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EAP Course for Undergraduate Students in Bangladesh: An Exploration of Students' and Teachers' Perceptions

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ABSTRACT

All the tertiary-level institutions in Bangladesh offer English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course in the very first semester of the undergraduate studies to remediate students' existing language skills gap and guide them during their undergraduate studies. This research paper aimed at investigating both the teachers' and the students' perceptions of the EAP course. Following mixed-method approach, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected from two different tertiary-level institutions through the administration of a survey questionnaire for students and interviewing the teachers. Survey questionnaires were administered among one-hundred purposively selected students of eight different departments of two tertiary-level institutions and they were requested to answer a set of graded questions and a few open-ended questions. Ten teachers from those institutions were given a separate set of open-ended questions to put their perceptions and experiences regarding the EAP course in writing. To bring out the salient features related to the EAP course, data collected from both the teachers and the students were triangulated. Findings revealed various gaps in the course contents and the taught language skills in the EAP course, the given efforts and time by students and, in cases, by teachers. At the end, the researcher came up with some realistic recommendations which might have practical implications in developing need-specific EAP courses.

*Keywords:* EAP, language skills, tertiary-level, need-specific, students'/teachers' perceptions

INTRODUCTION

Though all the tertiary-level institutions of Bangladesh offer the English for Academic Purposes (hereafter referred to as EAP) course in the curriculum of the undergraduate programmes, it is often found to be misunderstood by many in terms of the course's goals and objectives with the explicit present or immediate needs and implicit future needs. Fundamentally, English, like any other language, is a means of communication which might have, for most of the tertiary-level learners, wide-ranging implications even beyond the academic life. For that very reason, teaching and learning English should not have the myopic view of only completing a

course. As the EAP course is offered for all, under the perceived homogeneity of the learners, comparatively competent students might not be equally motivated with the same course with easy going contents which stands below their “zone of proximal development (ZPD).” Therefore, this wide-spread offer of the EAP course in the tertiary-level should very necessarily draw attention from the researchers and a few of the researches focus on the impact phase. However, researchers did not investigate either the teachers’ or the students’ perceptions to pinpoint the applicability, suitability and necessity of the EAP course.

Bangladesh, erstwhile East Pakistan, fought in 1952 for the right to speak in Bangla, and continued its struggle to establish its politico-cultural identity based on the riches and resources of Bangla language and literature culminating into an independent nation through the Liberation War of 1971. In 1972, the newly formed constitution safeguarded the status of Bangla officially, but all the education commissions placed importance on learning English language in every level. Rahman meticulously chronicles the history of the gradual decline in English language skills among Bangladeshi students and the eventual reintroduction of the English language in the academic arena of Bangladesh since its independence (60-61). Though the students learn English as a compulsory subject up till Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) level with much emphasis, different language skills remain neglected because of the monotonous memorization practice, writing-intensive summative assessment system and unhealthy craving for grades. As a result, instructors also disregard the importance of productive language skills leading to students’ suffering in the tertiary-level.

The practical application of English as a language, with all four skills, comes to the foreground during the tertiary-level when medium of instruction turns to be English for most of the subjects. Besides being the medium of instruction in the universities, most of the tertiary-level textbooks are written in English while researchers and academics publish their articles in many international journals in English. To complicate the issue farther, students discover a quite autonomous teaching-learning environment in the tertiary-level where they need to attend class lectures regularly, study in groups, go to library for extra study and reflect on the learning process to achieve the learning outcome. Consequently, all the institutions offer EAP course to make up for the English language skills gap. One important issue to note here, EAP course no longer remains at the centre in the tertiary-level except for those who goes for English studies resulting in diverse pattern of motivation in the EAP class.

#### RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

In 2014, just after the landslide failure of admission-aspirant students in English in the admission test of the University of Dhaka, Prof. Emeritus Serajul Islam Choudhury’s comment came in *The Daily Star*, one of the reputed English dailies, thus: “Most of the students lack aptitude for learning English. All they care is about getting good marks” (Correspondent). The aforementioned debacle brought to the front the debate over the teaching-learning standard of English in secondary and higher secondary level education and also the difficulty level of the admission test question paper with the reciprocal blaming of the academics for this failure. Ponessa appropriately explained this phenomenon in his article entitled the “Chain of Blame” reminding us that every tier of education places the responsibility for students’ low achievement on their immediate past level of study. To make-up for the language skills gap of HSC-level, institutions include EAP course in the tertiary-level where it serves the students in three ways: (a) to get a good grade in the 3-credit EAP course, (b) to do better in the other core subjects, (c) to enhance the verbal and written communication skills in English and (d) to do better in the future professional life. In brief, language skills serve some immediate needs and also keep the promise of serving beyond the academic sphere.

However, both the teachers and the students express their perceptions regarding EAP course’s effectiveness and appropriateness with some sort of reservations. Unfortunately, these EAP classes fail to interest the students, whereas teachers also express their frustration regarding students’ motivation, involvement and participation during the course. Both the teachers and the students feel that the present and the future English language needs are not always fulfilled through the EAP course which is, in most cases, their last institutional opportunity of learning the language. All these issues demand empirical study to find out both teachers’ and students’ perceptions regarding the EAP course in the tertiary-level.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Various other previous researches on EAP course mainly focused on effectiveness of EAP courses with regard to its goals to fulfil the future study needs and mostly studied the impact phase. Current research scope is on students' perceptions on the alignment of the EAP course with their current and future educational needs. On the other hand, teachers have their own perceptions about the course syllabus, students' motivational factors and tendencies, and overall logistics support. The following two questions guided the researcher to measure teachers' and students' perceptions.

- a) What are the perceptions of both the teachers and students about the EAP course in the tertiary-level?
- b) To what extent are the goals and objectives of the EAP course achieved according to the students' and teachers' perceptions?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Since 1972, the government of Bangladesh formed various commissions for the enhancement of educational quality in every level and all the bodies identified the poor condition of teaching-learning English in all academic levels. Rahman notes that the government of Bangladesh passed an act in 1994 for the reintroduction of English in the B. A. degree and, consequently, all the institutions introduced the compulsory one-year foundation course in English in 1996 (65). Erling et al. (qtd. in Rahman 62) identify the reasons behind this reemergence of English language study "in helping people gain the resources to lift themselves out of poverty and increase their ability to participate in the world economic systems from which they have previously been excluded" (2).

The English language course entitled EAP is usually a branch of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and the scope of ESP courses is very precisely specified by Hutchison & Waters thus: "Why do these learners need to learn English?" (53) By declaring ESP as not "a monolithic universal phenomenon" (9), they also identifies - the students' *lacks*—the gaps between the "target proficiency" and the "existing proficiency" (55–56). Hamp-Lyons describes the early days of EAP as a "grass roots, practical response to an immediate problem" (91). In the western context, need for EAP courses increased due to the increasing number of enrollment of non-native English-speaking students in native English-speaking universities. Hyland asserts that "to improve students' academic communication skills in English to the level required for entry into an English-medium university or college" (4) many universities offer EAP course for undergraduate students. Usually English and Mathematics have remedial or specially designed courses for undergraduate students as these two connect students' future success, from pedagogical view point, in related stream of education. Goff-Kfoury & Ramzi clearly points towards this issue by referring to English and Mathematics as gatekeeper courses for enrolment in undergraduate programmes and states: "Students who are successful in disciplines such as history, geography, arts and languages are also successful in the English language and that those successful in science, logic and engineering are successful in Mathematics" (86).

One striking issue is that the understanding of EAP course is not always clear to the very teachers-practitioners. Many of the practitioners mistakenly consider the EAP course as something close to that of the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach and that maintaining a learner-friendly classroom with various activities makes an English language course an EAP course. Belcher clears the cloud of misunderstanding by asserting "the EAP ideal: combined needs assessor, specialised syllabus designer, authentic materials developer, and content-knowledgeable instructor, capable of coping with the revolving door of content areas relevant to learners' communities" (139). Gillet further clarifies the confusion regarding general study skills and EAP courses and delineates the differences as follows:

The main objective of EAP courses is to teach the language, both general academic language and subject specific language as well as language related practices such as summarising and writing introductions. The language of the learners' academic subject and language related study skills will form the main component of the EAP skills classes. (1)

Though tertiary-level institutions almost universally place EAP course in the undergraduate level studies, their effectiveness in enhancing students' language skills is subject to deep suspicion as per the opinion of many English language teachers, who emphasizes more on the classroom practices and teachers pedagogical abilities to make an EAP course successful (Othman & Shuqair 132).

## METHODOLOGY

As the current study is based on students' and teachers' perceptions of the EAP course, the researcher tried to bring together the relevant data from both of the groups in a coordinated manner. The researcher selected two tertiary-level institutions on purpose and followed the mixed-method approach. The researcher also tried to follow the guidelines given by Dörnyei and Taguchi that include five general instructions for the development of survey questionnaire and those are: (a) disclosing the purpose and importance of the study; (b) disclosing identity of the researcher/organization; (c) emphasizing on respondents' honesty and integrity while answering; (d) promising them confidentiality; and, (e) expressing courtesy (19).

With a view to investigate the research questions, the researcher developed a survey questionnaire for the students with EAP course related information questions followed by seventeen graded questions in a five-point-scale and six open-ended questions. Students, or the subject of this study, are asked to respond to the open-ended questions in Bangla to feel comfortable with bringing inner understanding without psychological hindrance. For the teachers, some open-ended interview questions were formulated. As all the teachers are directly involved with the EAP course, they might feel comfortable with open-ended questions to come up with insights to complement the research questions. Mixed-method approach helped the researcher to ascertain students' perceptions with that of the teachers' through data triangulation to reach the realistic understanding of the situation.

Out of the hundred purposively selected students 90 returned the questionnaire and 80 of them were found satisfactorily filled up. Students' graded responses were presented in bar-chart form using the MS Office package. From the open-ended questions, the researcher tried to bring some categories based on the commonalities and differences. Collected data, from both teachers and students, were analyzed based on the major perceptions on the EAP course in the tertiary-level. Communicative language teaching (CLT) approach is also consulted to validate or comment on the teaching-learning assumptions of both teachers and students. As the students were asked to respond to open-ended questions in Bangla, what many of them did, the researcher translated them in English before analysis remaining close to the students' meaning.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

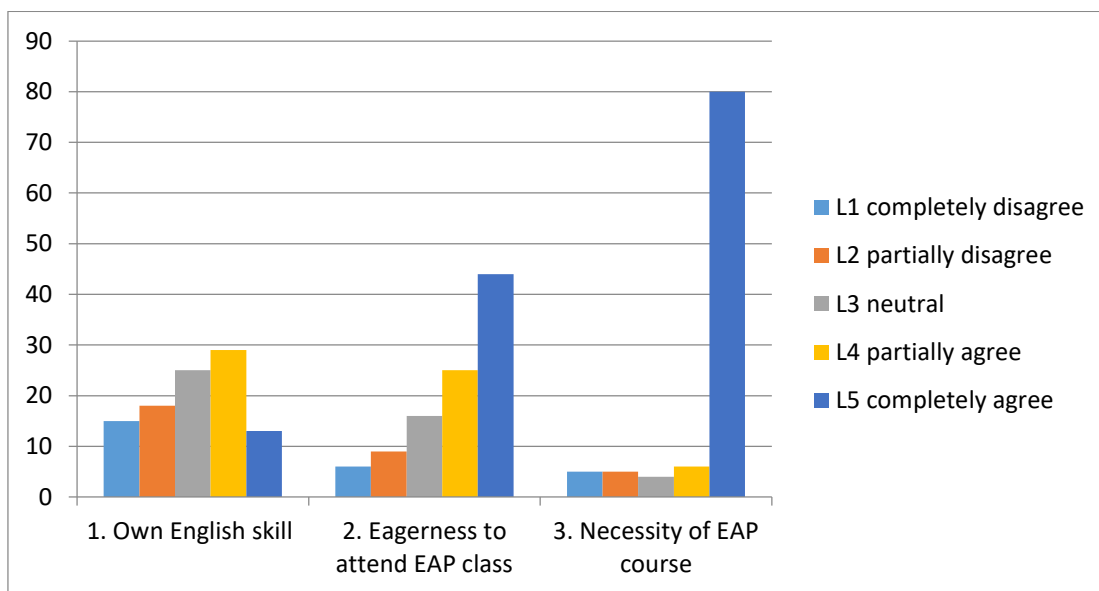
In the process of a research work, development of appropriate research instruments for data collection and the accumulation of that treasured data are, according to Dörnyei & Taguchi, only "half the battle" (83). The most challenging part is the appropriate understanding of the data and their interpretation. The researcher used bar-graphs to present the students graded responses. Responses to open-ended questions were brought together based on some general categories. Throughout the research work the researcher tried to maintain reliability and authenticity of data and its manipulation.

**Basic information of the EAP course** Students' questionnaire was divided into part A, B and C where A dealt with the basic information of the EAP course in different departments of two universities. The most common feature of all the EAP courses is a 3-credit course with thirty-nine contact-hour. However, number of classes conducted in all the departments ranged between fifteen and thirty-nine; thirty-nine classes being taken only once. *New Headway* (Intermediate level) by Liz and John Soars topped the list as EAP course-book with occasional presence of Cambridge IELTS practice guide which were used for teaching listening skills. Students of the Department of English mentioned the name of three different books which are consulted for meeting the needs of all four language skills. Students of one department mentioned the name of *Common Mistakes in English* by Timothy J. Fitikides which might be a subject of great debate; how does a book of common mistakes fit with the wider need of an EAP course? Many of the students from a number of departments reported bilingual medium of instruction

in the EAP classroom. Though all the four language skills should be practised in the context of Bangladesh, half of the departments reported the lack of adequate practice.

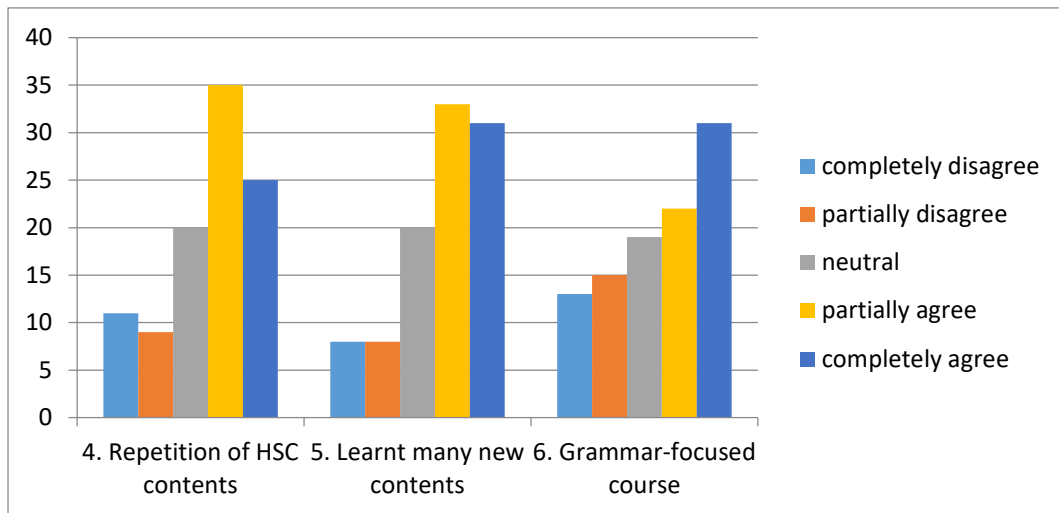
**Analysis of students' graded response** First 3 questions of part B of the student's questionnaire measured students' self-belief on language proficiency, enthusiasm for EAP course, and the overall necessity of the course. Data presented in chart 1 for question no. 1 clearly shows that undergraduate students are not very confident about their own English language skills even after twelve-year-study of English till HSC. Therefore, students' response goes in parallel with the existing understanding within and outside the academia. In response to question number 2 almost 70% of the respondents together either agreed or completely agreed that they used to wait eagerly for the EAP classes. More than 80% students completely agreed on the need of EAP courses in their undergraduate level. It can therefore be marked that inclusion of EAP course in the undergraduate level is justified.

Chart 1: Necessity of the EAP course (In all the charts the left-most bar indicates *completely disagree*.)



Questions number 4 to 6 were developed to identify the similarities/differences of an EAP course with the previous English courses and the findings from students' response are presented in chart 2. Respondents opined that most of the contents in the EAP syllabus are repetition of their HSC level contents. The overwhelming repetition of the HSC-level English contents might somehow justify academic concern of making up students' existent lack of proficiency but that will not adequately prepare the learners to face the English language needs during undergraduate studies. In the very next question, students very contradictorily expressed that they learnt many new contents in their EAP course and the researcher looked carefully into the students' response to open-ended questions. In response to question number 6, more than 60% students opined that the EAP course was a grammar-based course. However, CLT approach and the EAP assumptions do not usually encourage explicit grammar instruction at the tertiary-level of studies.

Chart 2: On novelty of the EAP course



Students’ response to questions 7, 8 and 9 investigated the environment of the classroom and the language learning activities and the findings were presented in chart 3. The first bar-graph gave a favourable picture of a good language classroom as more than 45% students completely agreed that a learning-friendly environment prevailed in the EAP classroom. Responses to question 8 indicated that teachers encouraged the students during the EAP classes. Encouragement is very important as it motivates learners to achieve more. In response to question number 9, around 50% students either completely agreed or partially agreed that the EAP classroom was participatory.

Chart 3: Learning environment

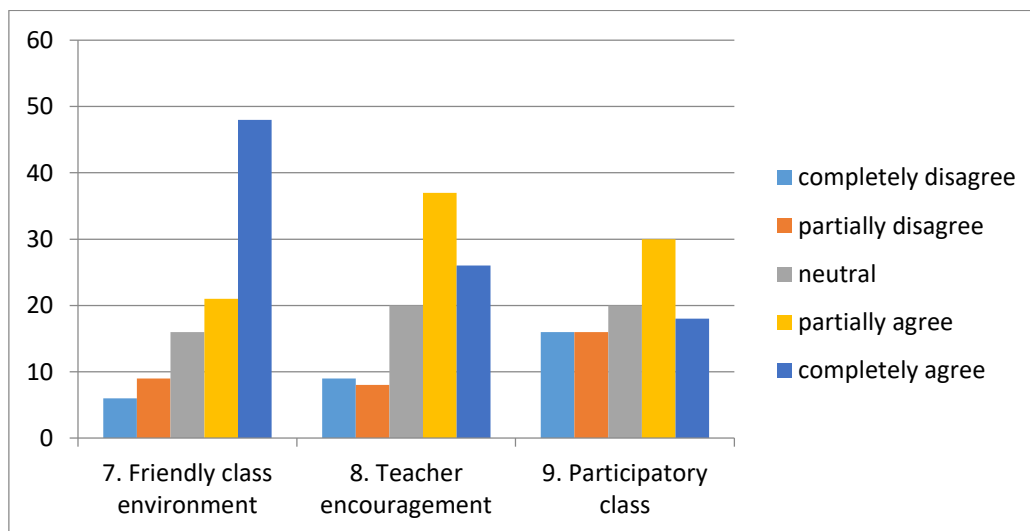
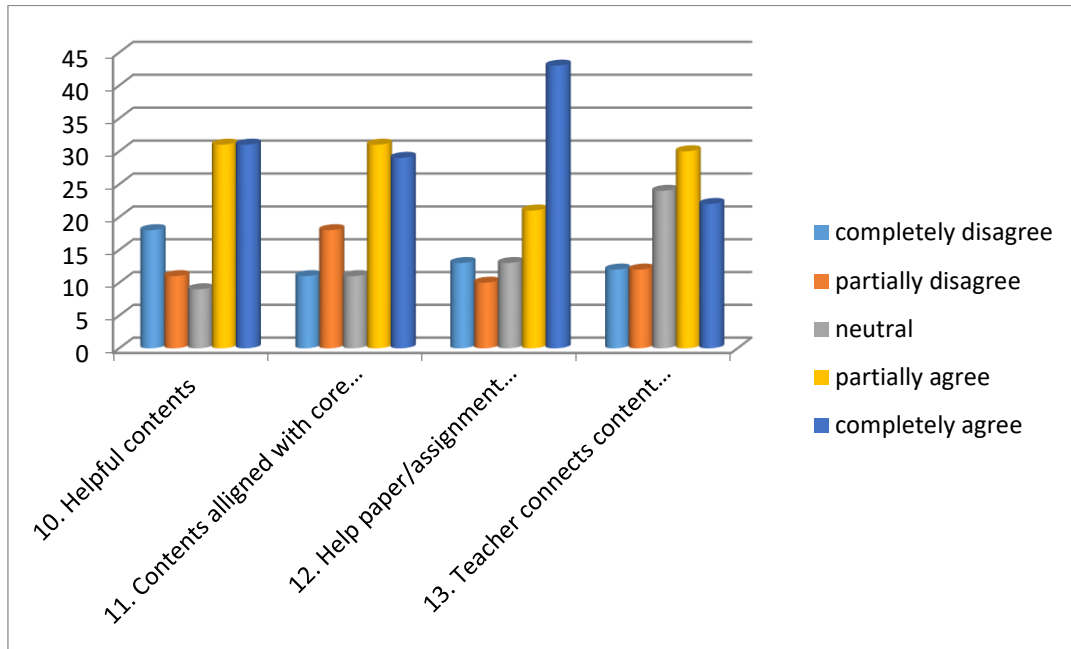


Chart 4 presents students’ response on question number 10 to 13. All these 4 questions investigated the relationship between the course content with that of the core subject of study. Though answers are not very negative still course instructors need to focus attentively on the issue of aligning language contents with the core courses, whenever that is possible. Otherwise, EAP course might take the look of any other general English course. On all four questions, more than 50% response favourably supported the statements in the questionnaire.

Chart 4: Alignment between EAP content and core-subject



Questions 14 and 15 dealt with teacher’s feedback on students’ written and spoken performance and the findings are presented in chart 5. The chart above shows that feedback on students’ productive activities is not enough. In response to question number 14 little more than 20% students opined that teacher gave them feedback on their productive skills. However, on question number 15, where timely feedback was investigated, less than 15% percent of students completely agreed that teacher provided timely feedback. On the other hand, on both questions more than 20% students completely disagreed on the issue of teacher’s feedback. As appropriate feedback is necessary for furthering language learning, EAP instructors need to consider the matter.

Chart 5: Teacher’s feedback

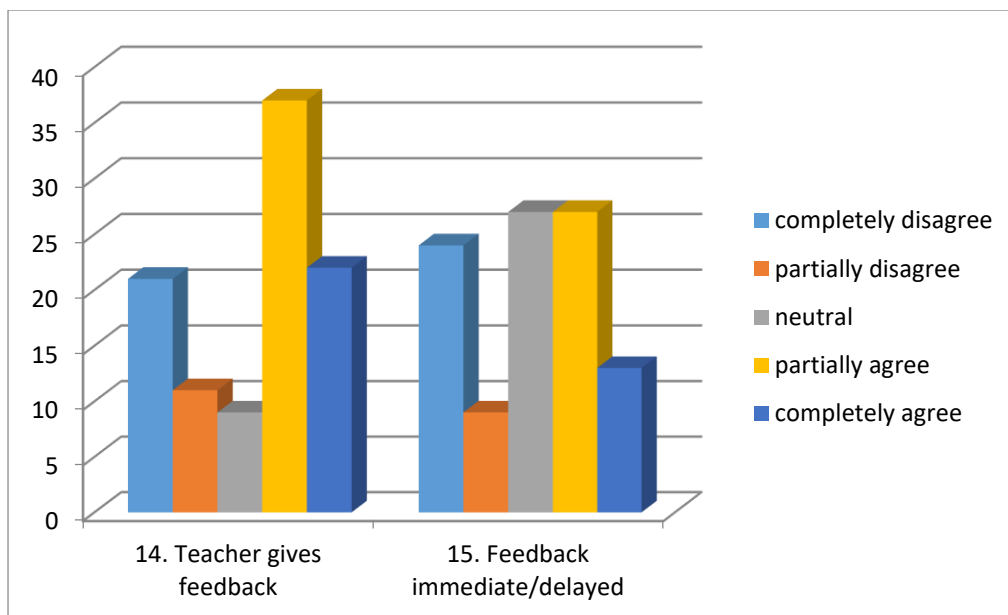
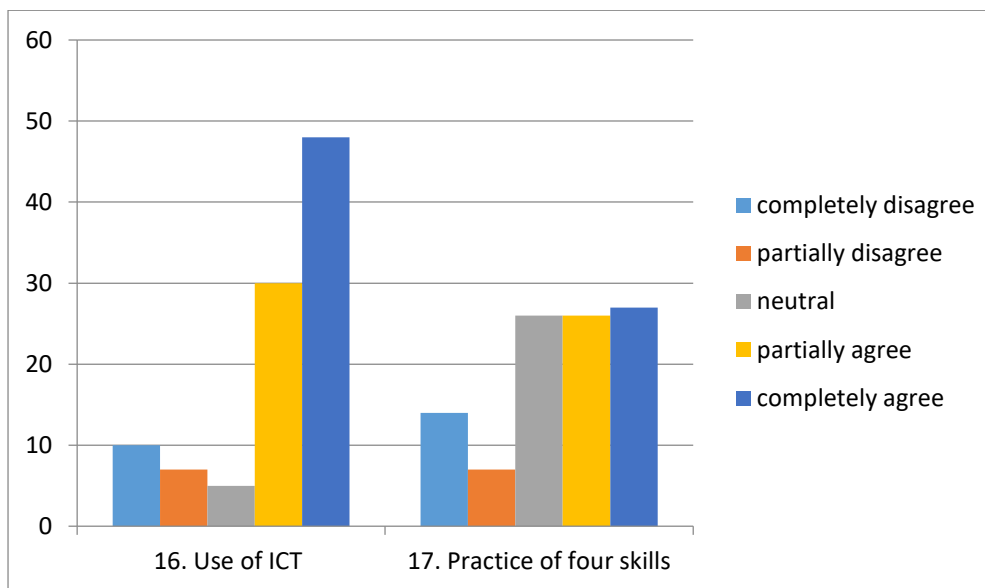


Chart 6 presents students’ response on ICT use and language skills practice in EAP class. In response to question 16 more than 75% students agreed that teacher used ICT in their EAP classes. As most of the tertiary-level institutions are now equipped with multi-media projector, computer and internet connection, it is now easy for teachers to use audio-visual materials to practice listening-speaking skills, cater for different learning styles, and also to incorporate blended learning. More than 25% students completely agreed that all the four

language skills were practiced in their EAP course. Another 25% partially agreed with that. Though academic practice places more emphasis on a number of skills based on need, it is important to remember that learning a language demands a holistic practice of all the skills. Otherwise, students might suffer at a time when they are well past their learning opportunities.

Chart 6: Use of ICT and practice of language skills



**Analysis of students' response to open-ended questions** Open-ended questions in students' questionnaire were on the strengths and gaps of EAP course, scope of possible change, length of the EAP course and miscellaneous issues left out in the survey questionnaire. The very first question was to find out students' insights on the strengths and gaps of the course. Major phrases from students' response are selected and presented here. Students opined that they experienced "grammar-based contents" and the EAP course suffered from the "lack of creativeness" and that the contents are "just repetition of intermediate-level syllabus". These responses are to a great extent aligned with the students graded response. One respondent went as far as to call the EAP course as the "worst course in undergraduate life". Many of the respondents commented that the "teacher [was] too occupied" and teacher's extreme level of engagement very naturally reduces the "number of classes (less)" and a few of them [teachers] "didn't take the classes regularly" and the "classes didn't follow course content". Other responses drew attention towards the "lack of lab facilities". "[Students] just want to pass with good grades" is a very objective criticism from one of the respondents. The most astonishing finding of this question is that a few of the EAP instructors use Bangla as medium of instruction which was supported by the previously given basic information on EAP course.

Some of the students wanted to see the following changes: "medium of instruction should be English" and "more communicative and entertaining classes" for EAP. Some of the respondents were found confused about their course teachers' communicative skills for issues like – pronunciation, choice of appropriate [academic] vocabulary, and unnatural sentence construction. Wang, Shang & Bridoy opined (qtd. in Othman & Shuqair) thus: "The use of English as a medium of communication is yet to mature among the students and the professors alike; therefore, the effectiveness of remedial courses in EFL/ESL studies becomes greatly jeopardized with relation to improving the student's performance in English" (133). One of the respondents demanded "more classes with listening speaking practice", while another wanted the inclusion of "presentations and debates" effectiveness of which is supported in various research literatures. One student emphasized "class-schedule should be maintained", and yet another of them wanted "English literature to improve our [students'] skills of reading and pronunciation."

The researcher wants here to quote one student's response to show his/her perception on the EAP course thus: "At this stage of life we need English for practical purpose. All those bookish knowledge and all, we



already have in previous classes. Now we need to apply them practically for our betterment in English.” However, almost all of the students answered that only a 3-credit course was not enough for developing their English language proficiency with mastery over all skills. One of the respondents highlighted the need for “English ... to keep pace with the world”. Another student expressed that “English course is taken lightly by students”. One student lamented over the delay of commencement of the EAP course. This delay related to the start of the EAP course demands better coordination, just after the undergraduate enrollment, between the Department of English/English Language and other departments.

**Analysis of teachers’ response** In response to the first question on students’ motivation teachers’ response validated a number of commonly held beliefs. Teacher’s [T-1] response reflected that students are “interested in their EAP course just for job related purpose”. T-3 added that “Getting good grades and surpassing the peers” is major motivation behind learning English. Other motivational factors for learning English include “medium of higher education is English”, “English is necessary for practical life” and so on. T-3 handed down much of the responsibility on the instructors shoulder as s/he mentioned the need for “interactive lecture”, “instructor’s affability” and “varied activities” inside the classroom to motivate learners in EAP classroom. T-6 also gave similar response mentioning the need for “skill-based classroom activities like that of role-play, presentation, pair or group work” to motivate learners and to facilitate learning at undergraduate level.

The second question in teachers’ interview inquired about students’ attitude towards EAP course and T-7 responded that they are “not truly enthusiastic about learning English as a foreign language” and “pretty reluctant to go beyond the necessity of job-related or course-related purpose”. T-8 also expressed similar perception thus: “Most of the undergraduate students show pessimistic attitude towards acquiring [learning] the English language ...have an inherent fear while learning English ...” On another note T-4 commented on the students’ existing English language gaps what eventually turns to be “a matter of challenge or fear in some cases [as] students’ lack of linguistic competence, grammatical knowledge and poor command of that language impede foreign language learning. In many cases they [students] do not find pleasure with instruction.”

Third question in teachers’ interview focused on the challenges EAP teachers face while conducting EAP course. T-9 expressed that the major challenges were “to make them [students] non-hesitant and more willing to learn ... as well as [to] converse in English” as the students were “less enthusiastic about the speaking and listening practice”. T-10 expressed that “most of the students remain dumb when being [they are] asked anything”. T-4 also blamed “students’ poor command over the language [as] one of the major challenges.” Besides that another important challenge was mentioned by T-2 thus: “as the course is minor, students do not focus on it like major courses.” Point to note here is that neglect towards the minor course hampers students’ overall grade point average (GPA).

Teachers expressed that they tried to practice all four language skills. T-5 told about practicing “listening skills [with] audio-clips (conversation, music, story, etc.) or video-clip is ....” T-6 reported that s/he made use of authentic materials as s/he asserts, “... I provide ... extracts from scientific journal or literary work. For speaking, I engage my students very often in presentation on various topics. For listening, I make pupil listen to an audio content ...” Adoption of various activities was also mentioned by T-4 who desired, “... to choose literature for language learning. ... or presentation for speaking or oral skills or process-oriented writing practice from a given real-life based materials or listening.”

On the point of bringing occasional changes in EAP contents T-7 forwarded the issue thus: “This is because a teacher has certain [level of] understanding about his/her students and knows better ... what will be more appropriate as course materials.” On the other hand T-2 demanded that the “minor course should be completely skill-based ... all the four skills should be focused besides grammar and pronunciation.”

In response to the question on the usefulness of ICT in language classroom T-10 very pragmatically asserted: “ICT plays a significant role in EAP class. It lessens the manual labour of a mentor [teacher]. ... Slides [PPT] rid a mentor of traditional board writing in an ICT enabled classroom.” Again T-9 responded thus: “Learning language involves [a] lot of practice which demands logistics support and updated technology-based assistance.” However, only use of technology is not any foolproof solution to the problems of an EAP course. On the

appropriateness of ICT in language classroom Dutta comments: "These gadgets [ICT] have multifarious uses where educative role is only part of that. Pedagogical and instructional innovations, technological habituation and integrative motivation on the part of the learners are necessary to convert these modern ICT boons into learning tools" (49).

Question number 7 tried to find out teacher's inclination towards any method or approach and they expressed a certain level of disbelief among the researchers and practitioners regarding the universal applicability of any method, approach or activity. The similar sentiment is expressed by T-5 thus: "A teacher can only facilitate the process; rest will happen in its own way once the learning environment is ensured which demands a force-free, stress-free condition that might get hampered by [heavy reliance on] any particular methodological process." T-2 resorts to GTM for teaching reading and writing but favours CLT approach for speaking skills development. Respondent T-6 prioritized the importance of engagement through "group work, individual performance, and individual presentation" in the language classroom. Other respondents also had favour for "task-based classroom activities and blended learning".

On the issue of course book/material selection only 1 teacher referred to 4 different books while most of the others mentioned the name of *New Headway* (intermediate level) by Liz and John Soars. T-7 responded by saying that s/he "try to follow what is prescribed in syllabus." T-8 "prefers books which contain materials with all the four language skills ... follows eclectic way to offer books." However, many teachers emphasized the need for customized materials to "cope with the necessity and capability of the students", and to "maintain authenticity of learning experience". Respondent T-10 rationalized the adoption of customized materials to "... make the learning process more enjoyable and more effective. Students can also avoid boredom sometimes". All the respondent teachers expressed their expectation regarding logistics support thus: "computer/projector and internet enabled classroom should be ensured ... spacious, well-lighted [classroom] should be available for good language class."

## MAJOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the teachers' interview and from students' survey questionnaire, some important findings came to light. Usually, learners' confidence vacillates while learning a second language. But teachers can motivate them greatly. A wide-range of classroom activities on the basis of CLT and participatory pedagogical assumptions along with the critical thinking practices might help the learners to develop their understanding of an EAP course. Progress or development in learning a language is not always visible in a concrete way. Therefore, teacher's relevant feedback helps learners to understand their own strengths, gaps, and progress made after a certain period of time. Use of authentic materials is always encouraged and appreciated in the field of EAP. But authentic materials also demand careful selection, and necessary adaptation before using those in the EAP classroom. The major findings from both students' and teachers' responses and the researcher's recommendations are given separately as bullet points.

- Students could identify their lack of English language skills and considered the EAP course important.
- Lack of contact-hour, often 50% of the scheduled hours, hampers the adequate practice of all four language skills.
- Many of the EAP contents are mere repetition of HSC-level syllabus, resulting in lack of motivation among students.
- EAP classes are conducted in a learner-friendly environment and the students are eager to attend the classes.
- EAP contents are not usually aligned with the needs of English for the core-subjects of study.
- Increased use of ICT in the EAP classroom is an encouraging phenomenon.

Based on the findings of the research following realistic recommendations are made by the researcher.

- Adequate number of classes should be taken to facilitate the practice of all four language skills with, perhaps, contextual bias for writing and speaking as deemed necessary by the teacher.
- Students' understanding of their lack of language skills should be considered as an opportunity to help them appropriately.
- Some HSC-level contents may remain as review of existing language skills.
- Grammar practice should be inductive and contextualized.
- While designing EAP course Krashen's input hypothesis, (i+1), might be followed. If students find the contents less challenging, they will lose motivation for learning.
- Students' engagement should be increased through various participatory learning activities.
- To make EAP course more effective and relevant, teachers should adapt real-life materials from journals, newspapers or internet sources emphasizing the need for subject-specific writing needs and academic English.
- Teachers must provide timely and relevant feedback on students' speaking and writing performance in order to help them keep track of their own progress and learning.
- Teachers need to diversify the use of ICT for blended or flipped classroom and also to cater for the students of different learning styles.
- Teachers should remain aware of the latest research findings in the field of EAP so as to deal with the emerging issues efficiently.
- EAP courses need to be designed after analyzing students' language skills gap and in consultation with pedagogues, content experts and job-market analysts.
- Students should not undermine EAP as a minor course because impact of learning a language is far wider than getting good grade.
- All the students, who get them admitted in the tertiary-level, should not be considered as a homogeneous group of learners. Instead, prior language proficiency test might be conducted to place them in the proper EAP course with specific language skills lack.

## CONCLUSION

This research tried to bring the perceptions of both students and teachers on EAP course to a coordinated understanding so as to find out what is going on in the tertiary-level EAP classrooms of Bangladesh, how much of the goals and objectives are fulfilled and what can be the line of action in future, for the better learning outcome of the course. One clear finding from this research is that EAP courses are not clearly aligned with the students' present and future needs and their subject of study. However, it can be expected that the research findings will help the EAP practitioners, curriculum developers and policy makers to handle various EAP related issues more pragmatically. Further research might be conducted to investigate subject-specific English language needs of various subjects in the undergraduate-level studies in the context of Bangladesh with larger sampling. As today's learners will one day turn out to be future scientists, teachers, leaders and workforce, coordinated efforts should be taken by all the stakeholders to design effective and need-oriented EAP course.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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