

# English for Academic Purposes Student Reflections: Factors Related to Their Additional Language Socialization at a Canadian University

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*This study set out to explore English for academic purposes (EAP) student perceptions of their experiences at a university in western Canada. A qualitative approach was used, with 17 students completing a questionnaire toward the end of their EAP program, and one of those students taking part in an interview approximately one year later. Data from the questionnaires and interview were transcribed and descriptively coded, with the codes gathered into salient themes. Thematic analysis identified benefits related to developing academic writing and speaking skills, boosting confidence levels, fostering EAP friendships, providing a transition period, and learning about local culture. However, the analysis also revealed the need for improvements in overall teaching and learning experiences, reading and listening skills development, and sociocultural content. These findings point to the importance of conceptualizing EAP with a wide range of outcomes related to linguistic, academic, social, cultural, and personal growth to support students' additional language socialization in a postsecondary context. The findings also highlight areas for curriculum renewal and revision and underscore the role these programs can play in building on students' strengths as they develop their overall competence in an additional language to achieve the goals that matter to them.*

*Cette étude avait pour objectif d'explorer les perceptions d'apprenants de l'anglais sur objectifs académiques (AOA) de leur expérience dans une université de l'ouest du Canada. Une approche qualitative a été privilégiée et 17 apprenants ont complété un questionnaire vers la fin de leur programme d'AOA, un de ces apprenants ayant également participé à un entretien un an plus tard. Les données des questionnaires et de l'entretien ont été transcrites et codées de manière descriptive et les codes ont été regroupés par thèmes saillants. L'analyse thématique a identifié des avantages liés au développement de l'écriture académique et des compétences orales, à la promotion des niveaux de confiance et des amitiés dans le cadre du programmes AOA, à l'établissement d'une période de transition et à l'apprentissage de la culture locale. Cependant, l'analyse a également révélé le besoin d'améliorer les expériences globales d'enseignement et d'apprentissage, le développement des compétences de lecture et d'écoute ainsi que le contenu socio-culturel. Ces résultats soulèvent l'importance de conceptualiser l'AOA en termes d'un large éventail de*

*résultats liés à la l'épanouissement académique, social, culturel et personnel afin de soutenir la socialisation des apprenants dans leur langue additionnelle et dans un contexte postsecondaire. Les résultats soulignent également les opportunités de renouvellement et de révision des curriculums et font ressortir le rôle que ces programmes peuvent jouer en s'appuyant sur les forces des apprenants tandis qu'ils développent leur compétence globale dans une langue additionnelle afin de réaliser les objectifs qui leur sont importants.*

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With more than 70 university-based English for academic purposes (EAP) programs across Canada, students who are academically admissible to university studies but have not yet met an institution's English language proficiency requirements have access to an educational and English language development pathway to higher education (Douglas & Landry, 2021). Rather than providing a one-time standardized test score as evidence of English language ability, students can enrol in EAP courses that prepare them for postsecondary studies in English and the multiple communicative, cognitive, and social situations they may encounter during those studies (Hyland & Hamp-Lyons, 2002). As part of this preparation, program goals may include developing English language skills, intercultural understanding, academic genre awareness, research methods, referencing styles, critical thinking ability, learning strategy use, and general knowledge (BC TEAL, 2013).

Despite the above description of EAP, there appears to be a wide range of program models that vary in structure and substance (Corcoran et al., 2022; Douglas & Landry, 2021; MacDonald, 2017). Furthermore, in the Canadian context, there appears to be little recent research exploring student perceptions of their EAP program experiences in relation to their undergraduate and graduate degree studies, with studies that have looked at this topic pointing to mixed outcomes (e.g., Tweedie & Kim, 2015). From the students' point of view, little is known about the relationship between their EAP program experiences and their concurrent and subsequent educational experiences and interactions. Thus, this study explored EAP student perceptions at a western Canadian university, with the overarching research question focusing on what students thought about their EAP program experiences and the relationship between those experiences and their undergraduate studies in general. The two supporting questions were as follows:

1. How did the EAP program experience benefit the participants in this study?
2. How could the EAP program experience be improved for the participants in this study?

## Theoretical and Empirical Background

### *Positive Impacts of EAP*

Several linguistic, academic, social, and other benefits have been identified for EAP students studying in Canada. It appears that EAP program completion can positively impact students' overall English language skills (Crossman & Pinchbeck, 2012; Lee & Wesche, 2000), with particular benefits related to increased vocabulary (Crossman, 2018), writing and speaking skills (Keefe & Shi, 2017; Tweedie & Kim, 2015), and understanding lectures (Keefe & Shi, 2017). As students prepare for postsecondary studies in Canada, EAP programs seem to play a valuable role in supporting English language learning (Van Viegen & Russell, 2019).

Participation in an EAP program can also improve academic skills (Ranson, 2016) and general academic gains (Crossman & Pinchbeck, 2012; Keefe & Shi, 2017). Crossman (2018) noted that EAP students transition more easily to postsecondary studies and obtain higher subsequent grades because of increased vocabulary knowledge. Further, students who participate in an EAP program do better academically than international students with a similar demographic profile who enter university through other pathways, such as meeting the minimum scores on a standardized English language proficiency test. The positive academic outcomes for students completing an EAP program include a higher grade point average (GPA), a shorter time to program completion, and a greater likelihood of graduating (Dyke, 2013; Fox, 2005; Johnson & Tweedie, 2021).

The potential social and cultural benefits of EAP programs should also not be overlooked. At Canadian universities, these programs can play an essential role in building students' social networks (Lee & Wesche, 2000) and fostering their engagement with local educational culture and ways of studying (Cheng & Fox, 2008; Fox et al., 2006). EAP programs can meaningfully impact students' social and academic engagement by supporting a wide range of skills development, such as goal setting and planning, communicative and interactive language use, and learning strategies (Fox et al., 2014). In particular, Raymond and Des Brisay (2000) observed EAP program students as having a better understanding of local practices related to areas such as reading and writing, oral communication, and learning strategies in a postsecondary context, and Keefe and Shi (2017) noted that EAP students were better at adapting to local expectations. EAP programs seem to provide social support and skills that are appreciated by students after they have completed an EAP program and are in their subsequent studies (Cheng & Fox, 2008). In addition, students in EAP programs develop a social and academic support network of friends (Keefe & Shi, 2017). In these networks, students develop closer relationships than before (Ranson, 2016) and can potentially make friends with EAP classmates from other countries and cultures (Tweedie & Kim, 2015).

EAP programs also serve to socialize students more generally into Canadian higher educational contexts (Van Viegen & Russell, 2019). Previous scholarship has identified EAP students' increased learning strategies (Raymond & Des Brisay, 2000), time management, reflective practices, focus on studies, ability to deal with social pressures (Landry, 2019), group work, and notetaking—particularly during academic lectures as an aid to learning (Tweedie & Kim, 2015). EAP students are also more likely to seek and obtain support when faced with challenges (Keefe & Shi, 2017). EAP program impacts have further been linked to boosting student motivation (Raymond & Des Brisay, 2000) and overall confidence in English-medium postsecondary contexts (Lee & Wesche, 2000; Keefe & Shi, 2017; Ranson, 2016; Raymond & Des Brisay, 2000). Other benefits include moments of self-realization, personal growth, superior

organization skills, and enhanced self-awareness (Ranson, 2016). All in all, it seems that many students complete their EAP studies with positive impressions (Keefe & Shi, 2017).

### *Mixed Impacts of EAP*

While there have been a number of benefits associated with completing an EAP program as a pathway to postsecondary studies in the Canadian context, questions still remain about the effectiveness of these programs. Early studies identified some relationship between EAP writing performance and later outcomes in arts and science programs; however, grades in EAP speaking courses were not good predictors of later academic outcomes (Black, 1991). Another study showed little relationship between EAP program participation and English language skill improvement (Bayliss & Raymond, 2004). Further research has pointed to ongoing challenges related to areas such as assessment practices, vocabulary understanding, and academic reading skills (Tweedie & Kim, 2015). Misalignments between EAP course content and what is required for postsecondary studies are another drawback previously identified by researchers (Raymond & Parks, 2002). These misalignments influence students' perceptions of the necessity of an EAP program and can negatively impact their academic experiences and lead to frustration and dissatisfaction (Cheng & Fox, 2008). Another area for improvement is related to providing opportunities for EAP students to meet people from other cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Without these types of intercultural encounters, EAP students may face ongoing challenges interacting with students outside of and after their EAP programs, such as with students whose primary or first language is English (Keefe & Shi, 2017). Tweedie and Kim (2015) have also observed how students may face ongoing linguistic and cultural barriers in their postsecondary studies after completing their EAP programs because of a neglected focus on meaningful social and intercultural learning. While Tweedie and Kim noted some benefits to studying EAP, the program in their study was less successful at developing students' speaking skills for interacting with other students on campus compared to other skills. Finding out more about what students perceive as the benefits of their EAP program experiences and what they identify as areas for improvement can help to maintain and grow what is working well in EAP programs as well as help to resolve the previously reported mixed impacts of EAP for students in Canada.

### *Additional Language Socialization*

The positive and mixed impacts of EAL teaching and learning in an EAP program can be understood through the lens of an additional language socialization theoretical framework, with additional language socialization offering insights into the process by which multilingual students develop their EAL skills through another language, participate in and become a meaningful part of a new community where English is the common language, and are increasingly seen as legitimate members of that community through their interactions with others (Duff, 2007, 2012; Duff & Anderson, 2015). These interactions can be between students, more knowledgeable community members, or other pertinent knowledge sources, such as books or the internet (Duff & Anderson, 2015). Through this process, multilingual students not only develop their EAL skills but also learn about the practices and knowledge associated with using English in the local community (Duff, 2012). In this process, EAL learners control their additional language socialization depending on their goals and abilities, with the process working both ways as learners and the people they interact with learn from and impact each other (Duff & Anderson, 2015).

Going to university has the potential to be a life-changing experience for EAP students as they learn EAL and use English to develop new knowledge, create relationships, and explore their identities

through interactions inside and outside of the classroom. EAP programs can look to an additional language socialization framework to inform the creation of those life changing experiences by enriching the educational environment so that students engage in content learning and EAL development while also taking part in cultural and social activities that promote the additional language socialization process (Duff et al., 2019). However, without adequate resources, support, time, and interactions, the additional language socialization process can be long and frustrating (Duff, 2012). It may also be that access to English language supports, helpful mentors, and meaningful interactions with other students in English are not consistent or readily available (Duff & Anderson, 2015; Duff et al., 2019). EAL students can want to improve their additional language skills and learn new knowledge, but honing those skills and gaining that knowledge is challenging when there are few opportunities to interact with people in English (Duff, 2010). It is a complex process, with EAL learners sometimes left to their own devices to work out how to gain access to the local community (Okuda & Anderson, 2018).

## **The Study**

### *Research Context*

This research project took place in an EAP program at a university in Western Canada. The purpose of this program was to provide an educational pathway to undergraduate studies for academically qualified students who had not yet fulfilled the university's English language proficiency requirements. At the time of the study, the program consisted of two levels, with students entering either Level One or Level Two, depending on their level of English language proficiency as measured by either an International English Language Testing System (IELTS) score or Test of English as a Foreign Language Internet-based Test (TOEFL iBT) score. Successful completion of Level Two generally met the university's English language proficiency requirements. Each level was worth three credits on students' academic transcripts.

When this study took place, an EAP level covered one 12-week semester, plus a scheduled final examination. Students were in EAP classes 15 hours a week, with five additional hours of language labs, resulting in a minimum of 240 hours of classes and labs in each semester. Because of scheduling and space constraints, EAP classes were generally held at different times and in different classrooms each day. It was also possible for classes to be scheduled at any time between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. A typical schedule might have students in class on Mondays from 1:00 to 4:00 pm, Tuesdays from 2:00 to 6:00 pm, Wednesdays from 11:30 am to 3:30 pm, and Thursdays from 12 noon to 4:00 pm. There were no classes on Fridays. A typical lab schedule might run on Mondays from 5:00 to 6:00 pm, Tuesdays from 5:00 to 7:00 pm, and Thursdays from 5:00 to 7:00 pm. Attendance in both the EAP classes and the labs was mandatory.

Also, at the time of this study, the EAP curriculum took an integrated skills approach to EAL teaching and learning during the 15 hours a week of classes, which combined reading, writing, listening, and speaking with learning strategies and intercultural exploration. The courses employed a language-through-content approach (Larsen Freeman & Anderson, 2011), with the units of instruction unfolding across a series of content themes related to different academic disciplines, such as education, psychology, engineering, business, and biology. The thematic units were conceived of as a vehicle for language learning, with the content providing a medium for learning outcomes related to grammar, vocabulary, reading, writing, listening, speaking, learning strategies, intercultural awareness, and so on. Generally, each unit of instruction included activities to foster the students' background knowledge on a subject, a core academic reading taken from a typical first-year undergraduate textbook, writing and grammar skills development

tasks, an intercultural activity, practice listening and speaking, and a final writing assignment. Depending on the thematic unit and associated academic discipline, writing assignments might include essays with a range of rhetorical patterns, such as compare and contrast, persuasion, cause and effect, summary and response, and procedure. However, other genres appropriate to different subject areas were also included in addition to essay formats, such as reflective journal entries, science lab reports, medical case studies, technical reports, annotated bibliographies, and industry reports. By way of example to illustrate the language-through-content approach used in this EAP program, in the ecology unit, all of the readings, listening activities, grammar points, and other course content related to the topic of ecology. Thus, if a grammar point in the ecology unit focused on using articles and nouns, the grammar explanation would be grounded in ecology, examples might be taken from the readings in the unit, and the grammar exercises would have a dual purpose of both practicing article and noun usage while also learning about a topic related to ecology. Students would then have the opportunity to use these grammar skills in a writing assignment appropriate to this subject or during a class discussion. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities would follow a similar approach.

During the five hours a week of mandatory labs, the EAP students worked with academic assistants who were undergraduate students studying at the same university. Lab activities included ice breakers, current events discussions, journal writing, presentation practice, vocabulary study, reading and discussion time, writing practice, topic brainstorming, essay writing, and general study time. Another major component of the labs was working through an online grammar and writing skills program, with topics including subject-verb agreement, sentence types, article usage, parallel structure, pronouns, and sentence variation. The academic assistants also organized two on-campus and two off-campus cultural activities. Playing games such as Jeopardy! was also organized by the academic assistants during the labs.

Students were also permitted to take up to six credits of courses in other disciplines as part of their overall undergraduate programs while they were in the EAP program, thus adding an additional three to six hours to their weekly schedules on top of the 15 hours of EAP classes and five hours of EAP labs.

## **Participants**

The participants were drawn from Level 2 (the exit level) of the EAP program. All of the participants had completed Level 1 of the EAP program in the previous semester. These participants were recruited toward the end of the semester, just before completing their EAP program. There were 17 students in the class, and they all agreed to complete a written questionnaire as part of the study. Out of the 17 participants, 16 identified as having Mandarin, Cantonese, or Chinese as their first language. The remaining participant spoke Hindi as a first language. The average age of the participants was 18.5 years (with a range of 18 to 22 years old). Ten students identified as male, and seven students identified as female. The participants reported being in a range of undergraduate programs, with six in economics, five in management, two each in arts and applied science, and one each in statistics and mathematics.

On the questionnaire, participants were also asked if they would be willing to take part in a subsequent interview. Participants who were willing to be contacted for an interview provided an email address for the researchers. While four of the original participants indicated a willingness to take part in an interview, when they were contacted via email approximately one year later, only one of those four participants agreed to take part in an interview. It was decided to proceed with interviewing the one interview participant to see if any of the themes found in the questionnaire data recurred with the one participant a year after the program and to strengthen the validity of the findings. Regarding the interview participant, while he was in the EAP program, he also took one additional course in first-year economics. He is a Bachelor of Science student originally from China, and his first language is Cantonese. He is

interested in statistics, and he may choose this discipline as his eventual major. He has lived in Canada less than five years, and his English language proficiency is estimated by the researchers working directly with the data to be about a B2 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Language (CEFR) global scale, which means that he can cope well with a wide range of texts, take part in discussions, and write about a variety of topics without too much difficulty (Council of Europe, 2020). An estimated equivalent on the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB) would be around a CLB 8/9 (North & Piccardo, 2018).

## Data Collection and Analysis

Before any research was carried out, the research project was reviewed by the university research ethics board where the research took place. A qualitative approach was used for the data collection and thematic analysis. Data collection took the form of an open-ended qualitative questionnaire to gather participants' perceptions near the end of their EAP program ( $N = 17$ ) and a semi-structured interview to elicit any new understandings one year later ( $n = 1$ ). In addition to eliciting demographic information, the open-ended qualitative questionnaire (see Appendix A) gathered the participants' insights about how their English, academic, and social skills were impacted by their EAP studies. There was also a section for general feedback in relation to their EAP program experiences. The 45-minute semi-structured interview (see Appendix B) was carried out with one of the 17 participants who completed the questionnaire. The interview covered topics such as the participant's background, language-learning experiences, academic endeavours, and social life. The participant also provided general feedback related to the EAP program. The interview was recorded and subsequently transcribed and prepared for analysis.

Overall, for both the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview data, the qualitative data-analysis process involved a number of iterative and recurrent steps to code meaningful data extracts, identify patterns, and gather the codes together into salient themes (Braun & Clark, 2006; Mills & Gay, 2016; Saldaña, 2013). The analysis process started with one researcher reading over the questionnaire responses and then the interview transcript multiple times to identify meaningful units of text that could be assigned a non-predetermined descriptive code. To facilitate the coding process, the units of text were labelled with codes, organized, sorted, and re-sorted using the table function in MS Word. As the coding process took place, some codes converged into a single code, while other codes split into two separate codes. Patterns were explored and consolidated into larger themes and associated sub-themes. To contribute to the reliability of the findings, an early draft of this paper was shared with the rest of the research team to achieve consensus, where necessary, on the findings.

## Findings

From the point of view of the participants, there appeared to be some benefits to studying in an EAP program, along with some suggestions for improvement. While writing skills, oral language and communication skills, confidence, class friendships, and cultural transition time were some of the positive outcomes, there were suggestions for enhancing the program's teaching and learning experiences, reading instruction, listening practice, and sociocultural content.

## *EAP Program Benefits*

### Writing Skills

There was a strong theme of writing skill development in the questionnaire data, with academic essay writing in particular being beneficially impacted by taking part in an EAP program. One participant wrote about the importance of essay writing, saying, “this academic skill is significant if staying in post-secondary, and I’ve learned a lot about it.” Some of the key writing skills participants reported developing included “academic writing, the structure of introduction, bodies, and conclusion.” Grammar was also related to writing skills, with a participant responding on the questionnaire, “I can apply grammar I learnt from my EAP classes while I am writing and editing my paper.” Overall, these sentiments were summarized by another participant, with the comment “how to write an academic essay. This course helps a lot.” Along with writing skills, referencing skills were frequently mentioned in the data. For example, a participant reported, “I learnt how to write reference. It’s very helpful for academic writing. My friends told me nobody teach students how to write APA rules in regular English class, but in EAP, I learnt it step by step.” Another student wrote, “It’s [learning how to write references] a really important part in university life and help to prevent plagiarism.”

The theme of developing writing skills was still relevant a year later in the interview participant’s reflections on his EAP program experiences. The interview participant maintained that “especially, I think EAP helps my writing a lot.” While he mentioned learning about formal essays, this participant felt other writing skills had also been improved: “I can write a lab report pretty quickly.” This skill was particularly useful in the participant’s chemistry class because it “seems like the lab report, usually, they’re requiring passive voice and you don’t want to use the first person’s perspective or like second perspective in general situations, so that’s what I had studied a lot in my EAP.”

### Oral Language and Communication Skills

Improvements in oral language and communication skills was another important theme in the questionnaire data. On the questionnaire, the participants noted general improvements in their speaking skills, such as “understanding each other’s words and can communicate with others” and “speaking with people smoothly.” There were also some benefits outside of the classroom, with a participant writing, “I have learnt more speaking skill in class, then I use them in the daily life,” and another participant reporting improved “communication with people” and “talking with my roommate (she is from Canada), I can get her point.” However, most gains appeared to be in the realm of delivering academic presentations. For example, one participant wrote, “presentation is not a problem for me anymore,” and another participant reported having “many chances to give a presentation.”

The theme of improved oral language was salient in the interview participants’ reflections as well. The interview participant felt that “academically...I can say it [EAP] helped me a lot in speaking English, definitely,” and he thought, “I seem like I have a good speaking skill for now. Others can know what I’m saying.” Part of this improvement in speaking skills came from the focus on presentations in his EAP classes. He felt,

The most helpful part for my speaking is the presentation part. Actually, for presentation, you know, everyone is just sitting around there and they’re listening to you. And, there’s not optional; you have to do that. So, you have no choice to do that. You have to stand up and speaking.



Working with a group to put together these presentations was also beneficial:

I still remember there is a presentation presented with a group, so that help us to practise how we are going to cooperate together and how we're going to manage our time carefully, like kind of practising your communication skill and how you are going to cooperate with each other.

These types of speaking-related skills were also useful in the interview participant's other undergraduate classes. He said,

We also have a discussion about the project. And you need to analysis data. And you need to tell me what you can find from the data, and...I can find some useful information and tell my group mate and they're like, they can clearly understand what I am talking about.

In fact, he reported that some of his classmates in this class said, "actually, your speaking is pretty good." His speaking skills also came in useful in his chemistry class where he said, "when I'm trying to discuss with my classmate, usually I can tell them what happens for a specific reaction what can happens inside and what will be resulted and what this reaction will give me, give us." Computer science was a third course where his improved speaking skills helped him. In this course, he said,

We usually need to have a discussion practice, at the end of each course, so we usually need to express it and discuss with the groupmates, like discuss the homework with the groups. So, usually I need to speak a lot.

Despite having to speak a lot, the participant felt, "when I'm [discussing] with a group when it is necessary, I think I can clearly express what I was trying to say."

## Confidence

Boosted levels of confidence was another key theme. For example, one participant wrote on the questionnaire, "I feel more confident to communicate with profs and group partners. An example would be the correct grammar to use." These boosted feelings of confidence were also reported by another participant who wrote about now having "enough courage and confidence in the presentation," and still another participant who shared, "I am able to give a speech and presentation in front of people. EAP helps me gain a lot of confidence." Still another participant reporting being "more confident after each unit's presentation." The general theme of increased confidence is further illustrated by this response: "I became more comfortable about speaking in front of others. Practising speech and presentation helps me gain a lot confidence." This increased confidence also was beneficial outside of the classroom, with a participant writing, "I feel confident to talk to other people and I am not afraid to make more friends." These sentiments were echoed by another participant who wrote about "having own opinion and willing to share with others."

A year after the questionnaire data were collected, boosted confidence remained a key theme in the interview data as well, with the interview participant sharing feelings of increased confidence. In general, the participant thought, "[EAP] helps me a lot for my daily life, like normal daily life when I'm going to shopping, I can confidently do the greeting things and like asking people [questions]." He also said, "I'm much more confidence than before to speak. I'm not afraid about that, and I think that's what

EAP help with my speaking for now.” He attributed his improved confidence in speaking to better grammar knowledge: “my grammar had a lot of mistake...but actually EAP fixed that problem a lot. So that make me feel a lot more confident on my speaking part.” In addition to improved grammar, he also felt that his EAP experiences “improved my pronunciation and it give me much more confidences than before, since I was a pretty shy boy before and like I’m afraid of talking with people because they might cannot understand me since my pronunciation was pretty bad.”

The interview participant felt his confidence increased in relation to his academic studies as well. When it came to presentations in his EAP class, he said, “at first, I was pretty afraid...but once I had much more practice about that, I feel much more confident. I done much more preparation than before. And that make my English speaking much more fluent.” In addition to academic presentations, his confidence was also improved in relation to academic writing. He said,

I feel more confidently to writing a lab report when I first time use. First time my TA [teaching assistant] say that I need to write a lab report, I’m like oh, I’m confident about that thing since I have practised a lot of times before I’m coming into this class. So, I’m not afraid of writing that kind of essay or things.

## Class Friendships

There was also a recurrent theme in the questionnaire data related to friendships and interactions within the EAP classroom. Participants reported being able to “meet new friends in a small class size” and “feel not afraid to make more friends.” For one participant, “most of my friends come from EAP,” and another participant felt, “we are getting along with EAP classmates. We stay together almost a whole day. We have a really good friendship with each other.” Having friends in the EAP class also seemed to be an important support mechanism: “I always feel homesick, but EAP program help me find a true friend. We can hang out, go shopping together. I feel better.” In fact, one of the participants exclaimed, “we love each other,” and these positive feelings were mirrored by a further participant who wrote, “I’ve got to know them [my classmates] better because of EAP.”

The benefit of making friends in the EAP classroom was also a theme in the interview participants’ recollections of his EAP program experiences. Thinking about the students in his EAP classes, he said, “the student in here is pretty kind. If you give them a smile, they usually smile back at you.” As a result, “we are kind of like a friend, like have a friend relationship with each other.” These friendships arose because “we usually have a lot of activity after classes together since that you feel like you’re just in a family. They’re like friend, but they’re usually like family members too.” The EAP program also provided students with “a lot of opportunity to participate in a lot of kind of activity that can make them meet more friends and make friends and learning a new culture.”

## Transitions and Culture

There were some other sociocultural benefits as well. For example, one of the questionnaire participants felt EAP was beneficial because it “gives me a moderate transitional period from high school to university. Reduce the shock of changing study environment.” The EAP classroom was also a place where participants could meet students from different backgrounds, particularly in the participants’ previous semester of study when there was a wider range of backgrounds in their classes: “EAP has students not only from my country. I meet friends from other country and know other culture a lot.” The interview participant also felt that there were some opportunities for cultural learning. When reflecting on some of the field trips he

took during his EAP studies (there were at least two or three organized per semester), the interview participant stated, "I think the best thing for this is you're learning another culture." For him, the field trips were "kind of interesting since we're usually going out for farmer market. And, we're going to visit museums, so we're not usually stay in the classroom. Sometimes we're having extra activities outside the classes." These field trips were beneficial because "you also not only study a language, you're studying a culture."

## *EAP Program Areas for Improvement*

### Teaching and Learning Experiences

Participants completing the questionnaire noted a number of areas in which the EAP program teaching and learning experiences could be improved. It seemed that the EAP classes were "a little bit stressful," and one participant wanted an opportunity for "retests." It also seemed that the participants felt "the class time is way too long" and there is "maybe just too much class time per week." In addition to the amount of time, the schedule also appeared to be a challenge, with a participant writing "morning class was so sleepy. Not flexible on the time." The morning class was also mentioned by a different participant, who found "We can do better if change the morning class. When I was late, I feel very self-blame sometimes I cannot get up on time." In addition to the scheduling, the classroom teaching and learning experiences were also a subject for improvement, with one of the participants writing, "interest [was missing from EAP]. It can be connect with real life. Movies, novels or outdoor activities [i.e., field trips] can also help to learn English instead of stuck in book." The language labs were also criticized: "EAP's labs are useful only a few times." These types of experiences may have led one participant to claim, "I did not participant actively," and another participant to wish "hopefully the program will be better and better."

Some of the questionnaire participants also felt that the EAP program did not particularly help them in their other courses either. There was a sense in the data that EAP was actually more difficult than other courses. One participant reported that "the other course's grade is higher than EAP." There also appeared to be a disconnect, for some participants, between what was being learned in EAP and what was being done in their other courses. For example, there appeared to be less emphasis on writing in other courses compared to EAP: "EAP [has] more focus on writing, until now, there is not many writing tasks [in other courses]." This feeling was corroborated by another participant who reported, "I don't have chance to write paper in other course." There was also a feeling that science students were missing out because EAP was "not a useful class to improve English for science students."

EAP program teaching and learning experiences were also a major theme for improvement in the interview data. Reflecting back on his time in the EAP program, the interview participant felt that the learning experiences were not always as engaging as he might have liked, leading to attendance issues. In particular, in elements of the EAP courses, such as the language labs, the interview participant stated that "sometimes people don't want to go to labs." In the participant's opinion, students perceived the language labs as "just practising." This issue with the labs was despite the fact that the interview participant said "it [the lab]'s helpful, definitely they're helpful." He also said, "I think the attendance for the lab section and the lecture is still pretty necessary since you're not only attend the classes, you're trying to learning a new language." However, he also said, "some of the students, they still chose not to go to the lab." For example, the participant recounted how the teachers "had arranged some of listening practice in the lab session, however, some people didn't get to the lab sometimes, so they missed that part." Part of the reason for the

lack of attendance, the participant felt, was because the language labs were perceived as optional (they were, in fact, mandatory and attendance was both required and recorded): “when I was studying EAP lab was optional, that makes a lot of students usually absent.” He thought, “if they can change it to mandatory, or the lab session can also count as part of your grade, I think that will make student come more.”

To make the EAP program experience more engaging, the interview participant felt, “it’s a really big point of how professor can make the classes become much more interesting for student so that they can attend the classes more.” However, he did acknowledge that “there is a big challenge for professor is how to engage students in learning in EAP classes.” For example, “just talking about grammar and vocabulary and just practicing English skill. That make the course kind of boring.” Another issue was that, on the surface, students might think that “some of the content they seem like they have been studied a long time ago...they studied a lot before.” As a result of some classes not being particularly engaging, he mentioned, “I kind of 50–60% of time concentrated on the class’s time. I don’t know what I’m doing. Sometimes I’m looking at my phone. Sometimes I’m doing some another work.” He also felt that he had already learned some of the grammar points being covered in class, “but for some grammar points, once I start doing the practice question, I found oh that’s got wrong. And, when you go through them to see if they’re correct, and most of them they’re wrong.”

## Reading Instruction

Another area participants identified as needing improvement was related to reading skills. While there were some positive reports in the questionnaire data on improved reading skills, such as reading “without translator,” reading “much more easily and faster than before,” and “understanding some major AWLs [academic word list] [making it] easier to read,” there were dissenting opinions in the questionnaire data on the benefits of the EAP program for learning reading. One participant claimed the time learning reading skills was the least beneficial aspect of the program. Another participant pointed out that “not many time giving to us for reading,” and a third participant wrote about continued reading challenges: “A few sentence are hard to know the real meaning.”

Reflecting about a year later on his EAP program experiences, in relation to reading, the interview participant said, “I don’t know...if it [EAP] is helpful for my reading skill,” and “I’m not really sure if EAP help me read a lot.” He worried, “I still think I’m not pretty good at reading.” In particular, he noted “the lack of practising [reading] in EAP,” and “It seems like there is no practice about this [reading] in EAP courses.” As a result, the participant voiced his concerns about future courses with potentially heavy reading loads: “I think it will make me have a hard time on my English course for this summer.” The reason for his anxiety was because “they say you need to read a lot of books in English courses, and what I’m worry about is that.” He attributed some of his challenges with reading to a lack of vocabulary: “I don’t have that much vocabulary...since I don’t have a lot of vocabulary, I don’t have enough vocabulary to support [reading].” He felt that without enough vocabulary, “sometimes you cannot really understand what the word in the book is telling about for you.” Thus, he advised, “I think this [reading instruction] is one of the points that it can be improved in EAP.” He hoped in future EAP classes, “they [instructors] can teach students how to improve their reading skill.”

## Listening Practice

The perceived need for a greater focus on listening skills was another key theme in the data. While there were some positive aspects related to listening reported on the questionnaire, such as having the “TED Talk

(listening practice) in lab," understanding "what the professor [in other classes] said most of the time," and listening and understanding "some academic words," there were questionnaire participants who felt that their listening skills were the least benefited by the EAP program. One of these participants felt a need for improved listening skills because "[EAP] helps me a little bit [in other courses] but not so much. Since instructor for ECON is talking so fast, in most of the situation, I still need to study by myself." Another participant also had the same issue, "since sometimes instructor is talking so fast, I cannot follow it easily." In fact, there was a questionnaire participant who felt listening was missing from the EAP curriculum despite it being "one of the most important English skills."

The interview participant also felt listening could have more focus in the EAP curriculum. He said, "I think EAP is still lack a kind of listening practice." While there was some listening practice in the language labs, the participant offered the opinion, "I think if there is an opportunity, the listening practice can sometimes appear in the lecture section, which maybe help a lot in the listening part for me if I have an experience in EAP again." Because of the "lack of practice in EAP class...they [the instructors] can improve it...and arrange some of the listening practice in the lectures." Challenges with listening skills continued to face the interview participant after completing his EAP program. He remarked,

I think listening was still a kind of problem for me since sometimes when I'm listening my professor...if the professor is speaking so fast, I just cannot follow the professor's speaking. And, I might need to return to the textbook and look around what he is trying to talking to me.

He also noted the range of accents his professors had in his classes. Because he didn't have exposure to different accents other than those of his EAP classmates and instructors, he said, "this make you a kind of difficult for you to listening and understanding what [an instructor with a different accent] is trying to talking about." He gave the example of one of his instructors from a French-speaking background and how it was "kind of difficult to understand him." While he could read his textbook, he felt, "I still think if I can understand what professor is talking about, I still think it's better for me to listening to a professor than reading to a textbook since it is a way to show how hard you are studying."

## Sociocultural Factors

Sociocultural factors, and the need for an improved focus on developing social communication and intercultural skills was another major theme. When asked whether EAP helped facilitate interactions with people not in EAP, one participant wrote, "not a lot of help because most are academic in class thing, barely did social interactions skill training." Another participant echoed this sentiment by responding, "the class does not offer skills about how students interact with other people outside the classroom." Along these lines, a different participant reported, "I still feel hard to make friends with people outside the classroom because I don't have enough social and communication skill." It seems that, for some of the participants, they "don't talk to strangers a lot," and they "stay with EAP friends almost all day." From the point of view of the participants, they "seldom have group discussions with other students." One reason for this lack of outside interaction might be because, as one participant wrote, "EAP class has occupied most of my time, and most EAP students are from China. That's why I can make friends with EAP classmates only." Another student also remarked how "maybe speaking [didn't improve] since in EAP class, people all from one country."

Participants writing in the questionnaire did offer some suggestions for mitigating their isolation from the wider community. For example, one participant asked for "social interaction skills such as how to

make friends with local people. Because it is vital to have friends living outside of your home country.” This sentiment was mirrored by another participant who, writing about social interactions, said there was “barely no chance to do it.” “Local culture” was also missing according to one of the participants. Another participant suggested that the EAP classes were “missing outside activities. Because it’s a good way to improve the relationship between students and teachers, also it helps student to know the local culture.” Still another participant also stated (despite two or three field trips being organized during a semester), “some field trips would be awesome. It helps to boost our Canadian living experience more efficiently.” Increased “outdoor activities,” which was another way that participants referred to field trips, were mentioned a number of times, with a participant claiming these types of activities would “help me more with the contact of university,” and another writing “outdoor activities is one of the option can practise this skill [making friends with non-EAP students].”

The need for more of focus on skills to facilitate interpersonal and intercultural interactions to foster meaningful friendships also came up in the interview data. Out of all of his EAP program experiences, the interview participant felt, “the weakest part, I think is still the social skill.” He did state that he “learned some communication skill,” but “it didn’t...improve the social skill for me.” He described some of his interactions with other EAP students during the program: “for us, there is several practice questions while in the EAP classes, so we’re usually kind of discussing, but not much actually since we’re still kind of not good at English, so we didn’t develop discussion.” From the point of view of the interview participant, there was also a lack of opportunity for intercultural interactions within his EAP program. The interview participant remarked, thinking about his second semester in the program when only one of the EAP students in his class was non-Chinese, “when I was in EAP class, most of us come from the same country. Most of them are come from China.” Thus, he felt, “you cannot have an environment of diversity culture” because “we all come from the same country.” When all the students are from the same country, he thought, “what will happen is that we are having the same rules, and having the same customs. We’re all celebrating the same festival.”

After the EAP program, the participant recounted, “It is still kind of hard to making friend with non-Chinese student or domestic student.” He said, “although I have some of friend from another country, not from China, I think it’s still a challenge for me to making friend with domestic student.” He attributed his difficulty making friends as follows: “it’s kind of hard for me to doing the social skill.” He also felt, “I still missing...I don’t know what people’s habit is here is, like what is the people’s habits in here have. It seems like I don’t know none of them for the Canadian people.” He thought, “if you really want to be a member in [this city], the first step is that you know what is the difference between culture, what people are having, and what their behaviours is, and what they like and what they don’t like.” When thinking about his fellow students on campus, he felt, “they seem like they’re friendly. They’re kind, and they usually say hi to you. If you know them, they will say hi to you.” The challenge was turning that friendliness into friendship because “they kind of forget you. They just like stranger, you know.” The participant had “met a lot of non-EAP students,” but “some of them are like a stranger; some of them are group mates, and some of them we seem like friends, but we didn’t have a lot of contact with each other. Like, we seem like friends, in classes we’re talking about ourselves, but after class we didn’t have a lot of communication with each other.” Despite the lack of communication, this participant said, “you try to make more friends in here. You don’t want to feel lonely here, right? So, you want to have much more interaction with the people in here.” Unfortunately for the participant, “I think in classes there are not pretty much interaction in the classes,” and outside of class, he felt, “I don’t have that much time to making new friends.”

## Discussion and Implications

For the participants in this study, their EAP program experiences played an important part of their additional language socialization by developing their academic writing and speaking skills, boosting their confidence, creating a community of close peers, and providing a safe academic and cultural transition period into higher education. However, there were recurrent concerns related to perceived unsatisfactory teaching and learning experiences, insufficient reading and listening skill development, and infrequent interpersonal and intercultural encounters. In particular, as Duff et al. (2019) have pointed out, it cannot be assumed that studying at an English-medium university will result in meaningful access to language-learning opportunities and interactions with other students on campus. Maintaining the benefits that contribute to students' additional language socialization while taking into account the factors that may hinder this process is an important part of the ongoing review, redevelopment, and renewal of EAP programming, and it can contribute to a fuller process of additional language socialization through the continuous improvement of students' experiences in these types of postsecondary EAL development pathways, where the goal is to create enriched educational environments that encourage social and cultural experiences along with EAL and content learning (Duff et al., 2019).

Based on this study, there appears to be a number of beneficial areas worthy of continued support in an EAP curriculum as they promote various positive aspects related to the participants' additional language socialization in English. Similar to other studies, improved writing and speaking skills (Crossman, 2018, Crossman & Pinchbeck, 2012; Lee & Wesche, 2000; Keefe & Shi, 2017; Tweedie & Kim, 2015; van Viegen & Russell, 2019), boosted levels of confidence (Lee & Wesche, 2000; Keefe & Shi, 2017; Ranson, 2016; Raymond & Des Brisay, 2000), classroom-based friendships (Cheng & Fox, 2008; Keefe & Shi, 2017; Lee & Wesche, 2000; Ranson, 2016), and time to adapt and learn about local educational practices and other cultures (Cheng & Fox, 2008; Fox et al., 2006, 2014; Keefe & Shi, 2017; Raymond & Des Brisay, 2000; Tweedie & Kim, 2015) were all identified as positive outcomes associated with the participants' EAP program experiences and should continue to be part of the EAP curriculum.

However, despite the benefits of studying EAP recounted by the participants, a number of key areas were identified as requiring improvement to better support the participants' additional language socialization at the institution where they were studying. For example, the need to improve general teaching and learning experiences in the EAP program was an ongoing theme in the data. One factor was the participants spending 20 to 26 hours a week in class during their EAP program. Although this amount of time aligns with the average of 22 hours per week in EAP programs across Canada (Douglas & Landry, 2021), a number of participants felt that it was too much time. One solution might be to provide some of these classroom hours asynchronously online rather than in a traditional classroom setting to give EAP students more control over their schedule (e.g., Landry, 2019; Surtees & Yamamoto, 2021). The time sequestered in EAP classes with other EAP students may also be taking away from opportunities for students in these programs to interact with other students on campus and further their additional language socialization process by becoming recognized members of the campus community who, in turn, also socialize those around them. If additional language socialization involves interacting with and learning from others as part of the additional language-learning process (Duff & Anderson, 2015), students need time and opportunities to have those interactions and to truly engage in multi-directional additional language socialization.

The participants also questioned the labs, unengaging classes, high levels of stress, and missing relevance to other courses (such as an overemphasis on writing skills and a lack of reading and listening skill development). If students in an EAP program feel that their educational needs are not being met, they

can start to feel frustrated and unhappy, which in turn can negatively affect how they engage with and adapt to the local academic culture (Cheng & Fox, 2008). High levels of stress and anxiety and low self-esteem are not conducive to additional language learning (Krashen, 2003). Therefore, finding ways to mitigate student stress is an important part of an EAP program experience. One way to lower stress for EAP students could be paying careful attention to scheduling, timetabling, and curricular content to align EAP student expectations with what they experience in class. It is also important to avoid mismatches between what supports EAP students' additional language socialization and eventual academic success with what they actually experience in their EAP classes (Cheng & Fox, 2008; Raymond & Parks, 2002). For example, in an integrated skills EAP program such as the one in this study, there may have been a tendency to drift toward a focus on reified understandings of academic language as reflected in writing skills associated with essay writing, formatting, and referencing, and speaking skills associated with oral presentations and formal class discussions, with the concomitant grammar and vocabulary learning outcomes that support this type of productive written and oral language. However, this type of productive skill development did not necessarily match with the participants' experiences in their courses in other disciplines, where they encountered little or different kinds of writing, missed opportunities for social and informal dialogue with other students, encountered high reading demands, and experienced challenging listening situations. Thus, there appears to be room in the curriculum to reduce the space allocated to essay writing and oral presentations, with the accompanying grammar and vocabulary outcomes, and increase the space allocated to reading, listening, and interpersonal speaking skills, aligning with Tweedie and Kim's (2015) particular call for improved EAP reading instruction and Johnson and Tweedie's (2021) assertion of the benefits of general EAP programs.

A lack of engagement, as evidenced by reports of overly long classes, low participation, lateness, and absenteeism, is a challenge to developing additional language skills. Incorporating an explicit focus on motivational design in an EAP curriculum can support garnering higher levels of student engagement. For example, the Attention, Relevance, Confidence, and Satisfaction (ARCS) model of motivational design can provide EAP instructors with a systematic approach to promoting greater levels of student engagement (Keller, 2010). In Keller's (2010) model, capturing students' attention, making learning relevant to their needs, fostering confidence in their abilities, and helping them feel satisfied with their learning experiences are key factors for cultivating student motivation. Participant calls for making the lessons more interesting, incorporating popular novels and movies, allowing retests, and doing away with rote grammar and vocabulary practice all reflect the various components of Keller's model that could be put into practice.

In addition, the ongoing concerns related to reading and listening, especially from the retrospective viewpoint of the interview participant, point to EAP students perhaps not being aware of how much reading and what listening challenges they might have in their future studies, putting the onus on EAP curriculum developers to ensure that reading and listening skills are part of the learning outcomes, assessments, and educational experiences. Regarding an increase in curricular space for listening skill outcomes, careful attention to the materials used to develop students' listening skills is important. For example, with participants reporting difficulty understanding fast-paced oral language, a range of accents, and speaking styles in their other classes, including listening materials with speakers from an assortment of language backgrounds will help to familiarize EAP students with the different accents and varieties of English they may encounter. However, the onus should not be only on the students to make meaning during a lecture. The responsibility for making meaning and promoting understanding can be distributed between both the students and their instructors in disciplines other than EAP. Instructors can support the multilingual students in their classrooms by learning more about students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds, ensuring course content is understandable for all students, designing assessment and



assignments that are fair for all students, and seeing students as assets in the classroom (Shapiro et al., 2014).

Interpersonal and intercultural communication skills development was another area identified by participants as needing more focus in the EAP program. In particular, having these skills would support students as they navigate the complex additional language socialization process of becoming members of a new community and working out how to gain access to that community (Okuda & Anderson, 2018). The participant feelings related to perceived interpersonal and intercultural lacunae in their EAP program learning outcomes have also been mirrored in other studies in the Canadian context. In Keefe and Shi's (2017) study, missed opportunities to interact with people from other cultural and linguistic backgrounds may have contributed to later challenges interacting with other university students, and in Tweedie and Kim's (2015) study, it was felt that there were ongoing intercultural challenges because of the lack of focus in the participants' EAP program on sociocultural learning outcomes and little development of the speaking skills that would foster interaction with other students on campus. A lack of EAP curricular content related to interpersonal and intercultural skill building might have led to expressed feelings of isolation, with recurring recommendations from the participants that the EAP program needed to include social skills in the curriculum and incorporate more field trips and outside-the-classroom activities to get to know the local culture and practise making deeper friendships with people on campus. Even if the EAP program that was the site of this study did offer some of these elements, it is interesting to note that the participants still felt they were lacking from their point of view.

The EAP program experience can be further improved by lessening the sense of isolation and apartness EAP students might feel on campus—a major detriment to their additional language socialization. One way to alleviate these feelings would be to create space in the EAP curriculum for the participants' calls for more social and intercultural skill development. Interpersonal and intercultural learning outcomes may contribute not only to helping EAP students convert the reported friendliness of other students into more sustained friendships but also to gaining meaningful entry through those friendships with students outside of the EAP program into the campus community to sustain the bidirectional nature of additional language socialization, with both EAP students and the other students they encounter learning from each other and benefiting from the experience (Duff & Anderson, 2015). To support this process of additional language socialization, elements of an EAP curriculum that focus on language practice could be reconceptualized toward meaning making and intercultural encounters in the additional language. It cannot be assumed that students will organically find opportunities to mix with other students on campus. Rather, these types of intercultural encounters need to be organized to provide the types of interactions that students hope for and envision (Douglas, 2015). In particular, structured opportunities such as field trips and extra-curricular activities can help students to better connect with the community and culture around them and foster interpersonal and intercultural learning outcomes.

All in all, the findings point to the need for curricular revisions and program changes if students are to experience a meaningful and multi-directional process of additional language socialization. The concepts of constructive alignment (Biggs, 2014; Biggs & Tang, 2011) and understanding by design (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005) offer a way forward in this task so that an EAP program's intentions match with what is going on in the classroom and how students are being assessed. By adopting constructive alignment as a principle of curriculum development, EAP programs can review and ensure their learning outcomes support students' additional language socialization in a postsecondary context. With the establishment of meaningful learning outcomes related to the goal of fostering students' additional language socialization, both the teaching and learning experiences and the assessment practices can be designed to align with those outcomes and the ultimate goal. If there is constructive alignment in the

curriculum, the teaching and learning experiences prepare students for the assessments, which provide evidence that the students have met the learning outcomes, with the learning outcomes helping students with their process of additional language socialization (Biggs, 2014; Biggs & Tang, 2011; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005).

## Limitations and Future Studies

The findings from this study relate only to a particular group of participants enrolled in a specific EAP program at a certain western Canadian postsecondary institution at a unique point in time. The goal was to understand and describe the participants' thoughts and opinions in relation to their own lived experiences (Mills & Gay, 2016). As such, the results are not generalizable to other EAP programs in other contexts with other groups of students, nor was the study designed to provide such results. Rather, it is hoped that these findings might provide insights that may resonate with readers as they reflect on other programs with which they are familiar. In addition, the fact that only one of the participants who completed the questionnaire agreed to a subsequent interview is also a limitation of this study. While the interview participant's data do serve to triangulate the major themes to a certain extent, having more interview participants would have strengthened the validity of the findings. A further limitation to this study is the fact that 16 out of 17 of participants came from similar Chinese cultural and linguistic backgrounds—a typical demographic in the part of Canada and institutional context where this study took place. The demographic makeup of the participants should be taken into account when interpreting the findings. However, despite these limitations, these results serve to shine a light into the inner workings of an EAP program that exhibits many of the same characteristics as other EAP programs in Canada, as described by Douglas and Landry (2021).

Without a scholarly and professional organization in the Canadian context dedicated to growing the field of EAP and its related body of knowledge, or other structures to encourage cooperation across institutions on a national scale, Canadian EAP programs can operate in isolation from one another, with programs being separated like Lortie's (1975) eggs in an egg carton. Borrowing from Lortie's metaphor, secluded scholarship and practice in EAP programs becomes the norm, and it is hard for people working and studying in a particular EAP program to peek outside of their program's individual pocket in the egg carton and to know what is happening in programs elsewhere. Qualitative studies, such as the one presented in this article, provide a glimpse into those other pockets of the egg carton, thus illuminating EAP practice and providing voice to student perceptions of that practice. Through that illumination and providing of voice, the results may then resonate and prove insightful for EAP scholars and practitioners engaged in developing the theory, research, and practice of EAP in the Canadian context.

Future studies may wish to build on this illumination by carrying out this form of inquiry in other EAP programs to add to the perceptions shared by the participants in this study. In particular, inquiry into what students in other programs think is beneficial in their EAP program experiences and what they think would improve their EAP program experiences can add resonance to the current findings and contribute to expanding the knowledge base of EAP teaching and learning. Capturing instructor perceptions is another line of inquiry that can build a more complete picture of the perceived benefits and areas for improvement in EAP practice by tapping into the personal practical knowledge (Clandinin, 1985) of teachers who are at the front lines of EAP teaching and learning. By expanding the scholarly exploration of EAP student and teacher perceptions, and generally answering the calls for greater research into EAP in the Canadian context (e.g., Corcoran et al., 2022), there is great potential to better understand the relationship between EAP program experiences and the quality of students' undergraduate program experiences.

## Conclusion

Overall, for the participants in this study, their EAP program experiences impacted them in a number of significant ways that contributed to their additional language socialization. While there were important perceived gains in their English language skills, particularly when it came to writing essays and making oral presentations, there were other noticeable benefits not specifically related to language, such as feeling more confident, building a close network of friends in their EAP classes, taking time to transition to postsecondary studies in a new place, and learning about the local culture. It is also evident that, from the point of view of the participants, there are areas for improvement when it comes to their EAP program experiences. Aspects of the teaching and learning experiences, the skill focus, and the sociocultural content are ready for revision and renewal in such a way that expands understandings of an EAP program curriculum to include a wider range of learning outcomes that holistically contribute to students realizing their potential in their undergraduate programs and as members of the local community.

Understanding how students perceive their EAP program experiences contributes to a better understanding of the additional language socialization process at a university and EAP's rightful role and position within English-medium postsecondary institutions in Canada. EAP is a scholarly discipline in its own right (Ding & Bruce, 2017), contributing to the educational development, knowledge creation, and theory-building functions of the academy. It is not a service to other academic units providing narrow training to remediate presumed deficits in a limited number of technical and linguistic skills. Rather, it is integral to the wider intellectual endeavours of higher education and central to its students' building on the strengths they bring with them to their studies in a new place while they develop their overall communicative competence in English for reasons and goals that matter to them.

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### *Appendix A: Questionnaire Questions*

1. What is your first language?
2. What year were you born?
3. What is your gender identity?
4. What is your major?
5. What can you do in English at the end of your EAP classes that you couldn't do before you started studying EAP? Can you provide an example?
6. Consider each of the following. Have you improved this skill? Why or why not?
  - a. Summarizing information
  - b. Reading and understanding textbooks
  - c. Editing your own writing
  - d. Writing a research paper with references
  - e. Understanding what other people are saying during discussions

- f. Participating in discussions with answers, opinions, and questions
  - g. Following lectures and take notes
  - h. Giving a presentation
  - i. Another skill not listed (Please write)
7. What language skill have you improved the most because of EAP? Can you give an example of when you used that language skill successfully?
  8. What other courses are you taking this semester in addition to the EAP program? Please list the course codes and titles.
  9. Do you think EAP helped you in other courses? Why or why not? Can you give an example of how the skills you learned in EAP helped you in another course?
  10. Has EAP helped your social interactions with your classmates in the EAP program? Social interactions are things like chatting with friends or making plans. Can you provide an example?
  11. Has EAP helped your social interactions with people who are not in the EAP program? Can you provide an example?
  12. In general, what do you think was most beneficial for you during the EAP program? Describe why you think it was beneficial.
  13. In general, what do you think was least beneficial for you during the EAP program? Describe why you think it was not beneficial.
  14. What do you feel was missing from the EAP program? Describe why it should have been included.
  15. If you have any other thoughts you would like to share in connection to your EAP program experience, please include them here.

### *Appendix B: Semi-Structured Interview Questions*

1. What languages do you speak?
2. Where have you lived before you started studying here?
3. What program are you taking?
4. What are your future academic goals?
5. What skills have you improved the most because of the EAP program?
6. What skills do you think haven't improved while you've been here?
7. What other courses have you taken in addition to your EAP courses?
8. What are your biggest challenges in your other courses?
9. Do you think the EAP program helped you in other courses?
10. Describe your interactions with your classmates in the EAP program.
11. Describe your interactions with students outside of the EAP program.
12. In general, what do you think was most beneficial for you during your EAP program?
13. In general, what do you think was least beneficial for you during your EAP program?
14. What do you feel was missing from your EAP program?
15. Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share in connection to your EAP program experience?