, although teaching-related matters tended to be prioritised over these. Most questionnaire respondents did not choose to access literature for management or leadership purposes, as a top priority at least.

Regarding the challenges accessing literature, although most practitioners felt as though they had good to average access to literature for their EAP role, many indicated ongoing difficulties accessing literature for various reasons. This included limited ICT infrastructure in the country or region, limited access to the internet, limited university subscriptions, limited relevant library resources and limited digitisation of literature. A small but important number of

.

practitioners did not have access to a university library and many of the questionnaire respondents felt as though they were unable to keep up to date with developments in the field. There was some indication that ICT infrastructure and access to the internet may be more problematic in some contexts than others. The existence of national firewalls and censorship in some contexts was also regarded as a barrier to access, although use of VPNs seemed to help here. Other access barriers included precarious job contracts and losing access in-between jobs or degree studies. This applied across contexts and individual circumstances. For many practitioners with access to a library as a staff or student member, some libraries were better resourced than others. For those practitioners with good access to literature, there were other challenges and issues. In particular, the time needed for or allocated to reading (and scholarship) was noted; as was the difficulty navigating the literature i.e. knowing what to look for, where, and when. Counter to the notion that there should not be a definitive knowledge base for EAP (citations from intro), some participants of this study would welcome a 'reading list' of sorts to help them navigate the breadth of literature available.

Many practitioners noted times when they felt excluded because of difficulties accessing literature and, for some, this was regarded as an important social justice matter that needs addressing further as a collective effort within the community. A noticeable number of participants who experienced access issues reported to rely on open access, other file sharing sites or shadow libraries, as well as relying on colleagues and EAP networks. Very few practitioners were able to pay directly for access to literature they needed.

In response to these issues, there were a number of suggestions made and selected within the questionnaire. There were also a series of written suggestions offered by practitioners. Most of these are included in the recommendations below.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and suggestions gathered in this study, BALEAP and the EAP community could consider the following:

1. BALEAP could host an online event to share and discuss these findings and suggested recommendations from this study. This could help to acknowledge this matter and make the discussion more transparent and inclusive. It could also help to identify some actions or staged milestones in our efforts to make access to literature more equitable across contexts and circumstances.

2. BALEAP and the EAP community could review the role we have played in national and international discussions about inequitable access to knowledge. The organisation may consider a representative open-access champion or other role that works with other organisations who are invested in this endeavour or involved in critical engagement in the open access movement.

3. BALEAP could take an advocacy role in discussing with institutions the possibilities of maintaining access for temporary staff.

4. BALEAP could continue to advertise their website, events and Special Interest Groups (SIGs) widely. This could include seminars, blogs, MA/PhD theses and the new EAP podcast series.

5. BALEAP could consider ways of supporting high-impact literature to be published open access. Perhaps via an application process that encourages authors to demonstrate the contribution to the field and the international community.

6. BALEAP could consider sharing or signposting to literature, such as an article of the month or other useful contributions.

7. BALEAP could consider making online conference proceedings free for all BALEAP members as part of their membership and consider allocating funds to cover costs of individual or institutional membership where this is deemed appropriate.

.

8. Presenters at BALEAP forums (Professional Interest Meetings, Research Training Event Series (ResTES), SIG meetings, and other online or hybrid meetings) could share their reference list with registered attendees beforehand and consider providing a brief summary of the text where this is requested. This could help to avoid copyright infringements.

9. BALEAP and EAP leaders or managers within EAP or language centres could consider their budget for staff resources and undertake a review of their EAP-related holdings in the library.

10. EAP leaders and managers could consider ways of supporting temporary staff to access university library resources year-round and giving them time to access resources within their teaching contract.

11. The EAP community could share more resources while also adhering to copyright guidance. For example, via pre-prints on ResearchGate.

References

Abusalim, A. 2021. ERPP practices in the Arab WorlD: One language, different problems. Journal of English for Research Publication Purposes **2**(1), pp. 30–61.

Alexander, O., Argent, S. and Spencer, J. 2008.EAP Essentials - A Teacher's Guide to Principles & Practice Book, London: Garnet Education.

Alexander, O. 2010. The leap into TEAP: the role of the BALEAP competency framework in the professional development of new EAP teachers.' *English for Specific Purposes Special Interest Group*, **42**(2)*,* pp. 21–24.

Al-Suqri,M.N. 2011. Information-seeking behavior of social science scholars in developing countries: A proposed model, *The International Information & Library Review*, **43**(1),pp. 1-14.

Aryee R, and Apronti Tetteh EO. 2024. Library resources constraints, frustration, and user behavior: An empirical library operations study, *Brain Behaviour* **14(**7):e3627.

BALEAP. 2022. *TEAP Individual Accreditation Scheme Handbook*. BALEAP publication.

BALEAP. 2024. *BALEAP Accreditation Scheme Handbook*. BALEAP publication.

BALEAP Special Interest Group, 'EAP for Social Justice'. Precarity Reflections. [Accessed 31 Jan 2025]. Available from https://eap4sj.weebly.com/blog-posts/precarity-reflections

Bardi,M. 2015. Learning the practice of scholarly publication in English – A Romanian perspective, *English for Specific Purposes*, **37**, pp. 98-111.

Bell,D. 2022. Methodology in EAP: Why is it largely still an overlooked issue?, *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, **55**, pp. 101073.

Bernstein, B. 2000. Pedagogy, symbolic control and identity: theory, research, critique. Oxford : Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

Bondi, M. 2016. Textbooks. In Hyland, K. (Ed). *The Routledge Handbook of English for Academic Purposes*. Routledge.

.

Boudry C, Alvarez-Muñoz P, Arencibia-Jorge R, Ayena D, Brouwer NJ, Chaudhuri Z, Chawner B, Epee E, Erraïs K, Fotouhi A, Gharaibeh AM, Hassanein DH, Herwig-Carl MC, Howard K, Kaimbo Wa Kaimbo D, Laughrea P, Lopez FA, Machin-Mastromatteo JD, Malerbi FK, Ndiaye PA, Noor NA, Pacheco-Mendoza J, Papastefanou VP, Shah M, Shields CL, Wang YX, Yartsev V, Mouriaux F.
2019. Worldwide inequality in access to full text scientific articles: the example of ophthalmology. *PeerJ* **7**:e7850.

Blaj-Ward, L. 201e. Researching contexts, practices and pedagogies in English for academic purposes, London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bruce, B. and Bond, B. 2022.*Contextualising English for academic purposes in higher education:*
politics, policies and practices. London: Bloomsbury.

Campion,G. 2016. The learning never ends': Exploring teachers' views on the transition from General English to EAP, *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, **23**, pp. 59-70.

Canagarajah, A. S. 1996. "Nondiscursive" Requirements in Academic Publishing, Material Resources of Periphery Scholars, and the Politics of Knowledge Production. *Written Communication*, *13*(4), 435-472

Chapman. T., and Tibbetts, N. 2023. A Guide to In-sessional English for Academic Purposes, London: Routledge.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., and Morrison, K. 2018. *Research Methods in Education*. Taylor and Francis.

Cowley-Haselden, S. 2020. Building knowledge to ease troublesomeness: Affording theory knowledgeability through academic reading circles, Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice, 17(2), Article 8.

Creswell, J. W. 2014. *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative Research*. Pearson Publishing.

Cui, K. 2024. Leadership in English for Academic Purposes (EAP): A Vision for Sino-Foreign Joint University Success. In: Morris, G.H. and Kozuch, S. (Ed). *Developments and Future Trends in Transnational Higher Education Leadership,* China, IGI Global Scientific Publishing.

Clamon, T. S., Sergiadis, A., and Young, J. 2022. Addressing textbook affordability with institutional licensed e-textbooks. In Charleston conference proceedings. East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee.

Curry, N. 2021. Teaching English for academic purposes with evidence: where to get it and how to use it. Cambridge ELT Blog. Accessible via https://www.cambridge.org/elt/blog/2020/07/31/teaching-english-for-academic-purposes-with-evidence-where-to-get-it-and-how-to-use-it/

Davis, M. 2019. Publishing research as an EAP practitioner: Opportunities and threats. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, **39**, pp. 72-86.

Dei, D.-G. J., and Asante, F. Y. 2022. Role of academic libraries in the achievement of quality education as a sustainable development goal. Library Management, **43**(6/7), 439–459.

Ding, A. 2022. Scholarship, Ethics and Book Reviews: Some preliminary and Provisional Thoughts. Teaching EAP [blog] July 11 2022. Accessed on 16th April 2024.

Ding, A. and Bruce, I. 2017. *The English for Academic Purposes Practitioner: Operating on the Edge of Academia*. Palgave Macmillan.

Ding, A and Evans, M. 2022. *Social Theory for English for Academic Purposes: Foundations and Perspectives*. London:Bloomsbury.

Ding, A. and Monbec, L. 2024. *Practitioner Agency and Identity in English for Academic Purposes*. London: Bloomsbury.

Elshafei, M. 2022. Institutional exclusion and exploitation of language teachers. Working papers in Applied Linguistics and Linguistics at York. **2**. pp. 112-121.

Feak, C.B., and Swales, J.M. 2014. Tensions between the Old and the New in EAP Textbook Revision: A Tale of Two Projects. In: Harwood, N. (Ed). *English Language Teaching Textbooks*. Palgrave Macmillan, London.

Fitzpatrick, D., Costley, T., Tavakoli, P. 2022. Exploring EAP teachers' expertise: Reflections on practice, pedagogy and professional development, *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, **59**, pp. 101140.

Fleming, J.I., Wilson, S.E., Hart, S.A., Therrien, W.J. & Cook, B.G. (2021) Open accessibility in education research: Enhancing the credibility, equity, impact, and efficiency of research, *Educational Psychologist*, 56:2, 110-121, DOI: 10.1080/00461520.2021.1897593

.

Fosci, M., Ficarra, V., Chiarelli, A., and Johnson, R. 2020. *Equitable access to research in a changing world: Research4Life Landscape and Situation Analysis*. The Knowledge Futures Commonplace.

Hadley, G. 2015. *English for Academic Purposes in Neoliberal Universities: A Critical Grounded Theory*. Springer.

Hall, G. 2023. *Teachers' engagement with published research: how do teachers who read research navigate the field, what do they read, and why*? British Council.

Harwood, N. 2005. What do we want EAP teaching materials for?, *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, **4**(2), pp. 149-161.

Helsper, E. 2021. The Digital Disconnect : The Social Causes and Consequences of Digital Inequalities, London: Sage Publications.

Hyland, K. 2018. Sympathy for the devil? A defence of EAP. *Language Teaching*, **51**(3), 383-399.

Hyland, K., and Jiang, F(K). 2021. A bibliometric study of EAP research: Who is doing what, where and when?, Journal of English for Academic Purposes, **49**, pp. 100929,

Jenkins, J. 2014. *English as a Lingua Franca in the international university: the politics of academic English language policy* , Abingdon, GB: Routledge.

Joubert, M., and Clarence,S. 2024. 'I just feel very dispensable': Exploring the connections between precarity and identity for academic literacy developers, *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 71, 101425.

Kaivanpanah, S., Alavi, S.M., Bruce, I., and Hejazi, S.Y. 2021. EAP in the expanding circle: Exploring the knowledge base, practices, and challenges of Iranian EAP practitioners, *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, **50**, PP. 100971.

Kajumba, T. 2023. *Addressing power dynamics and inequity in institutional partnership models.* International Institute for Environment and Development.

Knöchelmann. M. 2021. "The Democratisation Myth: Open Access and the Solidification of Epistemic Injustices", *Science & Technology Studies*, **34**(2), pp. 65–89.

Lawrence, A., Houghton, J., Thomas, J., Weldone, P. 2020. *Grey literature strategies survey results and questionnaires: producers, users and collecting services.* Grey Literature Strategies Project Archive.

Łuczaj, K. and Łuczaj. M.H. 2020. How Academics outside Global Research Centers Challenge Limitations in Access to Scholarly Literature. *Libraries and the Academy*, **20**(4), pp. 715-731.

MacDiarmid, C., and MacDonald, J.M. 2021.*Pedagogies in English for Academic Purposes: Teaching and Learning in International Context*s. London: Bloomsbury.

Maton, K. 2014. *Knowledge and knowers: Towards a realist sociology of education*. Routledge.

Mills, D., Kingori, P. Branford,A.,Chatio, S., Robinson, N., and Tindana, P. 2023. *Who counts? Ghanaian academic publishing and global science.* SA: African Minds.

Monbec, L. and Ding, A. 2024. *Recovering Language in Higher Education: Social Justice, Ethics and Practices*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Sechelski, A. N., and Onwuegbuzie, A. J. 2019. A Call for Enhancing Saturation at the Qualitative Data Analysis Stage via the Use of Multiple Qualitative Data Analysis Approaches, *The Qualitative Report*, **24**(4), pp. 795-821.

Segado-Boj, F., Martín-Quevedo, J., and Prieto-Gutiérrez, J.-J. 2022. Jumping over the paywall: Strategies and motivations for scholarly piracy and other alternatives. *Information Development*, *0*(0).

Siler, K.,& Frenken,F. 2020. The pricing of open access journals: Diverse niches and sources of value in academic publishing. *Quantitative Science Studies* **1**(1), pp. 28–59.

Simkhada, P., van Teijlingen., E.R., Devkota., B. and Sathian, B. 2014. Accessing research literature: A mixed-method study of academics in Higher Education Institutions in Nepal, *Nepal Journal of Epidemiology* **4**, pp. 405-14.

Sutton, A. 2022. Open Research at Cambridge Conference, Publishing, Supporting Researchers in the 21st Century. [Accessed 31 Jan 2025]. Available from https://unlockingresearch-blog.lib.cam.ac.uk/?p=3298

Swales, J.M. 2019. The futures of EAP genre studies: A personal viewpoint, *Journal of English for Academic Purpose*s, **38**, pp. 75-82.

.

Taylor, M. 2020. The Great Firewall of China: restricted access to commonly used websites and resources, University of Sussex Educational Enhancement Team.

UNESCO, 2007. *Knowledge for the future: research capacity in developing countries*. International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP).

UNESCO, 2019. *Launch of the Global Alliance of Open Access Scholarly Communication Platforms* (GLOALL) *to democratize knowledge*. UNESCO.

United Nations, 2020. Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries | [WWW Document].
URL https://www.un.org/technologybank/

UKRI. 2023.Guidance for UKRI's open access fund for long-form publications. Accessed 31 Jan 2025]. Available from https://www.ukri.org/publications/guidance-for-ukris-open-access-fund-for-long-form-publications/

Walkova, M. 2021. Scholarship is a Journey. 29 July. *The Language Scholar.* [Online]. [Accessed 23 June 2024]. Available from https://languagescholar.leeds.ac.uk/scholarship-is-a-journey/

Walters, W. H. 2019. Beg, borrow, and steal: Formal and informal access to the scholarly literature at US master's universities. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship*, **45**(6), pp. 102059.

Wang, Y., and Chan, N.C.L. 2024. Formulaic Language in University Seminars: A Comparison of EAP Textbook Coverage and Authentic Language Use in ELF Settings. In Walková. M. Ed. *Linguistic Approaches in English for Academic Purposes : Expanding the Discourse*, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.

Winiarska-Pringle, I., and Rolińska, A. 2024. Finding space and voice: Duoethnographic exploration of teacher agency in EAP. In Ding, A. & Monbec, L. Eds. *Practitioner Agency and Identity in English for Academic Purposes*, Bloomsbury, pp.136-154.

Webster, S. (2022). The transition of EAP practitioners into scholarship writing. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 57*, 101091.

Zhang, L., Wei, Y., Huang, Y. 2022. Should open access lead to closed research? The trends towards paying to perform research. *Scientometrics* **127**, pp. 7653–7679.

Appendix 1. List of networks and platforms

- BALEAP mailing list, twitter and website including Research and Publications website
- BALEAP institutions and individual members
- IATEFL including Research SIG
- #AusELT
- BAAL SIG convenors
- JEAP authors
- GERAS (France) * other associations via https://www.geras.fr/communaute/associations-amies
- ALDinHE
- China EAP Association (CEAPA)
- WeChat groups for applied linguists
- QQ groups for writing and ELT teachers in China
- Individual contacts in different contexts (Mexico, Japan, Argentina,Turkey, Italy, Vietnam, Canada, South Africa, Pakistan.
- Personal contacts in Chinese Universities such as HKUST, Fudan University, and Shantou University.
- Personal contacts in HK (CITYU, HKU, PolyU, HKBU), and Singapore: NTU, NUS.
- SAAL (Singapore)
- LCT and Sysfling mailing lists
- EATAW
- AL networks on Facebook (Teacher Voices, Aukland AL Research Network, AL Research Methods Discussion, Second Language Writing)
- LinkedIn accounts
- afiszbein@thedialogue.org
- Authors of Bloomsbury series, New Perspectives in English for Academic Purposes.

.

Appendix 2. Questionnaire Items

1.Do you access or want to access literature for your EAP role? Please note this question aims to

avoid the assumption that accessing literature for practice is necessary or a priority for all practitioners.

2.If you answered 'no' to question 1, please share any reasons why accessing literature is not necessary or a priority for your EAP role.

3.Do you think it is important to access literature for your role as an EAP teacher?

4.Please explain your reasons for your response to the previous question

5.Which type(s) of literature do you (want to) access?

- Blogs (e.g., posts by EAP teachers)
- Books or chapters (EAP research or pedagogy focused)
- Books or chapters (language teaching or research focused)
- Books or chapters (education, educational technology related)
- Books or chapters (subject-specific pedagogy, e.g., scientific writing styles)
- Books or papers focused on research methodology
- Conference proceedings (e.g. BALEAP conference)
- Course materials online (e.g., university course syllabi, CELTA materials, MOOCs)
- EAP course books (e.g., EAP Now!)
- Journal papers (EAP research or pedagogy focused, e.g., Journal of English for Academic
- Purposes)
- Journal papers (language teaching or research focused, e.g., TESOL Quarterly)
- Journal papers (education or educational technology related, e.g., Teaching in Higher
- Education)
- Journal papers (subject-specific research, e.g. Linguistics, Computer Science,
- Mathematics, Business)

- Journal papers (subject-specific pedagogy, e.g., Digital Humanities pedagogy)

- Subject specific textbooks

- Grey literature - resources not produced by commercial or scholarly publishing industry

- e.g. Theses, policy documents, reports etc

- Other

6.Which bodies of literature do you need to or want to access? *There are areas of overlap in the list below so please select any that apply to you.

- Applied linguistics

- Applied linguistics

- Socio-linguistics

- Education-based

- Research skills

- Study skills

- Sociological

- TESOL/ ELT

- Discipline-specific i.e., for investigating Chemistry or Mathematics (for EAP teaching

- purposes)

- Explicit-EAP Literature – tailored to EAP teachers specifically

- Other

7.In which language(s) are the resources written that you access or would like to access for your
EAP role?

8. Please use the space below to tell us anything else about the type of literature you access or

.
would like to access for your EAP role.

9.Please rank the following purposes for accessing literature (1 = most frequent/ 4 = least frequent)

- Teaching, assessment and feedback
- Research and scholarship
- Curriculum or materials design
- Management or leadership

10.Please add any comments you would like to make about how you ranked the purposes.

11.What is your aim when accessing this literature?
- To teach a specific discipline e.g. engineering
- To learn about an aspect of language learning and teaching
- To learn about ways of analysing language
- To learn about research methods for my own scholarship or research
- To learn about leadership and management?
- Other

12. Please use this space to tell us anything else about the purposes for accessing literature within your EAP role.

13. Do you have access to a university library?

14. Is your access available all year?

15. If you answered no to the previous question, for how many months a year do you have access and what is it reliant on?

16. Where do you access literature?

- A university library (either physical or online)

- A public library (either physical or online)

- Directly via publishers or journal websites

- Open access services

- Google Scholar

- ResearchGate or Academia.com

- Shadow library or file-sharing services

- Via colleagues or personal contacts

17. How would you rate your access to literature?

- Good

- Average

- Poor

18. Please explain your selection in the previous question.

19. For each type of source you use, please indicate whether you have any difficulty accessing the source type. Options: an always access easily/ Can access with some challenges/ Very difficult to access/ NA.

- Archival or heritage material

- Audio-visual materials

- Blogs Books and EBooks

- Commercial and market research

- Conference papers and presentations

- Data sets (e.g. government or research, including corpora)

- Discussion or position papers

- Doctoral or Masters theses

- Essays Journal articles

- Literature reviews (peer reviewed)

- Reports (including research, project, inquiry, consultant)

- Evaluations

.

- Legal and court documents

- Social media, podcasts, talk back radio

- Webpages, websites

- Working papers and re-prints

20. Can you identify the reasons why this literature is difficult to access?

- I do not have access to a library (either in person or online)

- I have limited access to the Information Communication Technology (ICT) or the internet

- Limited university subscriptions

- Library does not own many books in this field

- Limited ICT infrastructure in the country/region

- Limited ICT infrastructure in the university

- Limited digitisation of literature

- N/A Other

21. How do you overcome these issues?

- I don't
- I rely on colleagues to share resources
- I use open access
- I use a shadow library
- N/A
- Other

22. In general, do you feel you are able to stay up-to-date with developments in the EAP field or
other relevant fields?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

23. If you answered No or Maybe, please explain further.

24.Other than via access to literature, in what other ways are you able to stay up-to-date with developments in the field? (i.e. online seminars, chats with colleagues etc.)

25.Have you ever felt excluded or disadvantaged due to your level of access to literature? If so,
how?

26.In relation to any access issues that you have identified or are aware of, can you suggest one
or more ways that access to literature could be improved?

27. The following suggestions have been made as ways to improve access to literature for EAP practitioners. Please select any options that you think could be helpful to you.

- Teachers on short-term contracts (including summer pre-sessional contracts) should
- maintain library access throughout the academic year.
- Teachers on short-term contracts (including summer pre-sessional contracts) are given
- time to find and download literature while they have library access.
- Publications tailored for the EAP community should be open access whenever this is
- financially possible.
- There should be a centralised EAP budget for open access fees.
- The EAP community could produce more grey literature i.e. blogs, theses, policy
- documents.
- BALEAP conference proceedings should be free for all BALEAP members as part of their
- membership.
- EAP-teaching departments, language centres etc should have a budget for resources
- that staff might need to access in their role.
- Reference lists being discussed in BALEAP forums (PIMS, ResTES, other [online]
- meetings) should be shared with the audience beforehand so they can inform organisers

.

- if they do not have access to the resources.

28. Please add any further comments about the suggestions in the previous question. This might include how feasible you think one or more of the suggestions are in your context or any
additional thoughts.

28. Finally, please use the space below to share any further details or information about your experiences of accessing literature relevant to your EAP role.

29.Please select your age.

- 20-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60-69
- 70-79
- 80+

30. Please tell us about your gender.

31. Please describe your educational background selecting all that apply.

- Undergraduate level
- Postgraduate level
- Doctoral level
- Teaching Certificate (e.g. PGCE or CELTA or DELTA)
- Other

32. In which country or countries are you currently teaching EAP?

33. Are you currently teaching full time or part time?

34. Are you working on a permanent or temporary contract?

35. How many years have you been teaching EAP?

36. How many years in total have you taught (including EAP and non-EAP courses)?

37. Which type(s) of EAP courses are you teaching/ have you been teaching for the past three years?

- General EAP standalone (not embedded in faculties)
- Discipline-specific EAP standalone (not embedded in faculties)
- Embedded EAP/ ESAP (within faculties)
- Other

38. Which levels/types of students do you work with?

- Pre-university students
- Undergraduate students
- Masters students
- Doctoral students

39. Are you mainly teaching online or offline?

- Online
- Offline
- Equal amount online and offline

40. When do you usually read for your work as an EAP teacher?

- During weekdays
- During evenings and weekends
- During holidays

41. How much time on average do you spend on reading for your work?

- Less than 1 hour per week

.

- 1-5 hours per week
- 6-10 hours
- 11-15 hours per week
- 16-20 hours per week
- More than 20 hours per week.

42. Which of the following journals do you most often read? (Choose up to 5).

- Applied Linguistics
- Assessing Writing
- Asia Pacific Education Researcher
- Asian ESP Journal
- English for Specific Purposes
- Ibérica
- Language Teaching
- Language Learning
- ELT Journal
- International Journal of Bilingual Education & Bilingualism
- Journal of English for Academic Purposes
- Journal of Pragmatics
- Journal of Multilingual & Multicultural Development
- Journal of Second Language Writing
- Language and Education
- Language Teaching Research
- Language Testing
- RELC Journals
- System
- Teaching and Teacher Education
- Teaching in Higher Education

- TESOL Quarterly

- World Englishes

- Written Communication

- Not applicable

- Other

43. What are the titles of the EAP literature you have read in the last week or month or semester?

.

Appendix 3. Online interview and focus group questions

1. Why did you decide to take part in this interview/ focus group?

2. The questionnaire asked about the sort of literature you want to access and why? Do you want to add anything more to this/ would you share with others about this.

3. The questionnaire asked about any challenges you have accessing the literature? Would you like to discuss any challenges or issues you experience?

4. If you have any access issues, how do you cope with these?

5. Would you like to share ideas about ways of helping others to access literature?

6. What might be some challenges in trying to improve people's access?