

Exploring English as an Additional Language Students' Difficulties and Learning Needs in Academic Writing for International Publication

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ABSTRACT

Disseminating the findings of a research study in an international journal is necessary for the process of developing any field of study. The relationship between the language of choice for publishing and the author's proficiency in it, its clarity, the size of the audience, and the prestige proportionally deserve to be considered in the publishing industry. Ideally, postgraduate students can write a research article in English to be published in an international journal. Thus, the article should be written in good English and fulfill the requirements of a good journal article. To this preliminary study, however, the situation is far from desirable. Through a quantitative questionnaire, this study used 70 international students in Indonesia to explore the difficulties faced by EAL students when writing a paper for international publication, divulge their learning needs, along with finding out if there is a difference between EFL and ESL regarding difficulties and needs. Using SPSS, the findings of t-test and descriptive statistics indicated the high level of many EAL students' difficulties and needs in academic writing. Furthermore, the results find no significant difference between EFL and ESL students' difficulties and needs in terms of academic writing style required by the Anglophone international publication. This study found that such students lack adequate academic writing instruction. This implies the importance of equipping them with good English knowledge and adequate academic writing skills.

Keywords

English as an Additional Language; difficulties; needs; academic writing, an international publication

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Introduction

The research publication industry has recently shown an extensive expansion in terms of gigantic proportions of participants (authors, reviewers, publishers, editors, and many others) with its diverse places and background, including language where the English language globally dominates the industry (Cargill, 2016; Corcoran & Englander, 2016; Striphass, 2010). Despite having been criticized for years, and pointed out as a leaden burden to this industry due to poor academic writing and limited English proficiency (Shaw, 2016), the number of EAL researchers beats that of English native speakers (Villar, 2018; Vinther & Rosenberg, 2012), a situation that incorporates both advantages and disadvantages for participants. Such scholars suffer from the triple disadvantage of reading, doing research, and writing in another language. However, to submit a paper in well-constructed English is clearly of paramount importance, a requirement that is unlikely to disappear (Amano et al., 2016; Bortolus, 2012; Villar, 2018). Consequently, most of the partners in the international publication are afraid of the development of this industry due to language-based problems found in EAL publications.

English as an Additional Language student is the one whose first language is not English. While the first language is found as the language that was introduced by the child as it begins and continues to be developed by using it at home, additional language is acquired through social interaction, as well as classrooms and thus developed by practice (Murray & Christison, 2011; Nordquist, 2019). According to Judd, et al (2001a) teaching an additional language is to instruct a second, third, or more languages besides the student's

languages of origin. Speaking an additional language means that someone is already fluent in another language considered as the first or native language. They state that it would be important to use the term "additional language" rather than commonly used terms "second languages" or "foreign languages". In English case, EAL users refer to both English as a second language and a foreign language speakers. Academically, Judd et al., (2001b) and (Ammon, 2001; Flowerdew, 2008a; Martín et al., 2014), who conjoined them in what they call NNES (Non-native English speakers) and EAL (English as an Additional Language), find ESL and EFL as equal students with the same problems in academic writing. As a result, Some researchers only conduct their EAL studies and also equate ESL and EFL without any kind of discrimination Si (2019). This implies that the fact of not being the native English speakers marginalizes them from international publication community.

Despite the above perspective, by definition, other researchers see ESL and ESL as different concepts. Iwai (2011) and Si (2019) define EFL students as those who learn English in non-native English countries while ESL refers to those who learn it in the countries that use speak it formally and using it as a tool of communication. Most of them are those who view them only in the mirror of social or environmental background. However, the research about international publication revealed that in the eyes of native and fluent non-native English editors and reviewers, both ESL and EFL scholars share the same problems regarding academic writing. So many scholars around the world do not have English as their first language. Therefore, it is not surprising that the English of many of them is different from the English written by a native speaker in quality, and in

many cases, they face serious difficulties in writing manuscripts that are worthy to be accepted by international journal editors and reviewers (Canagarajah, 2002; Li & Flowerdew, 2007a).

Although some researchers argue that the use of English and the style are not the reasons provided by the journals for submission rejection (Belcher, 2007), others say the opposite (Mur-Dueñas, 2012; Swales and Leeder, 2012). Two main problems that led to the goal of publishing in Anglophone journals as a challenge for non-native English commonly known as EAL speakers are time (Mur-Dueñas, 2012) and cost (Mur-Dueñas, 2012; Ferguson & Perez-Llantada, 2011; Sheldon, 2011), both of which are rooted in the linguistic background because of the time or money some participants spend for fixing language issues, which occur in EAL scholars works.

Academic writing is viewed by many scholars as language writers ability to write on academic topics in academic contexts through the application of writing conventions, lexicon, rhetorical structures, and the quality or standards of academic writing in higher education institutions (Casanave, 2003; Hinkel, 2002, 2003, 2004; Hyland, 2002). Thus, for ESL/EFL favor, to improve their learning, it is crucial to successfully learn and master some rhetorical and linguistic forms of writing in particular academic genres in certain class disciplines. For them, as for Kanakri (2016), the acquisition of the standards, conventions, lexicon, and the rhetorical structures of their education will facilitate their success and avoidance of being excluded from the academic community and disciplinary knowledge because the variety of their cultural, linguistic and educational backgrounds they come from can cause for them various challenges and needs. Regarding the international publication industry, scholars including (Kanakri, 2016) say that academic writing goes beyond providing the content since it also takes to show the author's identity, ideas, and perspectives. In view of this dimension, it gives students the ability to build their legitimacy that is accepted in their practical social communities and included in the academic knowledge and discourse. Flowerdew (2013) categorized many important academic writing aspects where EAL researchers face the challenge, namely: grammar, use of citations, referring to the published literature, textual organization, relating the text to the audience, ways of making claims, revealing author's the point of view, hedges caution expected by the academic community, and abilities to deal with interference of different cultural views regarding the nature of academic processes. According to Bailey (2011), academic style should: use formal language, be impersonal and objective, concise and clear, use cautious language, use quotations, and referencing the works of other authors. Unfortunately, many EAL students have failed to persuade the entire academic community comprises writers, editors, reviewers, and researchers in terms of the above features based on literature (Atta-Obeng, 2014; Boon; Irfan & Voon, 2013; Fadda, 2012; Giridharan, 2012; Goldberg, 2013; Judd et al., 2001c; Murphy, 2010).

Research questions

One way to better address all of the concepts audited in the preceding paragraph is to formally organize the instructions on the subject of academic writing in the universities and the colleges. Consequently, institutions and educators need to be aware of the barriers that hinder students and the desire of EAL students. To this end, it contributes to the development of quality instruction and to provides lasting support to these students to achieve their academic goals. This study tends to explore the needs and difficulties of EAL students. In tandem, it tends also to reveal whether or not there is a significant difference between EFL and ESL students or not, in terms of needs and difficulties in an academic writing activity. This study aims therefore to answer the following questions:

What are the difficulties and needs of EAL students in academic writing for publication purposes?

At what level are the difficulties and needs of EAL students in academic writing for the international publication?

Are the academic difficulties and needs of EFL and ESL students similar?

Literature Review

EAL students' difficulties in academic writing for international publication

The EAL publications have been accused of poor English and poor academic writing skills which make the EAL writers also feel discriminated against in the academic publishing industry. Anecdotaly, Flowerdew (2008b) asserted that he heard such writers complaining of discrimination from the native English editors and reviewers because of their English. Using a large-scale survey, over 585 Hong Kong Cantonese L1 respondents in the study conducted by Flowerdew (1999) reported that they were discriminated against. Ammon, (2000), the German editor of a book published in English, reported an internal review of the manuscripts which referred to "almost incomprehensible due to serious grammatical errors". Curry and Lillis (2004) quoted a Hungarian psychologist in the following words: If the style or the form is not native or not current, reviewers think that 'this is a stupid man, this is not acceptable material'. They are not accepted for regional accent, for regional style, absolutely sick, denial, this is their attitude." The poor clarity of presentation, inadequate quality of language, incomprehensible sentences, wording difficulties in wording are the quotations that (Li & Flowerdew, 2007b) found from reviewers of research papers submitted by Chinese writers.

Several researchers found many serious difficulties for EAL scholars in writing articles for international publication. The challenges aligned with word choice types or impotence, and failure to express adequate meanings, diction and grammatical problems, low ability to express the adequate meanings, poor vocabulary, and difficulties in remembering words spelling (Alkhuzaee et al., 2019; Azizah and Budiman, 2017a; Boon; Irfan and Voon, 2013; Geiger and Straesser, 2015; Sajid & Siddiqui, 2015). However, the limited English proficiency of EAL known as non-native English is a detrimental factor in scholarly publication.

Using interviews, other researchers said the concerned students encounter difficulties in language use when writing research papers in English (Flowerdew & Li, 2009; Huang, 2010). This study is consistent with preceding studies which revealed similar critics commented by reviewers and editors from different international journals as illustrated in the former paragraph. The above issues may prevent them from publishing in international journals.

Publishing in English is necessary but also has a variety of issues including a lack of understanding of different cultures. Moreover, in terms of identity, the fear to be colonized by the English language and its culture is a disadvantage in the industry (Fischer, 2008). This limits the students' opportunity of practicing writing in English. Contrary, it would be a good occasion for scholars to learn how to convince different people textually. Nonetheless, the investigations done on dealing with various cultural views in EAL articles revealed that such writers face many problems because of cultural interference (Azizah and Budiman, 2017b; Suryani et al., 2014). They mention the EAL scholars' attitudes towards the indication of caution expected by the huge academic community. This indicates the writers' inability to politely interact with the readers of different cultures in the text. They argue that EAL writers have difficulties in using convincing the academic community using cautious language.

Other EAL difficulties are related to textual accuracy as stated by (Khan, 2011), who mentioned prepositions, wrong punctuation, and doubling of subjects organization, as long as bewildering the adjectives and adverbs, definite, indefinite, and zero article words, you can even find non-verbs and incorrect tenses in their essays. and plagiarism, citing, and referencing (Lampthey and Atta-Obeng, 2012), while others have difficulty in language, content development, and organization (Chien, 2019), which is related to paragraph development and their linking coherently and cohesively. Despite the weakness of some scholars in citing and referencing other researchers, it is a required academic aspect tending to respect one's intellectual property rights.

EAL students' needs in academic writing for international publication

According to Lillis and Curry (2010), like other researchers, what the EAL students need is not only a way to design their research, but also a way to disseminate in acceptable English standard. This includes not only research skills but also language and writing skills. Cargill and Connor (2006) on the other hand, find that students need help to develop discourse strategies to express the researcher's intended meaning. Intending to develop academic writing material for international students, Bailey (2011b) states that in addition to vocabulary for academic English, both EFL/ESL undergraduate and postgraduate students need to learn new conventions of academic style, referencing, format. He also reminds that teachers should be concerned about the students' ability to logically organize their ideas. Moreover, accurate and effective language use is highly crucial for such students. This may reduce their problems with articles, spelling, prepositions, and word endings which can lead to

essays that the best-interested markers can hardly understand.

Hinkel's (2015) study indicated that a large proportion of undergraduate and graduate students from EAL universities and colleges have been poorly prepared for academic writing works in their classes. The survey results show that both teachers' activities and curriculum content should satisfy the needs of L2 writers and the vocabulary and grammatical structure required by these students for developing their abilities to interpret language knowledge and meaning-making. He also recommended that the concerned students learn about discourse organization and have the ability to systematically organize their ideas because each course should have its own formal structure of academic writing. He also introduced the areas of editing to regulate punctuation and spelling errors. Hinkel's (2015) second theme is that student writing is considered their reflection of the extent to which they mastered and understood the course material. Moreover, it seems to focus on the written work quality such as grammatical accuracy, organization of the content, academic vocabulary use.

Investigating the L2 development in writing of 25 ESL students, Storch (2009) ended up by claiming that the improvement of L2 students' academic writing skills. He, therefore, emphasized the abilities of content development, English language structures, well-developed and coherent arguments with more significant and precise conclusions inappropriate language. In the same line, Song (2006) studied the EAL freshmen challenges in writing international academic papers. He wanted to find out the most serious problems they face in writing academically and to find out the appropriate instruction to satisfy their needs to be among the international research and publishing industry. He found that these students are mainly challenged by the terminology in the target language. This implies that have limited vocabulary knowledge and any instruction should be adopted for developing their awareness of vocabulary learning.

Methods

Instruments and procedure

This is a quantitative study that used two questionnaires, one for identifying students' difficulties and another one for students' needs. The difficulties questionnaire was composed of 20 statements while that of needs was composed of 15 statements. Based on their responses, a 35-statements online survey mostly with associated 5-point rating scales was designed. That is (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree. The instrument used was adapted from (Abdulwahed, 2011) and (Azizah & Budiman, 2017). Using the Cronbach Alpha formula, the reliability rating was 0.92. Then, the questionnaires were distributed to the international students who have been studying in Indonesia from 2016 until 2021 in different departments.

Participants and sampling method

This study uses a purposive sampling method that seeks the parameters of the population to be taken into account in

selecting the case. The criteria are identified such as groups, settings, and individuals where the case to be studied is likely to occur (Creswell, 2012; Silverman, 2000). In this study, the concerned group is 70 EAL students or non-native English speakers. To graduate, these students are supposed to publish at least one research paper in an international journal. Academic writing is a subject that tends to prepare them to write an academic research article for international publication. The course focuses on developing the skills of higher education students and prepare them to be competitive in the international academic community. From table 1, it is clear that the participant who is not an ESL speaker is an EFL speaker. However, this shows that based on linguistic background, as EAL speakers, each has his or her challenges as well as needs to write academically in general. Therefore, the participants of the study were 70 international students from 32 nationalities namely Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Benin, Burundi, Cambodian, China, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Laos, Madagascar, Mali, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Papua New Guinea, Philippine, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Tanzania, Thailand, East Timor, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Vietnam, Yemen, and Zimbabwe as illustrated in this table below:

Table 1. Participants' Biodata

| Total | 70 students |
|-----------------|---|
| Gender | 45 females & 25 male |
| Age | 20-45 years old |
| Education level | 4 Doctors, 32 masters, 34 undergraduate students. |
| Nationality | 1 Azerbaijanis, 1 Bengalese, 1 Beninese, 4 Burundians, 2 Cambodians, 3 Chinese, 2 Congolese, 1 Egyptians, 2 Ethiopians, 4 Gambians, 2 Ghanaians, 2 Kenyans, 3 Laos, 3 Malagasies, 3 Malians, 1 Mexican, 3 Nigerians, 1 Pakistani, 2 Palestinians, 1 Papuans, 1 Filipino, 4 Rwandans, 2 Sierra |

Table 2. Students' difficulties in academic writing for research and publication purposes

| | | Participant & Percentage (%) | | | | | |
|----|---|------------------------------|-----------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----|
| N0 | Item/statements | SD | D | N | A | SA | Tot |
| 1 | When writing a research paper, I feel having enough ideas but I never trust my English | 1(1.4) | 13(18.6) | 1(1.4) | 43(61.4) | 12 (17.1) | 70 |
| 2 | When writing in English, I fail to use punctuation appropriately. | 18(25.7) | 12(17.1) | 0 | 40 (57.1) | 18(25.7) | |
| 3 | Writing is a very important skill for me but my vocabulary use is still inadequate. | 1 (1.4) | 10 (14.3) | 2 (2.9) | 44 (62.9) | 13 (18.6) | |
| 4 | I hate writing as I find it difficult to write in it. | 2(2.9) | 12 (17.1) | 2 (2.9) | 35 (50) | 19(20.0) | |
| 5 | I dislike writing in English because it is a very difficult skill for me. | 2(2.9) | 11(15.7) | 1 (1.4) | 42 (60) | 14(20.0) | |
| 6 | I feel bored when writing a research paper since my English is not very good. | 1(1.4) | 5(7.1) | 2 (2.9) | 38 (54.3) | 24 (34.3) | |
| 7 | I hate writing in English because my paper had been once rejected due to my grammatical errors. | 2(2.9) | 5(7.1) | 0 | 38(54.3) | 25(35.7) | |
| 8 | I get lost when I start writing a research paper in English. | 2(2.9) | 4(5.7) | 2(2.9) | 39(55.7) | 23(32.9) | |
| 9 | I feel annoyed to practice writing a paper | 0 | 2(2.9) | 1(1.4) | 43 (61.4) | 24(34.3) | |

Leoneans, 2 Sudanese, 4 Tanzanians, 3 Thais, 4 East Timorese, 1 Turkmen, 4 Ugandans, 1 Vietnamese, 1 Yemeni, 2 Zimbabweans.

English variety

44 EFL students, 26 ESL students.

Among 70 participants, 45 males (64.3%) and 25 females (35.7%) in terms of gender. Regarding their educational level, master's students equal to 32 (45.7%), undergraduate students are 34 (48.6), and 4 (5.5%) of doctorate. The surveyed students are those who do not possess English as their first language. Therefore, 44 (62.9%) are EFL speakers, and 26 (37.1%) are ESL speakers.

Data Analysis

In the wake of data analysis, the quantitative technique was used. The SPSS program of the 25th edition was employed to get different types of descriptive statistics and independent sample t-Tests from the quantitative data collected via the questionnaire in form of a Likert scale of 5-points, that is (1) strongly disagree, (5) strongly agree. For the independent t-test, all items (35) either students' needs or difficulties were coded to ease and simplify the length of the statement in software presentation. In addition to the percentages measured for finding the level of the participants' difficulties and needs, two groups were formed and used to view the discrepancy as mean difference within them. Explicitly, the analysis focused on the mean differences in the views of both ESL and EFL students. The findings of the questionnaire were looked at and analysed in the same sequence as the three research questions were posed earlier.

Results

| | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| | because English academic writing has many rules to master. | | | | | |
| 10 | I find it difficult to convey the idea to particular people related to my research topic. | 0 | 0 | 1(1.4) | 42 (60) | 27(38.6) |
| 11 | I am good at writing in my mother tongue but not in English. | 0 | 3(4.3) | 0 | 29(41.4) | 38(54.3) |
| 12 | I find it difficult to obtain related articles to make citations. | 0 | 2(2.9) | 2(2.9) | 37(52.9) | 29(41.4) |
| 13 | I find the problem in the way to get authors' message in related journals / guiding books. | 0 | 4(5.7) | 0 | 36(51.4) | 30(42.9) |
| 14 | I find it difficult to paraphrase, summarize and reference in English. | 0 | 0 | 1(1.4) | 33(47.1) | 36(51.4) |
| 15 | It is hard to organize my idea/opinion in a paragraph. | 0 | 7(10.0) | 1(1.4) | 34(48.6) | 28(40.0) |
| 16 | I find it difficult to relate the idea from one paragraph to another. | 0 | 3(4.3) | 4(5.7) | 37(52.9) | 26(37.1) |
| 17 | It is hard to write analytically, such as involving cause-effect, comparison, and pro-contra (for-against). | 0 | 0 | 1(1.4) | 36(51.4) | 33(47.1) |
| 18 | I find it hard to convince readers about my new perspective toward the issue different from other related research. | 0 | 1(1.4) | 1(1.4) | 41(58.6) | 27(38.6) |
| 19 | I find it hard to write clearly and orderly. | 0 | 1(1.4) | 1(1.4) | 41(58.6) | 27(38.6) |
| 20 | I find difficulty in writing research so that the message can be accepted by people having a different culture. | 0 | 2 (2.9) | 0 | 35 (50.0) | 33 (47.1) |

The table above depicts the level of participants' agreement based on the academic writing aspects. The results from table 2 answer one part of the first research question and another one for the second research question (What are the difficulties and needs of EAL students when writing papers for publication purposes?), which simultaneously highlights their existing difficulties and their levels. Through a Likert scale as an instrument adapted to measure the frequency of difficulties, the participants agreed more to the statements compared to the level to which they disagree. Looking at the level of participants' agreement, we found that over 20 statements, the frequency for EAL students ranged from 43

to 0 on a point scale dropping down from strongly agree "5" to strongly disagree "1". Therefore, the item that was accepted by the fewest participants is 33 (47.1%) while the statement accepted by the highest number of participants is 43 or (61.4%) over 70 participants. On the side of the strong agreement scale, the statements that have been strongly accepted by a high number of participants are 38 (54.3%) while the item that has been strongly agreed by a low number is 12 (17.1%). The percentages above implied that the substantial portion of difficulties' students from EAL students is to the high level.

Table-3. Students' target needs of academic writing in English

| | | Participant & Percentage (%) | | | | | |
|----|---|------------------------------|--------|--------|----------|----------|-----|
| NO | Items /Statements | SD | D | N | A | SA | Tot |
| 21 | Learning to write in English seems important for academic and international affairs | 0 | 1(1.4) | 0 | 28(40.0) | 41(58.6) | 70 |
| 22 | I need to learn to write in English since it helps me to write a research paper in a good language | 0 | 0 | 0 | 30(42.9) | 40(57.1) | |
| 23 | I need to learn writing skills so that I can maximize my abilities in writing good paragraphs. | 0 | 1(1.4) | 0 | 27(38.6) | 42(60.0) | |
| 24 | I need to learn English skills in order to master English adequate vocabulary to convey my ideas | 0 | 1(1.4) | 1(1.4) | 24(34.3) | 44(62.9) | |
| 25 | Learning to write in English is helpful since it can help me write my ideas coherently and cohesively. | 0 | 1(1.4) | 1(1.4) | 27(38.6) | 41(58.6) | |
| 26 | I feel that I can be a good writer in English if I get enough opportunity to practicing writing skills regularly. | 0 | 1(1.4) | 1(1.4) | 23(32.9) | 45(64.3) | |
| 27 | I want to learn English so that I can be familiar with the English structure. | 0 | 0 | 1(1.4) | 27(38.6) | 42(60.0) | |
| 28 | I would like to learn all English language skills especially writing skills and English structures. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 30(42.9) | 40(57.1) | |

| | | | | | | |
|----|--|---|--------|--------|----------|----------|
| 29 | I feel interested in learning English writing to be familiar with the cautious language. | 0 | 0 | 1(1.4) | 23(32.9) | 46(65.7) |
| 30 | I want to learn English academic writing in order to master the academic style. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 22(31.4) | 48(68.6) |
| 31 | I wish I could practice English academic writing in order to be familiar with the rhetorical mechanics of writing. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 26(37.1) | 44(62.9) |
| 32 | I want to learn English academic writing in order to know how to organize an idea within a paragraph. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 18(25.7) | 52(74.3) |
| 33 | I want to learn English writing in order to know how to convince my audience. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 27(38.6) | 43(61.4) |
| 34 | I feel interested in learning to write in order to know how to borrow other authors' ideas in terms of citations. | 0 | 1(1.4) | 0 | 27(38.6) | 42(60.0) |
| 35 | I Feel I would learn to write in English in order to know how to make references. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 24(34.3) | 46(65.7) |

Regarding the participants' needs, it has been found that the frequencies of students ranged from 52 to 0 descending from the strongly agree to strongly disagree on a point scale. Like the last table 2, table 3 answers both the first research question and the second research question. While table 2 focuses on difficulties, table 3 concentrates on students' needs in academic writing for international publication. To verify the needs of the participants, we used 15 statements from the questionnaire. The results showed that the EAL students show a high need in an academic writing course to overcome the difficulties faced by the mentioned students.

Regarding the participation level of agreement, we found that over fifteen words, the item accepted by a small number of participants were 18 or (25.7%), while the statement that was accepted by the highest number of participants is 30 or (42, 9%) over 70 participants. On the other hand, looking at the strong agreement, the statement that was strongly accepted by a high number of participants is 52 or (74.3%), whereas the statement that was strongly accepted by the lowest number of participants was 40 or (57.1%). This means that EAL students highly need to master English academic writing aspects.

Table-4. Independent Samples Test of EFL and ESL difficulties in academic writing

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|------|-----------------------------|---|--------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| | | Sig. | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference |
| ST01 | Equal variances assumed | .000 | 68 | .039 | .509 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 38.790 | .064 | .509 |
| ST02 | Equal variances assumed | .127 | 68 | .342 | .231 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 46.257 | .363 | .231 |
| ST03 | Equal variances assumed | .571 | 68 | .359 | .217 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 54.045 | .355 | .217 |
| ST04 | Equal variances assumed | .016 | 68 | .110 | .439 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 44.100 | .132 | .439 |
| ST05 | Equal variances assumed | .002 | 68 | .075 | .455 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 41.072 | .103 | .455 |
| ST06 | Equal variances assumed | .019 | 68 | .039 | .449 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 37.563 | .066 | .449 |
| ST07 | Equal variances assumed | .483 | 68 | .054 | .449 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 40.018 | .080 | .449 |
| ST08 | Equal variances assumed | .280 | 68 | .020 | .526 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 42.560 | .031 | .526 |
| ST09 | Equal variances assumed | .346 | 68 | .427 | .126 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 52.940 | .427 | .126 |
| ST10 | Equal variances assumed | .656 | 68 | .871 | -.021 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 55.612 | .868 | -.021 |
| ST11 | Equal variances assumed | .240 | 68 | .969 | -.007 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 40.857 | .971 | -.007 |
| ST12 | Equal variances assumed | .620 | 68 | .844 | .033 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 47.192 | .849 | .033 |
| ST13 | Equal variances assumed | .484 | 68 | .956 | .010 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 45.811 | .958 | .010 |
| ST14 | Equal variances assumed | .393 | 68 | .645 | -.061 |

| | | | | | |
|------|-----------------------------|------|--------|------|-------|
| ST15 | Equal variances not assumed | | 55.922 | .639 | -.061 |
| | Equal variances assumed | .170 | 68 | .435 | .173 |
| ST16 | Equal variances not assumed | | 41.297 | .471 | .173 |
| | Equal variances assumed | .294 | 68 | .523 | .119 |
| ST17 | Equal variances not assumed | | 41.680 | .554 | .119 |
| | Equal variances assumed | .438 | 68 | .958 | -.007 |
| ST18 | Equal variances not assumed | | 55.810 | .957 | -.007 |
| | Equal variances assumed | .306 | 68 | .971 | -.005 |
| ST19 | Equal variances not assumed | | 42.233 | .973 | -.005 |
| | Equal variances assumed | .418 | 68 | .518 | -.112 |
| ST20 | Equal variances not assumed | | 67.671 | .469 | -.112 |
| | Equal variances assumed | .633 | 68 | .931 | -.014 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 47.576 | .933 | -.014 |

Through an independent sample t-test, we tried to find out the mean difference between the two groups. The results showed that there was sometimes a significant difference between EFL and ESL students. By using coefficient $p\text{-value} = 0.05$ and the degree of freedom (df) equal to 68, $t\text{-calculated} < p\text{-value}$ where the mean difference is lower than 0.05. The highest mean difference scores that we found after analyzing the 20 item statements was 0.526 while the lowest one is -0.112. Looking at the score significance, we found that even though all statements showed the mean

difference, not all are statistically significant based on the coefficient $p\text{-value}$ of 0.05. In some statements within the calculated $t\text{-score}$ that is lower than 0.05 (for example, 0.039 and $0.020 < 0.05$), it means that there was a significant mean difference between the two groups of students (EFL and ESL) in terms of difficulties. Based on the mean differences found in terms of the difficulties, and also given that the statistical differences are only in two over twenty statements, it can be inferred that the EFL and ESL students face the same difficulties in academic writing.

Table 5. Independent Sample Test of EFL and ESL needs in academic writing

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | |
|------|-----------------------------|---|--------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| | | Sig. | df | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference |
| ST21 | Equal variances assumed | .067 | 68 | .135 | -.215 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 64.070 | .109 | -.215 |
| ST22 | Equal variances assumed | .047 | 68 | .291 | -.131 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 54.336 | .287 | -.131 |
| ST23 | Equal variances assumed | .005 | 67 | .158 | -.175 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 54.044 | .148 | -.175 |
| ST24 | Equal variances assumed | .889 | 68 | .471 | -.108 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 43.609 | .498 | -.108 |
| ST25 | Equal variances assumed | .091 | 68 | .242 | -.177 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 64.822 | .206 | -.177 |
| ST26 | Equal variances assumed | .412 | 68 | .807 | .037 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 42.343 | .819 | .037 |
| ST27 | Equal variances assumed | .343 | 68 | .719 | -.047 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 56.663 | .712 | -.047 |
| ST28 | Equal variances assumed | .047 | 68 | .291 | -.131 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 54.336 | .287 | -.131 |
| ST29 | Equal variances assumed | .029 | 68 | .272 | -.140 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 60.222 | .251 | -.140 |
| ST30 | Equal variances assumed | .202 | 68 | .539 | -.072 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 55.098 | .534 | -.072 |
| ST31 | Equal variances assumed | .496 | 68 | .741 | -.040 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 53.242 | .740 | -.040 |
| ST32 | Equal variances assumed | .124 | 68 | .323 | .121 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 50.136 | .332 | .121 |
| ST33 | Equal variances assumed | .163 | 68 | .464 | .080 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 48.263 | .477 | .080 |
| ST34 | Equal variances assumed | .322 | 68 | .629 | -.070 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 62.234 | .608 | -.070 |
| ST35 | Equal variances assumed | .414 | 68 | .962 | -.007 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | 61.336 | .960 | -.007 |

With 15 items used to find out if the students from both EFL and ESL groups have the same needs, the results have revealed that the mean difference score between EFL and

ESL groups indicate that the highest difference is 0.121 while the lowest is -0.215. Given the significance of the scores that is Sig. (2-tailed), we found that the p-value calculated was higher than the standard p-value (0.05). This implies that there is no significant difference in terms of needs. Therefore, it can be concluded that both EFL and ESL students need to learn the same academic aspects that are required by the international publishing industry.

Discussion

The statements in table 2 represent the academic skills required for publication. Those are according to Flowerdew (2013), grammar, use of citations, referring to the published literature, textual organization, relating the text to the audience, ways of making claims, revealing or concealing the point of view of the author, hedges to indicate caution expected by the academic community, and skills of dealing with interference of different cultural views regarding the nature of academic processes. As a result, the findings from table 2 affirmed that EAL students encounter serious problems when attempting to write academic papers for international publication. The results were in line with research carried out by (Hyland, 2016), who admits that issues about English syntax, lexis, or discourse are difficult for non-Anglophone researchers. These findings also supported the study carried out by (Azizah and Budiman, 2017a) who affirmed that non-native English speakers experience difficulties in seven academic writing aspects like grammatical issues and that of (Flowerdew, 2008c) who admitted the severity of EFL grammatical errors in academic writing based on what is said by international journals editors and reviewers. These findings also supported the study conducted by (Lamprey and Atta-Opong, 2012) who found the weaknesses of Ghanaian students in paraphrasing, citing, and referencing other researchers as an acknowledgment of other researchers' works. As a result, this emphasizes the accusation of plagiarizing often reported by reviewers and editors.

Initially, these results from table 3 go in line with the studies carried out by (Cargill and Connor, 2006; Lillis and Curry, 2010) who ask for developing EAL students' skills of expressing the intended meaning by using acceptable English standards. The findings also supported the study conducted by (Bailey, 2011) who tried to design academic writing material for ESL/EFL students. Based on the difficulties he found, he looked at the basic needs to maximize their academic writing potential. In his book entitled "Academic Writing: A handbook for international students", he affirmed that English non-native speakers have the adjustments to change. He, therefore, designed an English material on Grammar, paragraph organization, plagiarism avoidance, and academic style which aims at creating accuracy in writing. The latest part includes academic vocabulary, punctuation, verb, and tenses, etc. This also emphasizes the view of Bailey (2011a), that academic style needs to: use formal language, be impersonal and objective, concise and clear, use cautious language, use quotations, and referencing the works of other authors.

These findings from table 4 support many researchers who analyzed EFL/ESL students' difficulties without any kind of discrimination. They support initially the study conducted

by (Wang, 2017), who affirms that EFL/ESL students' academic writing differs from those composed by native English speakers. For example, the ESL / EFL authors have been criticized as totally foreign-like and incoherent in the eyes of some English L1 readers. These findings are also in line with (Wikborg, 1990) who points EFL/ESL writers' inappropriate paragraphing that results from uncertain inference ties and connectors. This leads to a break in conveying information between them and native English readers and other highly proficient English readers. The findings of this study also underpin that carried out by (Schneider and Connor, 1990) who view EFL/ESL writers as inexperienced writers who just write ungrammatical sentences with poor grammar and punctuation, etc. These are among the common problems found by the participants of this study. The same with their fellows, Lee & Chen (2009) revealed that both EFL and ESL make common errors in syntax and punctuation. This often causes the difficulty of knowing the boundaries of a sentence, especially when analyzing the writing of students who have low English proficiency as stated by (Fu, Yu & Liu, 2013). Finally, in line with the present study, all of these authors agree that EFL / ESL students have common writing problems whether they are postgraduates or undergraduates. The t-test results presented in table 5 both EFL and ESL as EAL students underpin the studies conducted by (Minerich, 2001; Singh, 2017; Tuyen, Osman, Dan & Ahmad, 2016; Young and Schartner, 2014) as they combine them in developing the materials for EFL/ESL teachers and identifying the strategies for them to use. Some of them studied the difficulties of both ESL/EFL, and end up by developing academic writing teaching materials for EFL/ESL closely while others tried to find out the suitable strategies to be employed. For example, while Young and Schartner (2014) affirm EFL/ESL difficulties related to language skills, academic writing literacy, and unfamiliarity with academic conventions, after investigating difficulties of ESL/EFL higher education students in academic writing, (Singh, 2017) proposed some adapting strategists for them to overcome those challenges, such as enhancing academic writing style, referring to non-formal advisory services and improving language proficiency. Developing the writing program for EFL/ESL students, (Tuyen et al., 2016) believe that the process Genre Model is suitable for Higher Educational institutions to improve both EFL/ESL undergraduate and graduate students' paper writing. It is therefore inferred that despite their differences in terms of definitions, academically and internationally have the same needs for overcoming the difficulties they face.

Conclusion

To conclude, the study explored the EAL students' difficulties and needs for publication in the field of English academic writing. The results showed that despite the requirement of publishing internationally, the surveyed students (EFL/EFL), have difficulties in academic writing, where the key problems are language use, academic style, content organization, and information searching skills. Proper use of grammar such as correct tenses, articles, prepositions, claiming, and reporting verbs, was grammatically the most difficult for them when attempting

to write the research papers for publication. Regarding organization, the students found difficulties in organizing their ideas within paragraphs. This is what Bailey calls vague ideas where some scholars fail to express one idea in one paragraph. Academic style, on the other hand, which is required by the Anglophone publishing industry is one of the most difficult issues for EFL / ESL students. This style which requires formal language, academic vocabulary with conciseness, clear communication, and precision were pointed out by the participants because their poor are among the factors making their articles to be criticized. This study also found paraphrasing, summarizing, quoting, and referencing as academic writing features as some of the difficulties in terms of searching information sources and using other researchers' works. As a result, this study recommends adequate instruction of academic writing instruction and English language skills to improve their proficiency in academic English for international publishing.

Limitations and Future Studies

This study was limited to only exploring the EAL students' difficulties and needs in academic writing for effectively writing for international publication. Another restriction was to measure the level of EAL difficulties and needs in academic writing for international publication. Further, the study was restricted to finding out whether there is a difference between EFL and ESL in terms of academic writing. Research has shown the results above. For future research, similar studies could be conducted in higher education institutions to compare academic writing difficulties and needs between Native English students and EAL students. Other studies could be also be done to measure the correlation between students' English background and their academic writing difficulties and needs.

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ppendix

Appendix 1. Questionnaire of EAL students' difficulties in English academic writing

| NO | Item/statements | SD | D | N | A | SA |
|----|---|----|---|---|---|----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | When writing a research paper, I feel having enough ideas but I never trust my English | | | | | |
| 2 | When writing in English, I fail to use punctuation appropriately. | | | | | |
| 3 | Writing is a very important skill for me but my vocabulary use is still inadequate. | | | | | |
| 4 | I hate writing because I find it difficult to write in it. | | | | | |
| 5 | I dislike writing in English because it is a very difficult skill for me. | | | | | |
| 6 | I feel bored when writing a research paper since my English is not very good. | | | | | |
| 7 | I hate writing in English because my paper had been once rejected due to my grammatical errors. | | | | | |
| 8 | I get lost when I start writing a research paper in English. | | | | | |
| 9 | I feel annoyed to practice writing a paper because English academic writing has many rules to master. | | | | | |
| 10 | I find it difficult to convey the idea to particular people related to my research topic. | | | | | |
| 11 | I am good at writing in my mother tongue but not in English. | | | | | |
| 12 | I find it difficult to obtain related articles to make citations. | | | | | |
| 13 | I find the problem in the way to get authors' messages in related journals / guiding books. | | | | | |
| 14 | I find it difficult to paraphrase, summarize and reference in English. | | | | | |
| 15 | It is hard to organize my idea/opinion in a paragraph. | | | | | |
| 16 | I find it difficult to relate the idea from one paragraph to another. | | | | | |
| 17 | It is hard to write analytically, such as involving cause-effect, comparison, and pro-contra (for-against). | | | | | |
| 18 | I find it hard to convince readers about my new perspective toward the issue different from other related research. | | | | | |
| 19 | I find it hard to write clearly and orderly. | | | | | |
| 20 | I find difficulty in writing research so that the message can be accepted by people having a different culture. | | | | | |

Appendix 2. Questionnaire of EAL students' needs in English academic writing

| NO | Item/statements | SD | D | N | A | SA |
|----|--|----|---|---|---|----|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21 | Learning to write in English seems important for academic and international affairs | | | | | |
| 22 | I need to learn to write in English since it helps me to write a research paper in a good language | | | | | |
| 23 | I need to learn writing skills so that I can maximize my abilities in writing good paragraphs. | | | | | |
| 24 | I need to learn English academic writing skills in order to master English adequate vocabulary to convey my ideas | | | | | |
| 25 | Learning to write in English is helpful since it can help me write my ideas coherently and cohesively. | | | | | |
| 26 | I feel that I can be a good writer in English if I get enough opportunity to practicing writing skills regularly. | | | | | |
| 27 | I want to learn English so that I can be familiar with the English structure. | | | | | |
| 28 | I would like to learn all English language skills especially writing skills and English structures | | | | | |
| 29 | I feel interested in learning English writing to be familiar with the cautious language. | | | | | |
| 30 | I want to learn English academic writing in order to master the academic style. | | | | | |
| 31 | I wish I could practice English academic writing in order to be familiar with the rhetorical mechanics of writing. | | | | | |
| 32 | I want to learn English academic writing in order to know how to organize an idea within a paragraph. | | | | | |
| 33 | I want to learn English academic writing in order to know how to convince my audience. | | | | | |
| 34 | I feel interested in learning to write to know how to borrow other authors' ideas in terms of citations. | | | | | |
| 35 | I Feel I would learn to write in English in order to know how to make references. | | | | | |