

NEEDS ANALYSIS OF ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES FOR ELT UNDERGRADUATES

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Abstract: A needs analysis is one of the best tools to identify the EAP needs of tertiary level students. In the Sri Lankan context, there are significant drawbacks to EAP needs in writing among third year ELT undergraduates. Hence, the objectives of this study were to investigate the need of EAP in writing among third-year ELT undergraduates, to explore reflections of third-year ELT undergraduates in writing for EAP in the previous academic years and to explore the perspectives of academic staff regarding the EAP needs of the ELT undergraduates. The mixed research method was used based on purposive sampling in the research design. A questionnaire form of Google Form and focus group discussions were conducted with twenty-six third year B. Ed ELT undergraduates as well a structured interview with seven internal and external lecturers in the Department of Languages Studies was conducted to collect the required data. As for the results, it is identified that there is a need for EAP in writing among third year ELT undergraduates. Grammar, vocabulary, research skills and proofreading are the specified areas to be improved in EAP in writing among third year ELT undergraduates. Furthermore, the identified needs of third year ELT undergraduates are similar to their previous year's reflections which provide clear insight into their needs were not addressed properly in the third year. Moreover, the perspectives of lecturers significantly stated the deficiency of EAP in writing among undergraduates. In conclusion, initiating an EAP certificate course, inserting more written practices into the curriculum and self-practice are the recommendations made according to the findings of the study.

Keywords: Needs analysis, EAP, Academic writing.