CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

As described in Chapter Three, the aim of this study was to find out the effectiveness of materials used in EGAP (English for General Academic Purposes) Program at the Open University of Sri Lanka, in relation to the context of its use. In this study, the course materials were critically evaluated based on their interaction with the other contextual factors and the stake holders of the program. As such, the nature of this study required obtaining data from various stake holders of the program, using many research techniques and tools. The stake holders of the program consisted of learners, tutors/visiting academics, language experts and course materials writers. Data were obtained through quantitative and qualitative research methods. The objectives of the study necessitated the use of questionnaires, interviews, group discussions and classroom observations as data gathering instruments. Further, the materials of the EGAP program were analysed using two standardized check lists and a check list designed for evaluation of self-instructional materials. Overall, this chapter deals with nature of data, criteria and methods of data analysis and presentation and interpretation of the results obtained.

4.2 Data description and analysis

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, data were gathered using many techniques and tools. Criteria for analysis were decided based on the type of data obtained. Questionnaires were analyzed in two ways: questions with a single response and with a Likert Scale, were analyzed statistically: chi-square test, frequencies, percentages and questions with multiple responses were analyzed using frequencies and percentages. Results were tabulated and presented in graphs, charts and tables. The data from semi-structured interviews were transcribed, coded and presented. The emerging common views and contradictory views were noted. Group discussions too were
transcribed, coded and interpreted with a focus on the emerging common opinions and deviations.

Course materials analysis was done according to the two check lists selected:

- Materials evaluation checklist – McGrath (2002 - based on Breen and Chandlin, 1987) - (see Appendix 3.6)
- Checklist for evaluation and selection of course books – Cunningsworth (1995) - (see Appendix 3.7)

Classroom observations were carried out in the regional centres where classes were conducted, to get a representative set of data. This was necessitated due to the differences in backgrounds of the learners, infrastructure facilities, equipment needed for teaching, the qualifications and level of training of the tutors/visiting academics etc.

The data gathered through all the above tools were analyzed, interpreted and triangulated to ensure credibility.

4.2.1 Description and analysis of the data from questionnaires

According to Dornyei and Taguchi (2010), questionnaires were designed to obtain data in a systematic way to answer the research questions. This research tool was intended to see the attitudes, impressions, feedback and opinions of the chief stake holders of the course materials. As mentioned in Chapter Three (section 3.6.2.1), the questionnaire for learners consisted of 45 questions categorized under four sections. Those four sections included factual (subject descriptors), behavioural and attitudinal questions to derive responses on many dimensions of the course and the learners’ negotiation with the course materials. The data obtained through questionnaires were analyzed quantitatively (statistically-descriptive and inferential) and qualitatively, based on the nature of the questions and responses.
The questionnaire for tutors/visiting academics consisted of seven sections as described in detail in Chapter Three (section 3.6.2.2). The questions elicited factual data through questions on personal information, demographic factors and through polar questions. The questions in sections B to F consisted of rating scales which elicited information on the perceptions, attitudes and opinions of the tutors/visiting academics. Section G dealt with the attitudes and opinions of the tutors/visiting academics. These data too were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively, based on the nature of the questions.

The interpretation of data obtained through questionnaires is presented in sections 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 in this chapter.

4.2.2 Description and analysis of data from semi-structured interviews

As described in detail in Chapter Three (section 3.6.3), semi-structured interviews were designed and administered to three categories of stakeholders: tutors/visiting academics, course material writers and the language experts. Interview was chosen as a tool with the expectation to yield rich and primary data on research questions. Further, the interviews were expected to yield qualitative data which could not be observed directly. The interviews were transcribed according the conventions of transcription to maintain authenticity. The emerging views, attitudes, perceptions and observations of the stakeholders were coded, recorded, presented and interpreted in this chapter (section 4.4).

4.2.3 Description and analysis of materials

The course materials of the EGAP program as described in detail in chapter 3 (sections 3.7) is based on three selected checklists and many guidelines as described in the same section. The outcome of the analysis was compared with many salient points emerging from data collected through other tools to ensure credibility.

4.2.4 Description and analysis of data from group discussions

Group discussions were conducted in three regional centres as mentioned in Chapter Three (section 3.6.5). The discussions were scheduled for one hour and was conducted
based on a 10 point structured schedule as the framework. The focus and objective of each point is presented in Chapter Three (section 3.6.5.1). The important points of the discussion were noted from the recordings and field notes and the responses were interpreted as per emerging opinions.

4.2.5 Description and analysis of data from classroom observations

Data from classroom observations were obtained through formal and informal methods. Formal method was the use of a checklist to evaluate classroom interactions and the informal method was writing field notes which were later written as descriptions on classroom interactions and proceedings.

4.3 Interpretation of data from questionnaires

The nature of data gathered from questionnaires for learners and tutors/visiting academics and data analysis of the same were described in detail in Chapter Three (section 3.6.2.1) and Chapter Four (section 4.3.1). The interpretation of data collected from questionnaires for two categories of responses: tutors/visiting academics and learners, in EGAP for Science program are presented below.

4.3.1. Questionnaire for learners

The statistical analysis was carried out using the chi-square test for independence as the test method to determine whether there were significant relationships between the categorical variables under consideration. The analysis was carried out between categorical variables (demographic variables and the opinions of the learners). Regional centre was selected as the only demographic variable that was compared with other variables (the opinions of learners) to determine the strength of the relationships (as per reasons given below).

Results were interpreted in the following way.
Hypothesis for the opinions of the learners and the regional centre

H$_0$ – Learners' opinions and demographic factors (regional centre) are independent
H$_1$ – Learners' opinions and demographic factors (regional centre) are dependent

H$_0$ (null hypothesis) predict the demographic factor (the opinions of the learners) does not change according to the regional centre and hence, independent.
H$_1$ (alternative hypothesis) indicates a significant association between the two categorical variables regional centre and the opinions of the learners and as such are dependent.

The p-value is defined as the probability of obtaining a result equal to or "more extreme" than what was actually observed, when the null hypothesis is true. In frequentist inference, the p-value is widely used in statistical hypothesis testing, specifically in null hypothesis significance testing.

When the P value is higher than the level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted which indicates that the two categorical variables under consideration are independent of each other. Similarly, when the P value is less than level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected which indicates that the two categorical variables under consideration are dependent on each other and there is a significant relationship between the two variables.

Significance level considered for this analysis is equal to 0.05
The Chi-Square test of independence was carried out for chosen demographic factors and learner opinions.

The statistical analysis and interpretations were based on one important demographic factor (regional centre) and the views and perceptions of learners and tutors/visiting academics as the other categorical variable. Regional centre was chosen as the single most important common categorical variable to compare with the other variables as it forms the entire network of the Open University of Sri Lanka and contribute to the huge diversity in terms of learners’ socio-economic, cultural, linguistic diversity and many
other academic factors like the proficiency level, exposure to language etc. Further, it was assumed that there could be differences in infrastructure facilities, equipment provided as well as the management issues specific to respective centres. At the same time the requirement to maintain consistency across the entire network of centres in terms of academic dissemination, to maintain equality while increasing the outreach made it necessary to inquire into the relationships between the regional centres and the learners’ views, perceptions, attitudes and observations on many aspects of the EGAP program. The ultimate goal would be to make suggestions, recommendations and take measures to bridge the existing gaps to enable a more streamlined and accommodative teaching-learning process that would benefit all the stake holders.

4.3.1.1 Questionnaire for learners–Section A (Personal information) - (see Appendix 3.1a)

The eight questions in section "A" (Questions 1-8) were designed to elicit demographic information.

4.3.1.1.1 Name and registration number

In Question One, the name and registration number were obtained for identification of individuals in the sample and coding them.

4.3.1.1.2 Regional/Study centre

Question two sought information on regional/study centre in which the learners attended face-to-face contact sessions. That gave an idea of the learner distribution across the island and how the sample of learners for the research had been selected. Further, this could give insights into the socio-economic background of the learners and the facilities and resources available for learning.

The distribution of the learners (registered for B.Sc. Degree programme) across the island is presented in figure 4.1.
Colombo being the main Regional Centre represented 52% of the total learner population distributed across the island. Matara and Kandy being the next largest centres represented 17% each of the total learner population registered for the Science degree. Batticaloa, Jaffna and Anuradhapura Regional centres represented 6%, 5% and 3% of the learner population respectively.

The numbers and percentages of the learner sample selected from each centre are presented below.
Colombo Regional centre represented an equal percentage of learners as in the total population. Kandy, Matara and Batticaloa centres represented a higher percentage of learners compared to the total population whereas Jaffna and Anuradhapura, represented a lower percentage compared to the total population. These differences were due to the differences in response rates to the questionnaire in each centre as the sample selected was 25% of the number of respondents from each centre. It could be observed that number of respondents selected from each centre for the sample was a very close representation of the total population.

4.3.1.1.3 Course code and group number

Course code and group number are important factors in identifying a learner in relation to the main program (B.Sc. Degree). But the current course did not provide much detail in terms of those two factors as the EGAP course was conducted prior to the commencement of the main program.

4.3.1.1.4 Age of the learners

Age can be a defining factor in many learning choices made by the learners and many teaching choices made by the tutors/visiting academics. Question Three focused on the
age of the learners as an important demographic factor which defines the sample. The age distribution range of the sample of learners selected for the study is presented in figure 4.3.

![Age of Learners](image_url)

**Figure 4.3 - Age of Learners**

Out of the sample of 163 learners, 133 learners (81.6%), belonged to the age range of 18 - 24, which showed that a very high percentage of the learners were young adults. Only 18 (11.04%) learners were in the age range of 25-30 whereas only 6 (3.68%) and 3 (1.84%) learners were in the age ranges of 31-35 and 36-40 respectively. Only 3 (1.84%) learners in the sample belonged to the age range of above forty.

Though the learner sample consisted of a very high percentage of young adults (between the age range of (18-24), the sample also consisted of learners across all age ranges leading to a wide variety in terms of age in the sample. This variety is an indication of a wide variation in the sample in terms of exposure, attitudes, interests, motivation, learner problems and numerous other factors associated with the age of the learner.

**4.3.1.5 Occupation**

Many learners in OUSL are employed. They pursue education at OUSL for reasons varying from career enhancement, added educational qualifications to the sheer interest in
learning. Some of them are learners who had missed the opportunity to enter government universities but are keen to pursue higher education. This category of learners is relatively young and mostly unemployed or full time learners. Among the employed learners, some study with the intention of obtaining promotions in their careers or pursuing the additional knowledge, and training required for their career enhancement whereas some learners enrol for the course to gain more knowledge in the field of their interest.

The data obtained on the occupation of the sample of learners is presented in figure 4.4.

![Occupation of learners](chart)

**Figure 4.4 – Occupations of Learners**

The frequencies and percentages show that the highest percentage (46, 34%) of learners were teachers by profession. The next highest number of learners (49, 30%) had not indicated their profession, hence, can be assumed to be unemployed /full time learners. Thirty three (20%) of the sample had indicated they were full time learners. Learners from many other professions represented 13% (21) of the sample which included professions like research officers, sales executives, public health inspectors, etc. while 3% of the sample were technical officers. The high number of full time learners in the sample could be related to the high percentage of young adult learners (18-24yrs) in the sample who had missed the opportunity of pursuing higher education in government
universities (National and affiliated universities). The high number of teachers over other professions could be an indication of the interest shown by learners in career enhancement and professional development.

4.3.1.1.6 Mother tongue

The data obtained on the mother tongue of the sample of learners are presented in figure 4.5.

![Mother Tongue - Sample](image)

**Figure 4.5 – Mother tongue of the sample of learners**

Out of 163 learners in the sample, 127 (78%) used Sinhala as the mother tongue. Only 34 (21%) used Tamil and 2 (1%) used English, as their mother tongue.

The centre wise distribution of learners in terms of their mother tongue showed much variation across centres which is presented in figure 4.6.
The centre wise distribution of learners in terms of their mother tongue showed a mixed distribution in some centres and extreme concentration of learners speaking a particular language in certain other centres. Matara regional centre represented a sample of learners who spoke Sinhala as their mother tongue whereas in Jaffna regional centre, the sample represented a population of learners who spoke Tamil as their mother tongue. Colombo, Kandy and Anuradhapura regional centres had a mixed sample of learners who spoke Sinhala and Tamil as their mother tongue though Sinhala speaking population was predominant in all three centres. Batticaloa regional centre had a learner population who predominantly spoke Tamil as their mother tongue.

Further, mother tongue could be considered as a demographic factor which denotes the religious and cultural background of the learners. Hence, it can be assumed that the total sample of learners represented a huge variation across the centres in terms of their religious and cultural background.
4.3.1.1.7 Highest qualification obtained in English language

The level of English language proficiency at the time of entry to OUSL, attribute much to the learner diversity in terms of linguistic competence and the resultant academic success. The language proficiency being the main factor under consideration in the EGAP course, the level of proficiency as indicated by their English language qualifications at entry has given a comprehensive view of the varying proficiency levels of the learners. Presented below (Table 4.7) is a representation of the highest qualification obtained in English language among the sample of learners.

![Highest Qualification in English](image.png)

Figure 4.7 – Highest qualification in English of the sample of learners

A clear majority (74%, 120) of the learner sample possessed the A/L (Advanced Level – General English) as their highest qualification in English and their proficiency levels varied from simple pass to a distinction in the said examination. This group of learners could be assumed to be entering the degree program after their advanced level examination. The next highest number from the sample (24, 14%), had obtained a pass to a distinction in G.C.E. Ordinary Level examination (O/L). Some of them might not have done their A/L examination whereas some might have had appeared for the A/L examination but had failed in English. A small number of learners from the sample possessed ‘Other “qualifications which included degrees, diplomas and passes in other
certificate courses. Out of 13 learners (8%) who had other qualifications, one had a degree in English where as seven others had diplomas and five learners had qualified in other certificate courses. Five learners (3%), had not mentioned the qualifications obtained in English. Overall, the variation in sample in terms of the qualifications in English language indicated a high variation in the level of English language proficiency of the learners at the point of entry to the EGAP program.

4.3.1.1.8 Stream of study

Learners had chosen subjects for their main degree (B.Sc.) in two main streams: Biological sciences and Physical sciences. Though there were some subjects common for the learners in both streams of study, there was a wide variation in the academic discourse, concepts and vocabulary.

The data obtained on the stream of study of the sample of learners are presented in figure 4.8.

![Stream of Study](image)

**Figure 4.8 – Stream of Study**

Majority (83%) of the learners from the sample were from the stream of Biological Sciences and only 16% of the sample was from physical sciences. Two learners (1%) had
not mentioned the stream of study in their main program (B.Sc. degree). Those percentages showed that there was a high tendency among the learners to choose Biological Science over Physical Science, as their stream of study.

4.3.1.2 Questionnaire for learners –Section B (General information)

The general information obtained from section “B” was interpreted to give a general idea about the study patterns, resources used by the learners, their past experiences and their general expectations from the course.

4.3.1.2.1 Places where English is used

In general learners are required to use English language in various places in their day to day life. The places where they use the language can to some extent determine their language requirements and the level of exposure to the language. Further, this gives insights into the genres the learners are exposed to and need to deal with in their daily life. The aim of this question was to obtain information on the places where the learners have to use the English language. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Where do you use English in your day to day life?</td>
<td>(a) At work</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>33.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) In the university</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>45.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) At home</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>13.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Any other</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1 - Places where English is used by learners

Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer.. The percentage was calculated for 237.
Majority (109, 45.99%) of the learners used English language in the university whereas 33.76% (80) used English at work. Thirty three (13.92%) of the learners had used English at home and 6.33% (15) of the learners had given other places where they had used the English language and their responses are categorized and summarized below.

Out of the (15) who had chosen the option “other”, four (26.6%) had said that they used English in messaging, accessing internet for e-mail, using social media and searching internet. Two (13.3%) of them had said they use English while travelling and three of them (20%) had been using English in their classes and training programs. The rest (6, 40%) were using English for educational purposes, at the work place and special occasions like parties and functions.

Overall, results had clearly indicted the need of the majority to learn English for academic purposes whereas the need for English to be used at the work place was also an obvious necessity. Further, the responses indicated the varying needs for the English language which extends beyond the academic purposes and employment requirements.

**4.3.1.2.2 Category of people with whom English is used**

The category of people the learners had to communicate with in English is a possible indication of the type of language they required and the level of proficiency and confidence they required to achieve in order to be quite comfortable in using English. The aim of this question was to obtain information on the category of people the learners had to communicate with in English language. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ItemNo.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Who do you communicate with in English?</td>
<td>(a) Friends</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>31.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(a) Colleagues and superiors at work</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>18.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Tutors/visiting academics in the university</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>34.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Family</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Any other</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.2 - Category of people with whom English is used

**Note:** The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 290.

Majority (34.14%, 99) of the learners used English language to communicate with their tutors/visiting academics in the university whereas 31.72% (92) used English to communicate with their friends. 18.97% (55) of the learners used English at work with their superiors and colleagues and only 9.31% (27) of them had used English at home to communicate with their family. Only 5.86% (17) of the learner sample had chosen the option 'any other' in this question and their responses were categorized and presented below.

Only 17 learners had responded to this question and out of them 14 (82.35%) said that they used English at school or work place to communicate with learners and colleagues (tutors/visiting academics). One learner had said he/she communicated with people close to his/her life. Further, one learner said he/she communicated with lecturers in a training program and another said he/she communicated with any other person who wish to communicate in English.
Overall, the responses from the sample of learners had indicated more use of English to communicate with people from their educational affiliations and less use of the English language for communication in employment related backgrounds.

4.3.1.2.3 Main requirements for learning English in the university

This question sought to obtain information from the learners on which aspect of learning academic English was more important to them in terms of their requirements. The results obtained are presented below in table 5.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Why do you learn English at the university?</td>
<td>(a) As support of your academic work</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>50.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To communicate with tutors/visiting academics</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>15.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To write assignments and answer examination questions</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>28.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Any other</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>99.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3 - Main requirements for learning English in the university

Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 284. The total percentage is 99.99 because of the rounding of error.

Majority (50.35%) of the learners from the sample indicated that they needed to learn English in the university as a support for their academic work and 28.87% of learners had said that they needed English to write assignments and answer examination questions. Only 15.14% the learners had said their requirement for learning English was to
communicate with tutors/visiting academics. Only 5.63% of the learner sample had chosen the option “Any other” and their responses are categorized and summarized below.

Out of 16 learners who had given other reasons to learn English, 4 learners had said that they followed the course as it was compulsory whereas an equal number (4) had said they focused on the future needs of English as it is an international language. Two (2) learners had said that they learnt English for future studies and three (3) learners had said that they learnt English because they like English. Another three (3) wished to improve their knowledge in English. Overall, results showed that the main reason for learners to learn English at the university was academic and academic related purposes. This had given a clear idea of the learner requirements for learning English in the context under focus.

4.3.1.2.4 Preferred method of study

This question aimed to obtain information from the learners on their preferred method of study. The information gathered from this question was expected to provide insights which could be useful in designing study materials. The results obtained are presented below in table 5.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>What is your preferred method of studying?</td>
<td>(a) Studying alone</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Studying in groups</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>27.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Through discussions with other learners</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>28.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Interactive learning through internet resources</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Any other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>284</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.99</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.4 - Preferred method of study
Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answers. The percentage was calculated for 284. The total percentage is 99.99 because of the rounding of error.

Majority (82, 28.87%) of the learners from the sample had indicated that their preferred method of study was through discussions with other learners and 77 (27.11%) of learners had said that they preferred to study in groups. Seventy three (25.7%) had said their preferred method of study was studying alone whereas 45 (15.85%) had said they gained knowledge through interactive learning by using internet resources. Only seven of the learner sample had chosen the option ‘any other’ in this question and their responses were categorized and summarized below.

Out of 07 learners who had given other reasons to learn English, two had said that they prefer to learn through discussions with tutors/visiting academics and other learners whereas an equal number (2) had said they like to learn with the help of a qualified teacher. One learner (1) had said that they prefer to learn English through reading books, imagination and scientific experimentation and another had said 'any other' suitable method that proves to be effective.

4.3.1.2.5 Use of learning resources

Aim of this question was to obtain information from the learners on their preferred learning resources for learning English. The information gathered through this question was expected to provide insights which could be useful in designing study materials and activities. Further, it could provide insights into the learning resources the learners could access. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.5.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>What resources do you use for learning English?</td>
<td>(a) News papers</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>17.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Books</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>35.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Internet resources</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>29.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) DVD/Audio/Video</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>15.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Any other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>355</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.5 - Use of learning resources**

**Note:** The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 344.

According to the learners’ responses, books seemed to be the main learning resource as majority (125, 35.21%) of the learners had chosen that option. A high number (104, 29.29%) from the sample indicated that they used internet resources and 63 (17.75%) of the learners had said that they used newspapers. Only 54 (15.21%) had chosen DVD/Audio/Video as learning resources. Only 9 (2.54%) of the learner sample had chosen the option ‘any other’ in this question and their responses were categorized and summarized below.

Out of 09 learners who had given other reasons to learn English, two (2) had said that they used magazines as a learning resource whereas an equal number (2) said they accessed human resources as an aid to learn English. One learner (1) had used movies whereas the other learner had used television as language learning resources. Three (3) of the responses were repetitions and as such those responses were rejected.

Overall, results indicated the heavy dependency of learners on books as a learning resource. Internet was also used effectively as a learning resource. This was an indication of the potential of internet and multimedia as effective and accessible learning resources.
4.3.1.2.6 Past experience regarding learning English

This question sought to obtain information from the learners on their past experience in learning English. The information gathered through this question was expected to provide insights which could help in designing study materials and also in the teaching process. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>What kind of experience have you had in the past regarding learning English?</td>
<td>(a) Studied English as a subject at school</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>34.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Attended an English medium school</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Followed an English course at an institution</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>25.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Lived in an English speaking country</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Learnt English at home, from the family</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(f) Read English books</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(g) Any other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>99.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 - Past experience regarding learning English

Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 377. The total percentage is 99.99 because of the rounding of error.

Highest number (130, 34.48%) of responses indicated that English was studied as a subject in school and 96 (25.46%) had followed an English course at an institution. 92
(24.4%) of them had gained knowledge through reading English books whereas 30 (7.96%) had learnt English at home, from the family. Only 14 (3.71%) had attended an English medium school and a very little percentage 4 (1.06%) had been exposed to English language by living in an English speaking country. Out of total learner sample, only 11 (2.92%) had chosen the option ‘any other’ in this question and their responses were categorized and summarized below.

Out of 11 learners who had given other reasons to learn English, four had said that they used English as the medium of instruction or learnt it as a subject at the training college for teachers. Two learners (2) attributed their past experience in learning English to watching movies/CD/Video and listening to audios. One learner (1) had said that his/her past experience in learning English related much to interaction with teachers, friends and another attributed it to self studies. Two (2) had repeated the responses and as such those responses were rejected.

Overall results indicate that apart from learning English as a subject at school, learners’ past experience in learning English was mostly dependent on the other courses they followed at various institutions and reading English books. This is an indication of the limitedness of the English knowledge of the learners, their effort to learn English to suit their requirements and the scope of providing them with more advanced and up to date resources and methods for learning English.

4.3.1.2.7 Which experience/s has/have helped/will help in learning Science in English medium

This question sought to obtain information from the learners on which of their past experiences had helped them in learning English. The information gathered through this question was expected to provide further insights in to their language background, level of proficiency in English and level of exposure to the language. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.7.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Which experience/s has/have helped/will help you in learning Science in English medium?</td>
<td>(a) Studying English as a subject at school</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Attending an English medium school</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Following an English course at an institution</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Living in an English speaking country</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Learning English at home, from the family</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>4.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(f) Reading books in English</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>27.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(g) Listening to programs on Science, in English, on television</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>24.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(h) Any other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>395</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.7 - Which experience/s has/have helped/will help in learning science in English medium**

**Note:** The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 395.

Majority (27.09%, 107) of the learners from the sample indicated that reading English books helped them to a great extent in learning English whereas 94 (24.05%) of the learners had said that listening to programs on Science, in English, on television helped them to learn English. Sixty (60, 15.19%) had agreed that following an English course at an institution helped in improving their knowledge of English whereas 79 (20%) of them had gained knowledge through studying English as a subject at school. Nineteen (19, 4.81%) from the learner sample had improved their knowledge of English language...
through attending an English medium school whereas an equal number had improved their English by learning English at home, from the family. A less percentage (7, 1.77%) of the learners had improved their English language skills by living in an English speaking country. Out of total learner sample, only 9 (2.28%) had chosen the option (h) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different reasons. Their responses were categorized and summarized below.

Out of 09 learners who had given other reasons as to how learning English in the past would help in learning Science in English medium, four had said that learning Science in English medium in the past had helped them where as two learners had said they watched scientific cinema, DVDs videos which helped them learn Science in English medium in the university. One learner each (1) had said that teaching Science in English medium had an influence on their working environment and reading books in English would help them learn Science in English medium at the university.

Overall, results indicated the heavy dependency of learners on the language knowledge gained through reading books and learning English at school. This further highlighted the requirement for a proper knowledge base and guidance to suit the academic requirements of the learners.

**4.3.1.2.8 How the past experience in learning English has helped in learning Science in English medium**

This question tried to elicit information from the learners on how their past experiences had helped them in learning Science in English medium. The information gathered through this question was expected to provide further insights in to their language background, level of proficiency in English and level of exposure to the language. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.8.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>How do the above experiences in learning English help you in learning Science in English medium?</td>
<td>(a) Improve communication skills</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>24.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Improve vocabulary knowledge</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>29.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Gives confidence in using the English language</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>26.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Improve the knowledge of grammar</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>19.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Any other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>402</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.8 - How the past experience in learning English has helped in learning Science in English medium**

**Note:** The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners have given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 402.

Majority (29.35%, 118) of the learners from the sample indicated that the past experience in learning English had improved their vocabulary knowledge which helped them in learning Science in English medium whereas 105 (26.12%) of them attributed the same to the confidence they gained in using the English language. Only 100 (24.88%) had said that communication skills enhanced through their past experiences in learning English helped them in learning Science in English medium whereas 19.14% attributed the same to their improved knowledge of grammar.

Out of total learner sample, only two had chosen the option (e) “Any other” in this question and they have said that past experience in learning English had provided them with skills to improve the ability to write answers and read articles.
4.3.1.3 Questionnaire for learners –Section C (Methods and Materials)

Interpretation of data gathered through section C (methods and materials), focused on the key areas of the research study: the learner perceptions on materials and how effective the materials were as perceived by the learners. This further looked in to the learners' opinions on the ways the materials could be improved to suit their learning requirements.

4.3.1.3.1 Learners’ general opinion about tutors/visiting academics and teaching

Question 17 asked about the learners’ opinion on whether the tutors/visiting academics taught well. The data obtained through the answers are presented in table 4.9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>In your opinion, do your English tutors/visiting academics teach well in the EGAP program?</td>
<td>(a) Yes</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>79.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) No</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To some extent</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.9 - Learners’ general opinion about tutors/visiting academics and teaching

Majority (79.27% , 130) of the total responses reflected that the tutors/visiting academics taught well. Only two of the responses reflected that tutors/visiting academics had not taught well and 31 (19.41%) had said that teaching was good to some extent. The overall results indicated that majority of the learners were satisfied with teaching in the EGAP program whereas a lesser number felt it should be improved.
The statistical analysis carried out using the Chi-Square test of independence to determine whether there is a significant relationship between two categorical variables (regional centre and learner opinions on the quality of teaching), gave the following results.

**Chi-Square Test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>17.772</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.059</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>20.590</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>163</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 11 cells (61.1%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .04.

The p value (0.049) was higher than the significance level (0.05) which indicated that two categorical variables did not show a significant relationship and hence, independent of each other. Therefore, it could be concluded that the learners’ level of satisfaction on teaching in EGAP course were not decided by the factors specific to the respective centres.

**4.3.1.3.2 Learner perception about the aspects in teaching that needs improvement**

This question sought to obtain information on the learner perceptions about the different aspects of teaching which needed improvement. The aim of this question was to gain insights into the areas which could be further improved in terms of the teaching process. The data obtained through the answers are presented in table 4.10.
Table 4.10 - Learner perception about the aspects in teaching that needs improvement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Learner perception about the aspects in teaching that needs improvement</td>
<td>(a) Giving more group work</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Giving extra learning materials</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Use of technology in teaching</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>26.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Giving more attention to the learning needs of the learners</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>30.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Any other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>115</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The total number of responses is less than 163 because 48 learners had not responded to the question. The percentage was calculated for 115.

Majority (30.43% - 35) of the total responses reflected the opinion that more attention should be given to the learning needs of the learners whereas 31 (26.96%) were of the view that technology should be incorporated into teaching. Only 28 (24.35%) of the responses indicated that tutors/visiting academics should focus on giving more group work and 16 (13.91%) indicated that providing extra learning materials could enhance teaching.

Out of total learner sample, only four (4) had chosen the option (e) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different reasons. Their responses varied and they are as follows.

- Tutors/visiting academics should be empathetic
- Tutors/visiting academics should focus more on understanding their learners and teach accordingly
• Tutors/visiting academics should focus more on improving the grammar knowledge of the learners

One response was irrelevant and was rejected.

4.3.1.3.3 Learners’ satisfaction on teaching methods

This question focused on the level of overall satisfaction of learners on teaching methods used in the EGAP program. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.11.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Are you satisfied with the teaching methods used in the language classroom?</td>
<td>(a) Yes</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>52.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) No</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To some extent</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Needs improvement</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>23.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.11 - Learners’ satisfaction on teaching methods

Majority (52.15%, 85) of the learners were in agreement that the teaching methods in EGAP were satisfactory whereas 29 (17.8%) had said teaching methods in EGAP were satisfactory only to some extent. Only 11 (6.75%) were of the view that teaching methods were not satisfactory at all and 38 (23.3%) were of the opinion that teaching methods in EGAP needed improvement. Overall, the results indicated a higher level of satisfaction among learners on the teaching methods but had left scope for further improvement. Variation in responses further suggested a possible variation in teaching methods of tutors/visiting academics, within and across centres.
Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>33.943\textsuperscript{a}</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>36.000</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>163</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 14 cells (58.3\%) have expected count less than 5.
   The minimum expected count is .20.

As per results of the Pearson's chi-square test for independence, the P value is less than the level of significance which indicated a strong relationship between the two variables (regional centre and the learners’ level of satisfaction on the teaching methods in EGAP). It can be concluded that the level of learner satisfaction varied significantly across centres. The reasons could be the different levels of exposure, experience and proficiency on the part of tutors/visiting academics and, also difference in proficiency levels, exposure, competency and expectations of the learners. Further, this indicated the necessity to maintain consistency across centres and requirement for more innovative and, also learner friendly teaching methods that suit the context of distance education.

### 4.3.1.3.4 Areas which need improvement in teaching methods

This question sought to obtain information on the learner perceptions about the different teaching methods which they felt that needed improvement. The aim of this question was to gain insights into the areas which could be further improved in terms of the teaching methods, to cater more effectively to the learners. The data obtained through the answers are presented in table 4. 12.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Areas which need improvement in teaching methods</td>
<td>(a) More opportunities for learner discussion</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>18.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) More time for speech activities</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>37.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) More help from the teacher</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>14.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Extra guidance towards learning English</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>25.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Any other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.12 - Areas which need improvement in teaching methods**

Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 234.

Majority (37.87%, 89) of the learners were in agreement that more time should be given for speech activities whereas 43 (18.3%) had said more opportunities should be provided for learner discussions. 49 (25.11%) were of the view that extra guidance should be given to learning English and 33 (14.04%) were of the opinion more help should be given on the part of teacher.

Out of total learner sample, only 11 (4.68%) had chosen the option (e) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different reasons. Their responses varied and in essence they conveyed the following opinions.

- Aspects of literature should be incorporated by the tutors/visiting academics to create interest among learners and activities like drama will enhance learner participation.
• The teaching and presentation should be more attractive to retain learner attention
• Study skills like vocabulary, listening and speaking should be more incorporated in teaching
• Learners’ desire to learn through modern technology and new trends in teaching and learning should be taken into consideration and given an adequate place in the teaching process

Three responses were irrelevant and hence rejected.

4.3.1.3.5 Usefulness of course materials

This question focused on the learners’ perceptions on the overall usefulness of course materials used in EGAP program. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.13.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Are the course materials useful?</td>
<td>(a) Very useful</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>40.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Useful</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Average</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Of very little use</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>99.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.13 - Usefulness of course materials

**Note:** The total percentage is 99.99 because of the rounding of error.

Majority (42.9%, 70) of the total responses reflected that the course materials in EGAP were useful whereas 66 (40.24%) of the total responses indicated that the course materials were very useful. Only 24 (14.24%) had said that the course materials in EGAP were average in terms of usefulness and three (3) had said that course materials were of very little use.
Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>15.347a</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>15.105</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>163</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 16 cells (66.7%) have expected count less than 5.

The minimum expected count is .06.

A higher P value (0.427) compared to the significance level at 0.05 indicated the acceptance of null hypothesis where two categorical variables were independent of each other. It could be concluded that the learners’ perceptions on the usefulness of course materials had no significant association with the regional centre where they followed classes.

4.3.1.3.6 Reasons for usefulness of course materials

This question sought to find out the reasons why learners thought that course materials in EGAP were useful to them. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.14.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Reasons for usefulness of course materials</td>
<td>(a) They cover the relevant language skills effectively</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>29.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) They are easy to understand</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>28.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) The content is relevant</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>16.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) The instructions are clear</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>23.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Any other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.14 - Reasons for usefulness of course materials**

**Note:** The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answers. The percentage was calculated for 249.

Majority (29.32%, 73) of the learners were in agreement that the course materials in EGAP covered the relevant language skills effectively and hence, useful to the learners whereas 28.51% (71) thought the materials were useful as they were easy to understand. Out of the total sample, 23.69% (59) of the learners considered the materials to be useful as the instructions were clear whereas 16.47% (41) related the usefulness of the materials to relevancy of content.

Out of total learner sample, only five (5) had chosen the option (e) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different reasons. Their responses reflected varying points which reflected negative aspects of materials. Those responses were irrelevant to this question and more reflective of the aspects included in question 23. Hence those responses were accounted for in question 23.

- Materials were not interesting and should be designed in a way they can be easily understood by the learners without the help of the teacher hence they should be more user friendly
- The content in the materials was not adequate

Overall, results indicated the low level of satisfaction among the sample of learners over many aspects of course materials as included in the question. This in turn reflected the range and scope of improvements to be made to the materials to make them more effective. (In this study we are making a move towards that direction)

4.3.1.3.7 Reasons to feel the course materials are not useful

This question focuses on the learners’ perceptions on the reasons to feel that course materials used in EGAP program were not useful. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.14.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reasons to feel the course materials are not useful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(a) The relevant language skills are not covered adequately</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) The content is not relevant</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Materials are not interesting</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>44.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Any other</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>17.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.15 - Reasons to feel the course materials are not useful

Note: The total number of responses is less than 163 because 79 learners had not responded to the question. The percentage was calculated for 84.

Majority (44.05%, 37) of the responses indicated that materials were not useful as they could not create much interest in learners where as 26.19% (22) were of the view that
materials did not cover the language skills effectively 11.9% (10) of the learners thought that materials were not useful as the content was not relevant.

Out of total learner sample, only 17.86% (15) had chosen the option (e) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different reasons. Their responses are summarized below as per the essence of opinions they conveyed.

- Materials were not interesting and should be designed in a way they can be easily understood by the learners without the help of the teacher. Hence, they should be more user friendly
- The content in the materials was not adequate
- Some materials were not available on time for the learners to prepare for the lessons in advance
- Some activities and certain lessons were difficult to understand. There should be more clarity in those.
- More attention should be given to grammar and vocabulary relevant to the respective discipline (Biological Science/ Physical Science)
- Presentation of materials should be more attractive. e.g. inclusion of pictures
- Time was wasted on unnecessary readings.

These responses indicated a variety of issues learners had faced during the course and those issues can be linked to various aspects of the course like level of proficiency, requirement for an ESP element in the course, learner attitudes and interests, lapses of administration etc.

Overall, results indicated a lower level of dissatisfaction over various aspects of the materials as presented in the question. The combined result of question 22 and 23 indicated that majority of the sample of learners had an average level of satisfaction over different aspects of course materials.
4.3.1.3.8 Relevance of English language skills to Science course

This question focused on the learners’ perceptions on the relevance of English language skills they learn through EGAP program, to their main course (Science course). The results obtained are presented below in table 4.16.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>According to your opinion, which language skills covered in the course materials will be relevant to the main course (Science degree program)?</td>
<td>(a) Grammar</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>28.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Vocabulary</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Language structures</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>38.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Any other</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.16 - Relevance of Language English language skills to science course

Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 280.

The highest number of learner in the sample (38.21%, 107) were of the view that language structures learnt in EGAP related more to the Science course whereas 30% (84) thought it to be vocabulary. 28.93% (81) of the learners felt the grammar learnt in the English course related more to the language requirements of the Science degree.

Out of total learner sample, only 2.86% (8) had chosen the option (d) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different reasons. Their responses included:

- Presentation skills
- Reading skills
• Listening and speaking skills
• Glossary

Three responses were irrelevant and hence rejected.

4.3.1.3.9 Language skills expected to learn from the course

This question aimed at eliciting information from learners about their expectations of language skills to be learnt through EGAP program. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.17.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Language skills expected to learn from the course</td>
<td>(a) Reading</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>12.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Writing</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>18.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Listening</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Speaking</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>21.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Vocabulary</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>16.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(f) Grammar</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(g) Any other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.17 - Language skills expected to learn from the course

Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 549.

Results clearly indicated that the main expectation of learners from the EGAP program was to develop their speaking skills as majority (21.68%, 119) of them chose that option from the responses. 18.03% (99) of the sample of learners felt writing as a main language skill to be learnt whereas 15.3% (84) each thought it to be listening and grammar. 16.21%
(89) felt the need to learn vocabulary whereas 12.93% (71) thought grammar as a main language skill to be learnt through EGAP program.

Out of total learner sample, only three (3) had chosen the option (g) “Any other” in this question. Two responses were irrelevant and the other was a repetition. Hence, all three responses were rejected.

4.3.1.3.10 Learner satisfaction on what is learnt in the course

This question sought to get a general idea about the level of learners’ satisfaction on what they had learnt in the EGAP program. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.18.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Are you satisfied with what you learnt in the English course?</td>
<td>(a) Yes</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>88.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) No</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.18 - Learner satisfaction on what is learnt in the course

Note: The total number of responses is less than 163 because 3 learners had not responded to the question. The percentage was calculated for 160.

Results clearly indicated that a higher percentage (88.75%, 142) of responses from the sample were satisfied with what they learnt in the EGAP program whereas only 11.25% (18) had expressed dissatisfaction on the same.
### Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>11.591a</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>10.170</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>163</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 6 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .39.

The results of analysis indicated a strong relationship between the two categorical variables (regional centre and the level of satisfaction of learners as to what was taught in the EGAP program). The P value (0.041) is less than the significance level at 0.05. Thus, it can be concluded that learners from different centres had varying levels of satisfaction of what was taught in EGAP program.

#### 4.3.1.3.11 Reasons for satisfaction on course materials

This question aimed to gather information from the responses on reasons for their satisfaction on course materials used in EGAP program. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.19.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>What are the reasons if you are satisfied with what you learnt in the English course?</td>
<td>(a) You think those skills will help in studying the main program (B Sc degree)</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>51.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) The time and resources are used effectively through the course</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Lesson materials are useful and up to date</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>19.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Lesson materials are interesting and motivating</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Any other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>199</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.19 - Reasons for satisfaction on course materials**

**Note:** *The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 199.*

Majority of the respondents (51.26%, 102) were in agreement that the skills learnt in EGAP program would help in studying the main program (B Sc. degree) whereas 19.6% (39) were satisfied of the course as they felt the lesson materials to be useful and up to date. 15.07% (30) of the responses related satisfaction of the course to the fact that lesson materials were interesting and motivating whereas 11.56% (23) felt they could be satisfied about the course as the time and resources were used effectively through the course.

Out of total learner sample, only five (5) had chosen the option (e) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different reasons. Those responses are summarized as below;

- Tutors/visiting academics tried to manage time and tried to cover the syllabus
• Tutors/visiting academics provided good guidance
• Tutors/visiting academics helped to improve our English knowledge

Two (2) responses were irrelevant and hence, rejected.

The overall results highlighted a high level of expectations of the learners that language skills learnt in the EGAP course would help them cope with the language requirements of the Science degree program.

4.3.1.3.12 Reasons for dissatisfaction on course materials

This question aimed to gather information from the respondents on reasons for their satisfaction on course materials used in EGAP program. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.20.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>What are the reasons, if you are not satisfied with what you learnt in the English course?</td>
<td>(a) The course did not meet your expectations</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) The course did not cater to your proficiency level</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) The teaching support is inadequate</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) The course materials are not up to the standard</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Any other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>51</strong></td>
<td><strong>99.99</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.20 - Reasons for dissatisfaction on course materials

Note: The total number of responses is less than 163 because 112 learners had not responded to the question. The percentage was calculated for 51. The total percentage is 99.99 because of the rounding of error.
Majority of the respondents (39.21%, 20) had agreed that they were dissatisfied about the EGAP course materials as the course materials did not meet their expectations where as 23.53% (12) had attributed their dissatisfaction to the failure of the course to cater to their proficiency level. 17.65% (9) of respondents had felt the teaching support was inadequate and 9.8% (5) felt the course materials were not up to the standard.

Out of total learner sample, only 9.8% (5) had chosen the option (e) “Any other” in this question and their responses could be summarized as below.

- Difficulty in attending contact sessions due to high work load.
- Inadequacy in coverage of grammar

Three responses were rejected as two of them were repetitions and one was not clear.

### 4.3.1.3.13 Interesting unit themes

This question aimed at eliciting information from respondents about their preference of unit themes in EGAP program, based on the level of interest they could create. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.21.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td>Choose the themes of the units which are interesting.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(a) World Personalities</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>22.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Distance Education - OUSL</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Leisure and Sports</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>11.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Eco - Tourism</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>21.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Religions of Sri Lanka</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>18.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(f) Gender and Representation</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>12.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>99.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.21 - Interesting unit themes**
Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 335. The total percentage is 99.99 because of the rounding of error.

Majority (22.69%, 76) of the respondents agreed that “World Personalities” was an interesting theme whereas 21.49% (72) agreed on “Eco-tourism” as an interesting theme. 18.21% (61) thought the theme “Religions of Sri Lanka” to be interesting whereas 13.13% (44) choose “Distance Education–OUSL” for the same. A lesser number of respondents 12.53% (42) chose “Gender and Representation” whereas “Leisure and Sports” was the least interesting theme as only 11.94% (40) respondents opted for that.

The overall responses indicated a higher preference of learners towards themes which lead to interaction, debate and discussions than the ones which presented facts and presentations.

4.3.1.3.14 Reasons for the themes to be interesting

This question aimed at eliciting information from respondents about the reasons behind their preference of unit themes in EGAP program, based on the level of interest they could create. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.22.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>What are the reasons for those themes to be interesting?</td>
<td>(a) Relevant</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>11.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Easy to understand</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>33.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Well presented</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>39.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Content is up to date</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Any other</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.22 - Reasons for the themes to be interesting
Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners have given more than one answer. The percentage is calculated for 242.

According to reasons given by the 39.67% (96) respondents, the main reason for themes to be interesting was effective presentation whereas 33.06% (80) had said that the interesting themes were easy to understand and 12.4% (30) had said content of those interesting themes were up to date. Only 11.98% (29) respondents were in agreement that lessons were interesting because they were relevant.

Out of total learner sample, only seven (7) had chosen the option (e) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different reasons. Their responses as to why they prefer certain themes over others are summarized below:

- Allowed more interactive work and debate
- Certain themes were very relevant
- Discussions were more effective than a presentation because discussions were more active and brought enthusiasm to the listener.

Three responses were rejected as one was not clear and two were irrelevant to the question. Overall, results indicated that the dominant reasons for learners to find the themes interesting were the ease of understanding and the effectiveness of presentation. The emerging views indicated learners’ preference for lessons which were more interactive, simple, relevant and contemporary.

4.3.1.3.15 Unit themes which are not interesting

This question aimed at eliciting information from responses about their unit themes in EGAP program, which were not interesting for the learners. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.23.
Table 4.23 - Unit themes which are not interesting

Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 187.

Majority (24.06%, 45) of the respondents agreed that “Eco - tourism” was the least interesting theme whereas 23.53% (44) agreed on “Gender and Representation” as a less interesting theme. 17.65% (33) thought the theme “Religions of Sri Lanka” to be less interesting whereas 14.97% (28) choose “Leisure and Sports” for the same. A lesser number of responses 12.3% (23) chose “Distance Education - OUSL” whereas “World Personalities” was the theme which least number (7.49% - 14) of respondents thought to be less interesting.

4.3.1.3.16 Reasons for the themes to be not interesting

This question aimed at eliciting information from respondents about the reasons behind their selection of unit themes in EGAP program, based on the fact they were not interesting for the learners.. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.24.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>What are the reasons for those themes to be not interesting?</td>
<td>(a) Lessons are boring</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>40.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Themes do not relate to your interest</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>23.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Themes do not relate to your main course</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Difficult to understand</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>20.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Any other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.24 - Reasons for the themes to be not interesting**

**Note:** The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 182.

Majority (40.66%, 74) of the respondents had agreed that unit themes were boring and 23.63% (43) had said the unit themes did not relate to their interest. 20.33% (37) of respondents agreed that themes were difficult to understand which resulted in loss of interest whereas 9.89% (18) had said that themes were not relevant to their main course and thus, failed to create interest among learners.

Out of total learner sample, only ten (10) had chosen the option (e) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different reasons. Their responses as to why certain themes were not interesting are summarized below.

- Less clarity in DVD (Religions of Sri Lanka and Gender and Representation)
- Non availability of materials on time which in turn make it difficult to get ready for the lessons in advance
- Activities were not interesting
- Last two units were not presented well
- Tutors/visiting academics asked irrelevant questions and lessons lead to irrelevant discussions
- Activities were not interesting

Four responses were rejected as three of them were irrelevant and one was not clear. Overall, results reflected that the lessons being boring was the main reason for learners to dislike a theme and the themes not being relevant to their interest was another main reason for the same.

4.3.1.3.17 New themes to be included

This question aimed at obtaining the opinions of respondents about the new theme units they would like to suggest. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.25.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Suggest new themes that you would like to be included in the course</td>
<td>(a) Information and Communication Technology (ICT)</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>28.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Environmental Pollution</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>23.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Sustainable development</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Genetic Engineering</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Any other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>99.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.24 - New themes to be included

**Note:** The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 242. The total percentage is 99.99 because of the rounding of error.
Majority 31.4% (76) selected “Genetic Engineering” as an appropriate theme whereas 28.51% (69) of the respondents selected “Information and Communication Technology (ICT)”. 23.55% (57) of the respondents selected “Environmental Pollution” as a suitable theme whereas 12.81% (31) choose “Sustainable Development”.

Out of total learner sample, only nine (9) had chosen the option (e) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different responses. They had suggested many new themes which included:

- The current trends of Science in the world, scientific experiments
- Social harmony
- Mental relaxation, Language of Music
- Astronomy
- Molecular Biology
- Psychology
- Social issues like child abuse
- Film industries
- Two responses were rejected as they were irrelevant to the question.

Overall, responses clearly indicated the high preference of learners for themes on the latest technological advancements in Science and other Science related topics.

4.3.1.3.18 Problems faced in using EGAP materials

This question aimed at obtaining the opinion of respondents about the problems faced by learners in using EGAP materials. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.26.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>What problems do you face in using EGAP course materials?</td>
<td>(a) Difficulty in understanding materials</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Difficulty in understanding grammar structures</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Difficulty in writing assignments and examination questions</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>30.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Any other</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>24.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>143</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.26 - Problems faced in using EGAP materials**

**Note:** The total number of responses is less than 163 because 20 learners have not responded to the question. The percentage is calculated for 143.

Majority 30.77% (44) of the respondents had said that their main difficulty was to write assignments and answer examination questions and 27.97% (40) of the respondents had indicated that they found it difficult to understand grammar structures in the materials. 16.78% (24) of respondents had indicated their difficulty in understanding EGAP materials in general.

Out of total learner sample, 24.48% (35) had chosen the option (d) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different reasons. Their responses were categorized and summarized below.
Six learners had pointed out difficulties in understanding course materials whereas five had issues with limitation of time, in attending classes and time allocated for lessons. Four (4) learners had pointed out that delay in receiving materials was an obstruction in effective use of materials whereas two (2) had attributed their issues to the materials being not so interesting. One (1) learner had pointed out that materials were not relevant to the subject. Seventeen (17, 48.47%) of the responses were not taken in to consideration as they were either irrelevant or not clear.

Overall, results showed that learners were of the view that the materials did not provide enough support to answering examination questions and writing assignments. The grammar structures in the materials posed a challenge to many of them.

4.3.1.3.19 Reasons for difficulty in understanding EGAP course books

This question aimed at obtaining the opinions of respondents about the reasons for difficulty in understanding EGAP course books. The results obtained are presented below in table 4. 27.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>If the course books (EGAP) are difficult to understand, what is /are the main reason/s for it?</td>
<td>(a) Difficult grammar</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Complex ideas</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>27.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Difficult words</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Lack of organization</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Any other</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>99.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.27 - Reasons for difficulty in understanding EGAP course books

Note: The total number of responses is less than 163 because 18 learners had not responded to the question. The percentage was calculated for 145. The total percentage is 99.99 because of the rounding of error.
Majority 33.1% (48) of the respondents had said that their reason for difficulty in understanding course materials was due to difficult vocabulary whereas 27.59% (40) attributed the same to complex ideas in the EGAP materials. 15.86% (23) of the respondents had difficulties due to lack of organization in materials 13.1% (19) had difficulties in understanding EGAP course materials due to difficult grammar.

Out of total learner sample, 10.34% (15) had chosen the option (e) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different reasons. Their responses are summarized below.

- Time limitation in covering the content in the course books
- Inadequacy of coverage of vocabulary
- Course books being not so user friendly
- Lack of support from the teacher
- Difficulty in understanding the grammar structures in Units 5 and 6

Nine responses were not considered as they were repetitions, unclear or irrelevant.

Overall, results showed that the main issues in understanding the course books could be attributed to difficult vocabulary and complex ideas. This reflected the fact that increasing level of proficiency in the course units may have been far too challenging for learners of certain categories of proficiency levels.

4.3.1.3.20 Requirement for extra help in learning any of the above areas

This question sought information from responses about the requirement for extra help in learning any of the areas mentioned in question 35. The results obtained are presented below in table 4. 28.
Table 4.28 - Requirement for extra help in learning any of the difficult areas in understanding EGAP course books

Note: The total number of responses is less than 163 because 3 learners had not responded to the question. The percentage was calculated for 160. The total percentage is 99.99 because of the rounding of error.

Majority, 73.13% (117) respondents had indicated that they need help in learning the areas mentioned in question 35 and only 26.86% (43) had said they do not need extra help for the same.

Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>7.034a</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>7.151</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>163</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

  a. 6 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .85.
The results of the chi-square test showed a higher P value (0.218) than the level of significance (0.05). Therefore, *it agreed with the null hypothesis (need for extra help for students is independent of the regional centre). As such it could be concluded that learners’ requirement for extra help in difficult language areas was independent of the regional centre where they followed classes. Thus, it can be assumed that difficulty in understanding EGAP course books and the extra help needed were more due to individual factors than context relevant factors.

4.3.1.3.21 In what ways the help is needed?

This question sought to obtain views of the respondents about the effective ways the extra help could be given in learning any of the areas mentioned in question 35. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.29.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>In what ways do you need extra help in learning difficult areas in course books.</td>
<td>(a) Supplementary materials</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>32.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Workshops</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>29.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Online lessons</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>34.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Any other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>148</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.29 – Ways in extra help is needed**

**Note:** The total number of responses is less than 163 because 15 learners had not responded to the question. The percentage was calculated for 148.

Majority, (34.46%, 51) preferred to get extra help through online lesson whereas 32.43% (48) preferred extra help through supplementary materials. 29.73% (44) of the respondents would like to get extra help through workshops.
Out of total learner sample, only five (5) had chosen the option (d) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different reasons. Their responses are summarized below.

- Requirement for more and better activities
- Requirement for more examples than activities
- Requirement for new and effective teaching techniques

Overall, results reflected the learners’ high preference for extra help in the form of online lessons and more interactive ways of teaching. This shed light on the scope of using less tapped and more advanced teaching resources to suit the changing times.

4.3.1.4 Questionnaire for learners – Section D (Teaching)

Section D (teaching) focused on different aspects of teaching in EGAP program, the teaching resources used and the overall effectiveness of the program as perceived by the learners.

4.3.1.4.1 Learners’ opinion about the English tutors/visiting academics

This question sought the opinion of the respondents about their language tutors/visiting academics. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.30.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td>Your English tutors/visiting academics are</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(a) Well prepared for the lesson</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>22.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Very clear in what they teach</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>23.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Knowledgeable about the subject</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>28.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Use appropriate equipment in the classroom</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Well organized</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>14.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(f) Any other</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>326</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.30 – Learners’ opinion about the English tutors/visiting academics
Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 326.

Majority, (28.53%, 93) were in agreement that the tutors/visiting academics who taught in EGAP were knowledgeable about the subject whereas 23.62% (77) of the respondents were of the view that tutors/visiting academics were very clear in what they taught. 22.09% (72) thought that tutors/visiting academics were well prepared for the lesson and 14.72% (48) of the respondents felt the tutors/visiting academics were well organized. Only 8.28% (27) of the respondents accepted that EGAP tutors/visiting academics used appropriate equipment in the classroom.

Out of total learner sample, only nine (9) had chosen the option (f) “Any other” in this question for which they had given different reasons. Those responses clearly reflected the variation in tutors/visiting academics in terms of many qualities and traits. The respondents had said that some tutors/visiting academics were friendly, good in presentation, responsible and made an effort to serve all learners well. At the same time some had said tutors/visiting academics were boring and do not possess many good traits of a teacher.

Three responses were rejected as two of them were repetitions and one response was irrelevant. The overall results indicated the wide variation among tutors/visiting academics in the effective qualities they should possess, as perceived by the learners. This further reflected the necessity to streamline teaching and the importance of teacher training to maintain consistency in teaching across the entire learner teacher population.

4.3.1.4.2 Areas of English language the learners need more support with

This question sought the opinion of the respondents about areas of English language the learners need more support with. The results obtained are presented below in table 4. 31.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Which areas/topics of English you need more teaching/support with?</td>
<td>(a) Grammar</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>29.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Report writing</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>15.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Reading</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Information transfer</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Essay writing</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>16.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(f) Vocabulary</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>21.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(g) Any other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.31 – Areas of English language in which the learners need more support

Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 306.

Majority, (29.74%, 91) were in agreement with the “Grammar” as the area in which they need extra support whereas 21.57% (66) of the respondents agreed on “Vocabulary” as the area of English language in which they need extra support apart from what is taught in EGAP. 16.99% (52) said they need extra support in “Essay Writing” and 15.69% (48) of the responses had agreed on the same regarding “Report Writing”. Out of the total responses, 10.46% (32), accepted that “Information Transfer” requires extra help whereas only 4.25% (13) respondents felt they need extra support for “Reading”.

Out of total learner sample, only four (4) had chosen the option (g) “Any other” in this question for which they had pointed out the importance of giving more attention to speaking. Further, one response was highlighting the requirement for guidance to answer examination questions. One response was irrelevant and hence rejected.
Overall, results indicated a high requirement for extra teaching support in learning grammar, vocabulary and essay writing.

4.3.1.4.3 Equipment used in the classroom

This question sought the learners’ observations on the equipment used in the classroom during the teaching process. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.32.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Which of the following equipment are used in the classroom?</td>
<td>(a) OHP</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Multimedia</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>37.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) White board/black board</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>53.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Any other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>99.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.32 – Equipment used in the classroom

Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 238. The total percentage is 99.99 because of the rounding of error.

Majority, (53.78%, 128) of the respondents had chosen blackboard/whiteboard as mostly used equipment in teaching which clearly indicated an obviously dominating trend towards using the basic and more traditional way of teaching. 37.39% (89) of the respondents had noted the use of multimedia and 6.3% (15) had indicated the use of OHP (overhead projector) in the classroom.

Out of total learners sample, only six (6) had chosen the option (d) “Any other” in this question for which they had pointed out certain other equipment used in the classrooms. Those included audio players, laptop computers and televisions with DVD players. One
respondent had mentioned that none of the given equipment were used in the class. Two of the irrelevant responses were not taken in to consideration.

Overall, results reflected the high level of disparity among centres and classes in terms of equipments used as teaching aids. This further suggested the scope and necessity for improvement on part of the institution and teaching approaches of the tutors/visiting academics.

4.3.1.4.4 Effectiveness of equipment used in the classroom

This question sought the learners’ opinions on the effectiveness of equipment used in the classroom during the teaching process. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.33.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Which equipment do you think are more effective in language teaching?</td>
<td>(a) OHP</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Multimedia</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>63.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) White board/black board</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>21.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Any other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>99.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.33 – Equipment used in the classroom

Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 208. The total percentage is 99.99 because of the rounding of error.

Majority, (63.46% - 132) of the respondents were in agreement that multimedia was more effective in supporting the teaching process whereas 21.63% (44) of the respondents had
felt that whiteboard/blackboard as more effective equipment. Only 12.98% (27) of the respondents had chosen OHP as an effective equipment in the classroom.

Out of total learner sample, only four (4) had chosen the option (d) “Any other” in this question and all four responses were not taken in to consideration as they were irrelevant to the question. Overall, results indicated a high demand for technological devices (multimedia) as effective teaching aids.

4.3.1.4.5 Adequacy of equipment used in the classroom

This question sought the learners’ observations on the adequacy of equipment used in the classroom during the teaching process. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.34.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>Your opinion about the extent of use of equipment in the classroom</td>
<td>(a) Adequate</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Satisfactory</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Needs more improvement</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not used appropriately</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>99.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.34 – Adequacy of equipment used in the classroom

Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 165. The total percentage is 99.99 because of the rounding of error.

Only 8.48% (14) respondents responses were in agreement that equipment used in the classroom was adequate whereas the majority, 44.24% (73) were in agreement that use of
equipment was satisfactory. 43.03% (71) had said the use of equipment needs more improvement whereas 4.24% (7) respondents were of the opinion that equipment was not used appropriately in the classroom.

**Chi-Square Tests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>21.775a</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>24.491</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>163</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 6 cells (62.5%) have expected count less than 5.

The minimum expected count is .09.

According to the results of the Chi-Square test, the P value (0.114) was higher than the level of significance (0.05). Hence, the two variables (Level of satisfaction among learners on the use of equipment in the classroom and the centre they attended classes) had no significant relationship. It could be concluded that adequate use of equipment and the level of learner satisfaction on this factor was consistent across centres.

**4.3.1.4.6 Learners’ overall opinion about the classrooms provided**

This question sought the learners’ overall opinion about the classrooms provided. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.35.
Table 4.35 – Learners’ overall opinion about the classrooms provided

Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 164. The total percentage is 99.99 because of the rounding of error.

Only 17.58% (29) respondents were in agreement that the classrooms provided were excellent whereas the majority, 41.81% (69) were in agreement that the quality of classrooms was satisfactory. 27.88% (46) had said the classrooms were average whereas 5.45% (9) responses were of the opinion that the quality of the classrooms was poor. 7.27% of the responses agreed on that classrooms needed more improvement.

Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>26.718a</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>32.987</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>.034</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>163</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chi-square test for independence carried out for the two variables (Regional centre and the learners’ opinion about the quality of the classrooms provided) indicated that there is no significant association between the two variables as the P value (0.143) is higher than the level of significance (0.05). As such, it could be assumed that there is a varying level of satisfaction on the part of learners on the quality of classrooms provided within the same centre as well as across the centres. This highlighted two main aspects:

- Importance of maintaining consistency in classroom quality within and across centres
- The differential levels of expectations of learners on classroom quality

4.3.1.4.7 Learners’ overall opinion about the English course

This question was aimed at finding out the overall opinion of the learners on EGAP program along many aspects. This was expected to provide a general idea about the course in terms of the learner perceptions. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.36.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>Your overall opinion about the English course</td>
<td>(a) Excellent</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Satisfactory</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>49.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Average</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>27.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Poor</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Needs improvement</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>164</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.36 – Learners’ overall opinion about the EGAP course
Note: The total number of responses is greater than 163 because some learners had given more than one answer. The percentage was calculated for 164.

Majority (49.39%) of the respondents from the sample of learners had said that the EGAP program was at a satisfactory level whereas 27.44% of learners were of the opinion that it was average. Only 18.29% of the learners were highly satisfied with the course as they had said the EGAP course was excellent. A lesser percentage (3.66%) of learners had indicated the program needs improvement and 1.22% of the learners had said the overall effect of the course was poor. The wide variation in the learner responses indicated a wide variation among the learners on the level of satisfaction about the course. This implied the necessity to reflect on the different aspects of the course and to improve in line with the requirements. Further, maintaining consistency within and across centres along the different dimensions of the course might prove to be effective in maintaining the standards of the course.

Chi-Square Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Chi-Square</td>
<td>58.820a</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likelihood Ratio</td>
<td>40.018</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N of Valid Cases</td>
<td>163</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. 27 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5.

The minimum expected count is .02.
Results of the Chi-square test indicated a strong relationship between the two variables (regional centre and the overall opinion of the learners on EGAP course). This indicated a strong dependency of the centre and the level of learner satisfaction on the EGAP course. It could be assumed that this indicated overall quality and the usefulness of the course was experienced differently by the learners across centres. This would further suggest the requirement to upgrade quality and maintain consistency.

4.3.1.4.8 Opinions derived from learners’ comments

The learners’ comments on different aspects of the course were diverse and they reflected not only many different aspects of the course but also different viewpoints and characteristics of the learner population.

Majority (148, 90.79%) of the sample of learners had commented on the various aspects of the EGAP program in response to question 44 of the questionnaire where they were asked to comment in general about the course. Only 15 (9.2%) of the sample had not responded.

The comments were categorized and interpreted under six main aspects of the EGAP course:

- Time constraint
- Language skills
- Course materials
- Teaching techniques/methods and equipment
- Administrative issues
- Other issues and comments

Sixteen (16) learners had pointed out issues related to time constraint and many of them were of the view that time duration of the EGAP program was not adequate to cover the lessons clearly, adequately and effectively. One learner had said that time allocated for the course was more than necessary in the fast and modern world. This suggested the scope and need for incorporation of more advanced and modern technology in learning to
facilitate more autonomous and effective learning spaces. Some learners pointed out time management issues with regard to particular lessons and units and it suggested the necessity for proper planning in time allocation for each unit and lesson. Some learners had indicated their inability to attend classes due to commitments in their careers. They had pointed out that as a result of this they could not get the maximum benefit of the EGAP program. This was an indirect indication of the heavy dependency of learners on the interactive sessions and this also indicated that course materials should be more learner friendly and motivating to promote self-studies. Further, the learners had hinted on the requirement for more opportunities for learning English to support their main academic program.

Among the twenty five (25) responses under the language skills, nine (9) had pointed out the need for more time, facilities and activities to improve their speaking skills whereas seven (7) had pointed out various issues involved in learning vocabulary. While some of them had emphasized the need to teach vocabulary related to Science subjects while some others had pointed out the necessity to use simple vocabulary in EGAP course books. Those comments reflected the interest shown by learners in acquiring the skills required for the Science stream education and the challenges the learners face with limited knowledge of English. Seven (7,) learners had emphasized the need for more lessons, activities and time for learning grammar. A smaller number of learners had requested for more attention to writing, reading and listening. Two learners had expressed their satisfaction over learning all those skills effectively through EGAP program. The diverse responses could be a reflection of the difference in attitudes, expectations and level of proficiency at the point of entry to the course.

Comments on course materials reflected diverse issues and views. There were positive and negative responses among the thirty two (32) responses given on course materials of EGAP. Many had said course materials were useful and effective but also had suggested improvements along many lines. Those responses can be summarized as follows:

- Inclusion of more activities would be useful
• Books should be more organized
• More themes, specifically themes related to Science should be included
• Course materials should be designed in line with the modern trends and should have online, DVD and more digital mode components
• Lessons should not be very complicated and should provide model answers to essay writing, report writing and instructions for processes. Providing the answers to all the activities will promote self-learning
• Inclusion of a lot of unfamiliar words in the lessons was far too challenging
• Course materials should be more interesting, user friendly and should help the learners of lower proficiency levels
• Course materials should cater to the specific needs of the Science learners

Overall, the learner responses indicated that some learners were satisfied with effectiveness of the materials while many others were of the view that materials should be improved.

Different views on teaching methods/techniques and equipment included thirty three (33) responses from the sample of learners. Their attitudes, opinions and views are summarized as follows:

• It would be more effective if learners are given an opportunity to do multimedia presentations which would help to improve the English language skills. More computer- based practice would help the learners.
• Doing more active and enjoyable activities like drama would create interest among learners. Classroom teaching and learning process should promote and guide more interaction among learners through speaking activities, word games and writing games.
• Tutors/visiting academics should be dedicated to making teaching-learning an interesting process and they should be sensitive to the learner difficulties and needs.
• Equipment and resources used in teaching needs more improvement. Incorporation of multimedia, modern technology and internet resources would be very effective.

• More interactive and collaborative learning should take place in the classroom.

Overall, responses indicated varying levels of satisfaction among learners towards teaching methods and equipment. Those responses clearly indicated the inconsistencies among tutors/visiting academics in the teaching process and the learners’ requirement for more modern, interactive and collaborative learning process.

As highlighted by thirty seven (37) respondents, administrative efficiency and issues played a key role in the successes and the failures of EGAP course. One of the main issues highlighted was the non-availability of materials on time. Specifically the non-availability of DVD well in advance had hindered the prior preparation of learners for the class and their self-learning away from the class. Many other issues that were pointed out in learner comments are given below:

• Unsatisfactory infrastructure facilities which hindered the effective learning process. Eg: the classes were very hot and it affected the smooth functioning of the class

• Constant change of the tutors/visiting academics: this in turn affected the learning process as it demanded continuous adjusting on part of the learners

• Poor supply, arrangement and use of multimedia equipment for lessons. Eg. inefficient organizing delayed the listening lessons

• Constant change of venue and classrooms affected the learning process and wasted a lot of time in between.

• The coordination between classes and tests should be more streamlined

• The mixed ability groups posed challenges and proved to be less effective. It would have been better if learners could be categorized according to the level of proficiency through a selection test at the beginning of the course.
• Learners were disappointed about not receiving a feedback on their performance at the continuous assessment (CA) tests.
• It was boring, tiring and ineffective to learn English the whole day. Having two sessions on the same day proved to be ineffective.

Overall, responses indicated that lapses in administrative functions on EGAP program had far reaching negative consequences and as a result had led to dissatisfaction and de-motivation among the learners.

The other comments on the EGAP program mostly included comments about the overall effectiveness of the program, suggestions for improvement in general and individual comments about particular tutors/visiting academics and the personal experiences of the learners. Many learners who commented and expressed their satisfaction about the overall conduct of the course while some others suggested further improvements. Further, the comments reflected disparities in teacher quality, facilities, venues, time allocation and overall management of the EGAP program.

4.3.2 Questionnaire for tutors/visiting academics

Interpretation of data from questionnaire for tutors/visiting academics were done in many steps. The demographic data were tabulated and presented in graphs and charts. This included the personal information of tutors/visiting academics through which the patterns of distribution of factual data and the trends across centres were observed. The questions dealing with attitudes and opinions which were given as rating scales, multiple choice questions, multiple choice questions with short answer options and the open ended question were tabulated and presented in tables. Through interpretation of data, the emerging patterns, opinions and attitudes were observed and presented. Finally, the interpretations were compared and triangulated with final observations of interpreted data obtained through other tools.
4.3.2.1 Questionnaire for tutors/visiting academics Section A (Personal Information)

The eight questions in section “A” (questions 1–7) were designed to elicit demographic information. These questions derived information on personal details: name and age, and focused more on career oriented aspects like the educational qualifications and experience in teaching. The Data derived through those questions were analyzed, tabulated and interpreted to present the general nature of the population of tutors/visiting academics across the island and to define the sample selected, in terms of the demographic factors.

4.3.2.1.1 Name

Name of the teacher, asked in question one is mainly for reference purposes. The data needed to be cross referenced and triangulated with the data obtained through other tools and name of the teacher was obtained for this purpose.

The name of the teacher gave further information on gender of the teacher. Though the gender of the teacher was not regarded as an important factor in this study, the gender distribution of the sample of tutors/visiting academics, across centres is presented below in Figure 4.9 to get a general idea of the sample of tutors/visiting academics and the total population of tutors/visiting academics in terms of gender representation.

![Gender Distribution of the Sample of Teachers](image)

**Figure 4.9– Gender distribution of the sample of tutors/visiting academics**
4.3.2.1.2 Regional/Study Centre

The number of tutors/visiting academics who returned the completed questionnaire from each centre is presented below in figure 4.10. The interpretation of data presented under the questionnaires, were based on the information provided by 17 tutors/visiting academics who submitted the completed questionnaires.

![Sample of Teachers](image)

Figure 4.10 – Centre wise sample of tutors/visiting academics

Two tutors/visiting academics From Colombo and Kandy regional centres, who participated in the semi-structured interview, did not return the completed questionnaire. One teacher who was observed during interactive sessions, was not available to complete the questionnaire or face-to-face the interview. Hence, the total number of tutors/visiting academics who completed the questionnaire were 17.

4.3.2.1.3 Age

The age of the tutors/visiting academics can have an impact on the teaching and learning process along many dimensions. It can be directly related to the exposure and experience of the teacher. Further, the teaching methods, level of knowledge of English, attitudes and opinions can be related to the age factor of the teacher. Age can affect the learner preference under certain circumstances such as their involvement in group activities and the use of technology in learning.
The statistics on the age range of the sample of tutors/visiting academics from the EGAP program for Science is presented below in graph 4.11.

![Graph 4.11 – Age distribution range of tutors/visiting academics across regional centres](image)

The Colombo centre having the highest number of tutors/visiting academics, showed the highest variation in age range of the tutors/visiting academics as well. Out of eleven tutors/visiting academics in the Colombo regional centre, four belonged to the 41-40 age range and overall in the total sample, six out of seventeen belonged to the same (41-40 yrs) age group. The second highest age range is from 61 – 70 yrs, which included four tutors/visiting academics, three from Colombo regional centre and one from Kandy regional centre. There are two tutors/visiting academics in the sample from >70 age range who represented Matara and Jaffna regional centres. Two tutors/visiting academics in Colombo regional centre belonged to the 41-60 yrs age range. One teacher from Colombo regional centre and one teacher from the Matara regional centre were from the 31-40 yrs age group and one teacher from the Colombo regional centre represented the 21- 30 yrs age range. Overall, the sample showed more concentration of tutors/visiting academics in mature age groups and less number of young tutors/visiting academics.
4.3.2.1.4 Qualifications

The educational and professional qualifications of the tutors/visiting academics can be an indication of many different dimensions of their career. Their expertise in various aspects of language teaching, the level of professional development and their willingness and enthusiasm shown in career development can be a few of them. The educational qualifications of the sample of tutors/visiting academics selected for the study, is presented in figure 4.12.

![Figure 4.12– Qualifications of tutors/visiting academics across regional centres](image)

Overall, eight tutors/visiting academics in the sample had obtained MA Degrees, seven in Colombo regional centre and one in Batticaloa regional centre. Three tutors/visiting academics in the sample had BA Degrees, two in Colombo and one in Anuradhapura regional centre whereas, one teacher each in Jaffna and Matara regional centres had obtained postgraduate diplomas. Two tutors/visiting academics in Colombo and one teacher in Matara had obtained other qualifications which included Special training in English language teaching and first level of BA degree (GAQ - General Arts Qualification).

4.3.2.1.5 Years of Experience in English Language Teaching

The tutors/visiting academics’ experience in English language teaching is an indication of many aspects of teaching like the exposure of the teacher, teaching methods, choice of
materials, choice of teaching aids, opinions and attitudes, etc. The experience of the sample of tutors/visiting academics in teaching English is presented below in Figure 4.13.

![Figure 4.13 - Years of Experience in English Language Teaching](image)

All the tutors/visiting academics in the sample (seventeen tutors/visiting academics) had more than five years of experience in teaching English language. One teacher in Colombo regional centre had 6 -10 yrs of experience in teaching English where as two tutors/visiting academics in Colombo and one teacher in Matara regional centre has 10-14 years of experience in teaching English. Two tutors/visiting academics in Colombo and one teacher in Batticaloa represented the range of 16-20 years of experience in English language teaching whereas two tutors/visiting academics in Colombo and one teacher from Kandy belonged to the range of 21-24 years of service. The highest number of tutors/visiting academics were from the category of >24 years of experience in teaching English and this category comprised of six (four from Colombo, one from Jaffna and one from Matara) out of the sample of seventeen tutors/visiting academics. Overall, the sample indicated that majority of tutors/visiting academics were very senior tutors/visiting academics with more than 24 years of experience as Tutors/visiting academics of English.
4.3.2.1.6 Experience in Teaching English to Science Undergraduates

The tutors/visiting academics’ understanding of the requirements of their learners can be an additional advantage in understanding the psychology of the learners and their learning requirements. Science undergraduates join the EGAP program with the intention of obtaining a fair background in the language of instruction of their main study program. It can be assumed that tutors/visiting academics can get an understanding as to how the language course can be made more relevant to the main program, if the tutors/visiting academics interact with the learners over a period of time. Hence, tutors/visiting academics’ experience in teaching English to science undergraduates can be an added advantage in shaping their own teaching and also the learning process of the learners. The information obtained through the questionnaire on the experience of the tutors/visiting academics in teaching English to Science undergraduates is presented below. (Figure 4.14)

![Experience in Teaching English to Science Undergraduates](image)

**Figure 4.14 - Experience in Teaching English to Science Undergraduates**

Ten tutors/visiting academics in the sample (seven from Colombo, one from Anuradhapura, one from Batticaloa and one from Matara regional centres) had less than five years experience in teaching English to Science undergraduates. Two tutors/visiting academics from Colombo regional centre had 6-10 years of experience whereas none of the tutors/visiting academics in sample belonged to the category of 11-14 years of experience. One teacher each from Colombo and Matara centres had 16-20 years of experience.
experience whereas one teacher from Kandy had 21-24 years of service. One teacher each from Colombo and Jaffna regional centres had more than 24 years of experience in teaching English to Science undergraduates. Overall, it can be observed that more than half the sample, had less than four years of experience and tutors/visiting academics with long term experience were less.

4.3.2.1.7 Experience in Teaching English Language in Distance Mode

The understanding of the tutors/visiting academics about the unique characteristics of distance education is a necessity for successful teaching and learning to take place. Teaching language through distance mode can be a challenging experience and the understanding of language tutors/visiting academics on teaching and learning English in DE mode can have a profound effect on the learning process of the learners. Hence, it can be assumed that tutors/visiting academics’ experience in teaching English through distance mode can be an added advantage in this study to provide insights into various dimensions of learning language in distance education. The information obtained through the questionnaire on the experience of the sample of tutors/visiting academics in distance teaching is presented below in graph 4.15.

![Graph 4.15 Experience in Teaching English Language in Distance Mode](image)

Six tutors/visiting academics (four in Colombo, one in Anuradhapura and one in Batticaloa centers) had less than five years of experience in teaching English in distance
mode. Seven tutors/visiting academics belonged to the group of tutors/visiting academics with 4-10 years of experience in teaching English in distance mode. Five of them represented Colombo regional centre where as one each represented Matara and Jaffna regional centres. One teacher from Matara regional centre had 10-14 years experience in teaching English in distance mode where as another teacher from Colombo regional centre had 16-20 years of experience in teaching English in distance mode. One teacher from Kandy regional centre belonged to the category of tutors/visiting academics who had 21- 24 years of experience whereas only one teacher (from Jaffna regional centre had more than 24 years of experience in teaching English in distance mode. Though the level of experience in teaching language in distance mode showed a distribution across a wide range in the sample selected, it could be observed that majority (thirteen out of seventeen) had less than 11 years experience in language teaching in distance mode.

4.3.2.2 Questionnaire for Tutors/visiting academics Section B (General Information)

Section B of the questionnaire dealt with the general information of the sample of tutors/visiting academics. The five statements (8–12) in this section dealt with the tutors/visiting academics’ perceptions on the prior knowledge of English of the learners, their level of proficiency, the level of interest and motivation the lesson creates in learners and the overall design of the course in catering to the academic language requirements of the learners. Further, the statements explored the level of impact these factors had on the learning process of the learners, as perceived by the sample of tutors/visiting academics who taught them academic English.

4.3.2.2.1 Prior knowledge of the learners in English

It can be assumed that a reasonable background in the target language may be beneficial in furthering the knowledge of academic English through the EGAP program. This question specifically focused on this aspect as the learners were from different proficiency levels.

The data gathered through this statement is presented below in Table 4.37.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Prior knowledge of English helps the learners in learning English better in EGAP</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very little extent</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.37 – Role of prior knowledge of English in EGAP

In answer to this question, twelve (12) teachers said "To a great extent", four (4) teachers said "To some extent".

4.3.2.2.2 Difference in proficiency levels

This question was aimed at exploring the tutors/visiting academics’ opinions and their observations on the impact of different proficiency levels of the learners in EGAP program. This is expected to reflect on an important aspect of learning process as the learners were categorized in to mixed ability classes and the course materials and tests are common for the entire learner population.

The information obtained is presented below in table 4.38.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>The differences in proficiency levels in English affected their learning process throughout the course</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>47.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very little extent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.38 – Effect of varying proficiency levels
In answer to this question, eight teachers said "To a great extent", eight teachers said "To some extent" and one teacher said to a "To a very little extent".

4.3.2.2.3 The lessons are interesting for learners

This question sought to find out in general the level of interest the EGAP lessons could create in learners. The results obtained were a reflection of teacher perception on this aspect and it can be assumed those perceptions were based on the outcome of teacher interaction with learners and also the observations of the tutors/visiting academics.

The results obtained were presented below in table 4.39.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>The lessons are interesting for the learners</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very little extent</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.39 – The level of interest the lessons create

In answer to this question, four (4) teachers said "To a great extent", eleven (11) teachers said "To some extent" and two (2) teachers said "To a very little extent".

4.3.2.2.4 Lessons are well designed

This question sought to obtain the general opinion of the sample of tutors/visiting academics on design of the EGAP course in order to achieve its academic objectives. The responses of the tutors/visiting academics are presented below in table 4.40
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>The course is well designed to cater to the academic language needs of the science undergraduates</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very Little extent</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.40 – Design of the course to suit Science undergraduates**

In answer to this question, four (4) teachers said "To a great extent", ten (10) teachers said "To some extent" and two (2) teachers said "To a very little extent".

**4.3.2.2.5 Presentation of lessons**

This question dealt with the overall perceptions of tutors/visiting academics on the level of motivation the materials could create in learners through effective presentation. The responses of the sample of tutors/visiting academics are presented below in table 4.41.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Presentation of lessons could motivate the learners</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very Little extent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.41 – The effect of presentation of materials in motivating learners**
In answer to this question, three (3) teachers said "To a great extent", nine (9) teachers said "To some extent", four (4) teachers said "To a very little extent" and one (1) teacher said 'Not at all'.

**4.3.2.3 Questionnaire for tutors/visiting academics Section C (Lesson Materials – Content)**

Section C of this questionnaire dealt with the tutors/visiting academics’ perceptions on the course materials used in the EGAP program, in terms of the content of the materials. The seventeen questions (13 – 29) this section dealt with the main aspect of the program: different dimensions of the course materials used in EGAP program. The questions focused on the lesson materials in general, lesson activities, instructions in books, content in course materials, presentation of lessons and availability of materials.

**4.3.2.3.1 Lesson Materials - Alignment with other dimensions of the course**

Proper coordination between different aspects of a program is crucial in effective delivery of the program and successful learning outcome. This question focused on the teacher perceptions of the alignment of lesson materials with the other dimensions of the course. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.42.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>The lesson materials are aligned with all other dimensions of the course process (e.g. mode of delivery, duration, target learner population etc.)</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very Little extent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 4.42 - Alignment of materials with other aspects of the course*
In answer to this question, four (4) teachers said "To a great extent", twelve (12) teachers said "To some extent" and one (1) teachers said "To a very little extent".

**4.3.2.3.2 Lesson Materials - Responsive to the context in use**

For an effective learning outcome the course materials should be designed in line with the requirement of the context and should be responsive to the relevant context in use. In this study, the relevant context, broadly being distance education and specifically being the Open University of Sri Lanka, the sensitivity of the materials to relevant contextual factors is of utmost importance. This question focused on the perception of the sample of tutors/visiting academics selected from EGAP program about the level of responsiveness of materials to the context in use. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.43.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Lesson materials are responsive to the context in which they are used</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very Little extent</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.43 - Response to the context in use**

In answer to this question, three (3) teachers said "To a great extent", twelve (12) teachers said "To some extent" and two (2) teachers said "To a very little extent".

**4.3.2.3.3 Lesson Materials - Supportive of participation and co-learning**

One of the main characteristics of DE materials is the ability to promote interaction among the learners and to promote co-learning. This question sought to obtain the perception of the sample of tutors/visiting academics from EGAP program on the level support the EGAP course materials could extend in promoting participation and co-learning. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.44.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Course materials are supportive of participation and co-learning</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very Little extent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.44 - Support through materials for co-learning**

In answer to this question, three (3) teachers said "To a great extent", eleven (11) teachers said "To some extent" and three (3) teachers said "To a very little extent".

4.3.2.3.4 Lesson Materials - clear and accessible

The requirement for distance education course materials to be clear and accessible stems from the practical reality that prospective learners are expected to be autonomous to a large extent in their learning process. The great amount of self studying involved in distance education required the study materials to be designed to make them more clear and accessible to the learners. This question sought to obtain the opinions of the sample of tutors/visiting academics in EGAP, the extent of clarity and accessibility of EGAP materials. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.45.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Course materials are clear and accessible</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very Little extent</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.45 - Clarity and accessibility of course materials**
In answer to this question, five (5) teachers said "To a great extent" and twelve (12) teachers said "To some extent".

4.3.2.3.5 Lesson Activities-Suit the level of the learners

This question sought to obtain information on the level of difficulty of the activities given in the course materials of the EGAP program. The perceptions of the tutors/visiting academics regarding this aspect are presented below in table 4.46.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Lesson activities suit the level of the learners</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very Little extent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.46 - Suitability to the level of the learners**

In answer to this question, six (6) teachers said "To a great extent", seven (7) teachers said "To some extent" and four (4) teachers said "To a very little extent".

4.3.2.3.6 Lesson Activities – Relevancy of activities to the lesson

The relevance of activities to the lesson is important in terms of building up the link and flow of the lesson. Further, this linkage is necessary in achieving the lesson objectives through building up coherence within the lesson. This question explored the level of relevance of lesson activities to the lessons, as perceived by the sample of tutors/visiting academics chosen from the EGAP program. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.47.
Table 4.47 - Relevance of activities to the lesson

In answer to this question, seven (7) teachers said "To a great extent", nine (9) teachers said "To some extent" and one (1) teacher said "To a very little extent".

4.3.2.3.7 Lesson Activities – Adequacy of number of activities per lesson

The lessons in DE should be interactive and hence should be designed with adequate number of activities to promote learner interaction and self-learning. Further, activities should be properly balanced with the academic requirements, available time and the mode of delivery. The aim of this question is to seek the opinion of the sample of tutors/visiting academics on the adequacy of the number of activities in EGAP lessons. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.48.

Table 4.48 - Adequacy of number of activities per lesson
In answer to this question, nine (9) teachers said "To a great extent", four (4) teachers said "To some extent", two (2) teachers said "To a very little extent" and one (1) teacher said "Not at all".

4.3.2.3.8 Clarity of instructions in books

One of the most important characteristic of DE materials is the instructions. DE materials are designed as self-instructional materials (SIM) to cater to the autonomous, independent learners of DE mode education. As such the clarity of instructions in materials is of utmost importance in serving effectively the prospective learners. This question focused on the perceptions of tutors/visiting academics on the level of clarity of materials in EGAP program. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.49.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Instructions in books are clear</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very Little extent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.49 – Clarity of instructions in books

4.3.2.3.9 Learner friendliness of instructions in books

Distance education course materials are expected to be designed to perform the role of the teacher as the major focus of DE is self learning. Therefore, the instructions should be effective and learner friendly to build up the rapport between the learner and the content of the materials. This question sought to obtain opinions of the tutors/visiting academics on the level of learner friendliness of EGAP materials. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.50.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Instructions in books are learner friendly</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very Little extent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.50 – Learner friendliness of instructions**

In answer to this question, eight (8) teachers said "To a great extent", six (6) teachers said "To some extent" and three (3) teachers said "To a very little extent".

4.3.2.3.10 Content in Course Materials – Relevancy to prior knowledge of learners

The aim of this question was to see the level of relevancy of the content to the prior knowledge of learners. It can be assumed that if the content is totally different to the kind of materials that learners are exposed to in general, it can lead to some difficulty in comprehension. As such, familiarity with the content of materials to some extent can lead to better comprehension hence enhancing the grasp of language skills presented through the content. This question sought to find out the perception of the tutors/visiting academics of EGAP on this aspect and the results obtained are presented in table 4.51.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Content in course materials relate to prior knowledge of learners</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very Little extent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.51 – Relevance of content to prior knowledge**
In answer to this question, one (1) teachers said "To a great extent", thirteen (13) teachers said "To some extent" and three (3) teachers said "To a very little extent".

4.3.2.3.11 Content in Course Materials – Relevant

This question sought to obtain information on teacher perceptions of the overall relevancy of the content in course materials to the course. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.52

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Content in course materials is relevant</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very Little extent 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong> 17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.52 – Relevancy of content in course materials

In answer to this question 6 teachers said "To a great extent", nine (9) teachers said "To some extent" and 2 teachers said "To a very little extent".

4.3.2.3.12 Content in Course Materials – Adequate

This question sought to obtain information on the opinions of tutors/visiting academics about adequacy of the content in course materials. The objective of the question was to find out through teacher perceptions whether the content in course materials was adequate to achieve the course objectives and to teach the relevant language skills adequately. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.53.
Table 4.53 – Adequacy of content in course materials

In answer to this question, four (4) teachers said "To a great extent", eleven (11) teachers said "To some extent" and two (2) teachers said "To a very little extent".

4.3.2.3.13 Content in Course Materials – Serves the Level of Proficiency of Learners

This question sought to obtain information on the views of tutors/visiting academics on the extent to which the content in course materials suited level of proficiency of learners. The objective of the question was to find out through teacher perceptions whether the content in course materials suited the level of proficiency of learners effectively to achieve the course objectives and to teach the relevant language skills adequately. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.54.

Table 4.54 – Adequacy of content in course materials to serve the proficiency levels
In answer to this question, four (4) teachers said "To a great extent", eight (8) teachers said "To some extent" and five (5) teachers said "To a very little extent".

4.3.2.3.14 Presentation of Lessons – Interesting and Motivating

This question aimed to obtain information on the views of tutors/visiting academics on presentation of lessons and the level of interest and motivation it could create in the learners. The objective of the question was to find out through teacher perceptions whether the presentation of lessons could motivate and create interest among learners and to what extent. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.55.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Presentation of lessons is interesting and motivating</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very Little extent</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.55 – Presentation of lessons in creating interest and motivation

In answer to this question, four (4) teachers said "To a great extent", eleven (11) teachers said "To some extent" and two (2) teachers said "To a very little extent".

4.3.2.3.14 Quality of the Teaching Aids

This question sought to obtain information on the views of tutors/visiting academics on the quality of teaching aids provided during the teaching process. The objective of the question was to find out through teacher perceptions whether the quality of teaching aids were satisfactory and helped to achieve the course objectives and taught the relevant language skills effectively. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.56.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>The quality of teaching aids is satisfactory</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very Little extent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.56 – Quality of teaching aids**

In answer to this question, thirteen (13) teachers said "To some extent" and three (3) teachers said "To a very little extent".

**4.3.2.3.16 Availability of materials in advance – To Learners**

As the learners in DE are expected to do a lot of self studying and be prepared well in advance for the contact session, receiving course materials in advance is of utmost importance. Further, the effectiveness of a contact session and learner learning as a whole can be much dependent on the availability of materials on time. The aim of this question was to find out from respective tutors/visiting academics about the availability of materials to the learners prior to the face to face sessions. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.57.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Materials were available in advance to the learners</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>The course materials were available in advance to the learners</td>
<td>(a) Yes</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) No</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.47 – Availability of course materials to learners**

In answer to this question, twelve (12) teachers said "Yes" and five teachers said" No".
4.3.2.3.17 Availability of materials in advance – To Tutors/visiting academics

Face-to-face contact sessions are meant to be discussion sessions where both tutors/visiting academics and learners require a lot of prior preparation. Hence, the availability of materials in advance to the tutors/visiting academics has an equal importance as to the learners. This question sought to find out the availability of course materials to the tutors/visiting academics in time for relevant contact sessions. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.58.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Materials were available in advance to the tutors/visiting academics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>The course materials were available in advance to the tutors/visiting academics</td>
<td>(a) Yes</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) No</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.58 – Availability of course materials to tutors/visiting academics**

In answer to this question, sixteen (16) teachers said "Yes" and one(1) teachers said "No".

4.3.2.4 Questionnaire for tutors/visiting academics Section D (Facilities)

Section D of this questionnaire dealt with the tutors/visiting academics’ perceptions on the facilities provided for teaching and learning in the EGAP program. The four questions (30 – 33) of this section dealt with another important aspect of the program: the facilities provided in the classroom for face-to-face contact sessions and the guidance provided for tutors/visiting academics in EGAP program.
4.3.2.4.1 Availability of classroom space

The interactive nature of learning in DE necessitates the classrooms to be adequately spacious to practice the activities and methodologies used in the teaching – learning process. This question sought to find out the availability of classroom space face-to-face contact sessions, from the feedback of the tutors/visiting academics. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.59.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Availability of space in classrooms is adequate</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very little extent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.59 – Availability of course materials to tutors/visiting academics**

In answer to this question, three (3) teachers said "To a great extent", nine (9) teachers said "To some extent", four (4) teachers said "To a very little extent" and one teacher said "Not at all"

4.3.2.4.2 Quality of classrooms

The interactive nature of learning in DE necessitates the classrooms to be equipped with the necessary facilities in the form of technological aids and teaching aids to enhance practice the activities and methodologies used in the teaching – learning process. Further, the classes should maintain qualities required to accommodate and motivate undergraduates. This question sought to find out the level of quality maintained in the classrooms as perceived by the tutors/visiting academics of EGAP. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.60.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Quality of classrooms is satisfactory</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very little extent</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.60 – Quality of classrooms**

In answer to this question, one (1) teachers said "To a great extent", seven (7) teachers said "To some extent", seven (7) teachers said "To a very little extent" and two (2) teacher said "Not at all".

### 4.3.2.4.3 Guidance for teaching

With varying levels of exposure and experience in tutors/visiting academics in DE, the guidance provided at the commencement and throughout the course is an important factor in ensuring success in EGAP. This question sought to obtain the opinions of the tutors/visiting academics on the level of guidance received in terms of their involvement with the EGAP program. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.61.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>Guidance for teaching given through teacher’s guide and briefing sessions, is adequate</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very little extent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 4.61- Guidance for teaching**
In answer to this question, ten (10) teachers said "To a great extent", six (6) teachers said "To some extent" and one (1) teachers said "To a very little extent ".

4.3.2.4.4 Availability of facilities on time

As DE learning involves a lot of equipment and multimedia facilities, availability of such facilities on time ensures smooth functioning of the sessions. This question sought to obtain information on the availability of facilities on time for the respective contact sessions. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.62.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>AV facilities, OHP, etc. are available on time</td>
<td>(a) To a great extent</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) To some extent</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To a very little extent</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Not at all</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.62– Availability of AV facilities on time

In answer to this question, four (4) teachers said "To a great extent", six (6) teachers said "To some extent", five (5) teachers said "To a very little extent "and two (2) teachers said "Not at all".

4.3.2.5 Questionnaire for tutors/visiting academics Section E (Teaching Process)

Teaching – learning process in DE allocate more time for self-learning on part of the learners and less time for interactive contact sessions. This does not undermine the importance of face-to-face contact sessions and quite contrary the interactive sessions provide the necessary background, facilities and motivation for the learner to proceed through the challenging path of DE. Hence, the effectiveness of face-to-face contact sessions was of utmost importance. Specifically in the context under focus where learners were largely dependent on the interactive sessions for productivity in their learning, this
aspect becomes even more important. The aim of the section on ‘teaching process’ was to find out the perceptions of the tutors/visiting academics on various aspects and observations on the teaching - learning process.

Five questions in this section (34 - 38) dealt with many aspects of teaching process. The results obtained are presented below in table 4.63.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q. No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>To a great extent</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To a very little extent</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>The learners’ response to the teaching is satisfactory</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>The learners” response to course materials is satisfactory</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Time allocation for each lesson is satisfactory</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Time allocation for activities is adequate</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>The quality of teaching materials used is satisfactory</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.63 - Teaching Process
In response to statement 34, six (6) teachers said "To a great extent", nine (9) teachers said "To some extent" and two (2) teachers said "To a very little extent". The results indicated scope for improvement and the requirement for more effort in this regard.

In response to statement 35, three (3) teachers said "To a great extent", nine (10) teachers said "To some extent" and two (4) teachers said "To a very little extent". Overall, results indicated requirement for an effort to make course materials more appealing and engaging for the learners.

In response to statement 36, one (1) teacher said "To a great extent", eleven (11) teachers said "To some extent", three (3) teachers said "To a very little extent" and two (2) teachers said "Not at all". The overall results clearly indicated a high level of dissatisfaction over time allocation per each lesson which in turn implies the need to improve on time allocation and management on lesson throughout the course.

In response to statement 37, ten (10) teachers said "To some extent", six (6) teachers said "To a very little extent" and one (1) teacher said "Not at all". Overall, results indicated the necessity for allocating more time for lesson activities as per the views of the tutors/visiting academics of EGAP.

In response to statement 38, four (4) teachers said "To a great extent", twelve (12) teachers said "To some extent" and two (1) teachers said "To a very little extent". The results showed scope for improvement in terms of the quality of the materials and a conscious effort for improvement in that respect.

4.3.2.6 Questionnaire for tutors/visiting academics Section F (Evaluation)

Section F of the questionnaire for tutors/visiting academics, dealt with evaluation. The ten questions (39-48) in this section focused on the evaluation of course materials and evaluation of learners (learner tests). Those aspects were evaluated through the perceptions of the tutors/visiting academics. The teachers' attitudes and opinions were derived by using a rating scale. The data obtained were presented below in table 4.64.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Q. No.</th>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Ratings and percentages</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>To a great extent</td>
<td>To some extent</td>
<td>To a very little extent</td>
<td>Not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>The materials cater to the proficiency levels of the learners</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>The materials cover the required content area</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>The materials are interesting and could motivate the learners</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>The print and presentation of materials are of good quality</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>The materials cover the required language skills effectively</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44</td>
<td>The tests, test the skills effectively</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>The tests are pitched at the proficiency level of the learners</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46</td>
<td>Selection of test items are appropriate</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>The relevant language skills are tested adequately</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>The methodology adopted for testing is appropriate</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.64 - Evaluation
In response to statement 39, four (4) teachers said "To a great extent", eleven (11) teachers said "To some extent" and two (2) teachers said "To a very little extent". The results indicated scope for improvement and the requirement for more effort in this regard. The results showed a greater need for improvement in developing and adapting materials to cater to the proficiency level of the EGAP learners.

In response to statement 40, six (6) teachers said "To a great extent", ten (10) teachers said "To some extent" and one (1) teacher said "To a very little extent". The results showed that level of dissatisfaction on the coverage of content area is low among the tutors/visiting academics of EGAP.

In response to statement 41, the tutors had given the following responses. Although ten (10) of the teachers were of the view that materials were interesting and could motivate the learner only to some extent whereas six (6) of them thought that materials were interesting and could motivate the students only to a very little extent. In this study we would show through our intervention, in Chapter Five, how they could be made interesting. Only one tutor had indicated that materials were interesting and could motivate the learners to a great extent. None of the tutors had expressed the view that materials did not create interest and motivation in learners at all. The results showed a greater need for improvement in developing and adapting materials to create interest and motivation among learners of EGAP.

In response to statement 42, six (6) teachers said "To a great extent", ten (10) teachers said "To some extent" and two (1) teacher said "To a very little extent". The results showed a fair level of satisfaction over this aspect but at the same time a need for improvement as well.

In response to statement 43, six (6) teachers said "To a great extent", nine (9) teachers said "To some extent" and two (2) teachers said "To a very little extent". The results showed a fair level of satisfaction on part of the tutors/visiting academics over the coverage of necessary language skills yet the inconsistency in responses imply the need for improvement in this aspect.
In response to statement 44, eight (8) teachers said "To a great extent", eight (8) teachers said "To some extent" and two (1) teacher said "To a very little extent". The results reflected a high level of satisfaction among tutors/visiting academics about the ability of the tests to assess the language skills effectively, but have left room for further improvement as the responses vary across the sample of tutors/visiting academics which imply a certain level of dissatisfaction among some tutors/visiting academics.

In response to statement 45, four (4) teachers said "To a great extent", twelve (12) teachers said "To some extent" and two (1) teacher said "To a very little extent". The results showed a fair level of satisfaction on part of the tutors/visiting academics over the ability of the tests to cater to the level of proficiency of learners and the variation in responses can be possibly due to the different levels of proficiency among the learners as well and hence, necessitated more attention on this aspect.

In response to statement 46, nine (9) teachers said "To a great extent", seven (7) teachers said "To some extent" and two (1) teacher said "To a very little extent". The results showed a high level of satisfaction on the part of tutors/visiting academics over the selection of test items and the variation in responses could be possibly due to the different levels of proficiency among the learners as well and hence, necessitates more attention on this aspect.

In response to statement 47, four (4) teachers said "To a great extent", eleven (11) teachers said "To some extent" and two (2) teachers said "To a very little extent". The results implied the need for more effort to effectively cover the necessary language skills, in tests.

In response to statement 48, eight (8) teachers said "To a great extent", eight (8) teachers said "To some extent" and one (1) teacher said "To a very little extent". The results showed a fairly high level of satisfaction on the part of tutors/visiting academics over the methodology adopted for testing but the variation in responses implied the need to focus on improvement in this aspect.
4.3.2.7 Questionnaire for tutors/visiting academics Section G (Learner Problems)

Section G consisted of eight questions (49 - 46) which included multiple choice questions with an option for short answers, polar question and one open ended question for the tutors/visiting academics to write comments on the EGAP course.

This section dealt with the questions based on the perceptions of the tutors/visiting academics on problems faced by learners in English medium instruction. This information was particularly important as the final objective of the program is to equip the learners with necessary language skills required for the main program of study (B Sc. Degree). Perceptions of the tutors/visiting academics in this aspect could contribute as a whole for the improvement of the program. Further, it could contribute to the learners’ learning requirements within and beyond the course to cater to their specific language needs.

4.3.2.7.1 Problems faced by learners in English medium instruction

English medium instruction is a big challenge the learners face when they start their university education. This can have a serious impact on the learners who had their school education in their mother tongue (Sinhala/Tamil) and those who have had no or minimum exposure to the English language in their work and home environments. The problems faced by the learners of EGAP program in dealing with English medium instruction, as perceived by the tutors/visiting academics are presented below in table 4.65.
Table 4.65 – Problems faced by learners in English medium instruction

According to perceptions of tutors/visiting academics, the most obvious problem the learners faced in English medium instruction was the difficulty in understanding their lectures and twelve (12) the respondents agreed to this. Five (5) of the respondents were of the view that difficulty in writing assignments and examination questions posed a challenge to the learners whereas two (2) of the respondents perceived that learners faced difficulties in understanding course books. Two (2) of the tutors, who responded under the category “Any other reasons”, had pointed out the following:

- Many learners do not have problems in English medium instruction
- Reasonable use of mother tongue by the teacher, at times, enhances clarity and saves time

Those two responses are more of suggestions and observations than additional information. Further, it was pointed out that lack of knowledge of the basic grammar was a drawback on the part of learners in facing the challenges in English medium instruction.
4.3.2.7.2 The reasons for learner difficulties in English medium instruction

This question on reasons for learner difficulties in English medium instruction focused on the gaps in the proficiency of the learners, as perceived by tutors/visiting academics. This was more relevant as the learners were from different proficiency levels, and as such, their competency levels were different. The responses for the question are presented below in table 4.66.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>What do you think are the reasons for learner difficulties in English medium instruction?</td>
<td>(a) Inadequate knowledge of grammar</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Complexity of the content</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Too many difficult words in texts and lectures</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Any other</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>31</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.66– Reasons for problems faced by learners in English medium instruction

Fifteen (15) respondents had agreed that inadequate knowledge of grammar of the learners as the reason for their difficulty in dealing with English medium instruction. Six (6) respondents were of the opinion that complexity of the content was a reason for learner difficulties in English medium instruction. This implied the inadequacy of the learners’ knowledge in grasping and understanding complex concepts in their subject areas. Five (5) of the respondents thought that presence of a high level of difficult or unknown words as a reason for difficulty in English medium instruction. Five (5) respondents had given other reasons which included very low competency level in the target language and the incorrect grammar and language usage that learners had already adopted, as reasons for learner difficulties in English medium instruction.
4.3.2.7.3 The language areas which need more support

This question focused on the tutors/visiting academics’ perceptions on the language areas which the learners need more support. The responses to the question are presented below in table 4.67.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>According to your opinion, which language areas need more support/teaching?</td>
<td>(a) Grammar</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Report writing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Reading</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Information transfer</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(e) Essay writing</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(f) Vocabulary</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(g) Any other</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>52</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.67- The language areas which need more support

Fifteen (15) respondents were of the view that the grammar knowledge of the learners was rather inadequate and learners needed more support in learning grammar. A large portion of the respondents twelve (12) of the respondents were of the view that extra support should be given to improve essay writing seven (7) each from the sample of respondents believed that learners should be provided with extra support in learning vocabulary and reading. While a less number of respondents five (5) view report writing as an area which learners should be provided with additional support, three (3) the respondents had said that learners should be given extra support in information transfer. Three (3) respondents had suggested other areas of learning that need additional support and those areas included speaking and listening. One respondent had suggested that essay writing need more time and conscious effort.
4.3.2.7.4 Learner difficulty in understanding science course materials

This question aimed at obtaining the general opinion of tutors/visiting academics whether the learners faced difficulties in understanding Science course materials. As the learners had not started their main program at the time they followed the English program, the responses of the tutors/visiting academics might not have been directly relevant to the course the learners were about to enrol for. It could be assumed that responses of tutors/visiting academics could be based on many factors such as their previous experience, their informal interactions with the learners, assumptions made based on the learner interaction with specific content areas in EGAP materials, etc.

The information obtained through this question is presented below in table 4.68.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>According to your experience in teaching science learners, do you think the learners find it difficult to understand science course materials?</td>
<td>(a) Yes</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) No</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) To some extent</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>14</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.68 – Difficulty in understanding science course materials

Nine (9) respondents had said that learners faced difficulties to some extent in understanding Science course materials where as six (6) of the respondents had said that learners do not face difficulties in understanding Science course materials.
4.3.2.7.5 The reasons for difficulty in understanding science course materials

This question focused on the reasons for learners’ difficulties in understanding Science course books, as perceived by the tutors/visiting academics of EGAP program. The responses to the question are presented below in table 4.69.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>If course materials are difficult to understand, what is/are the main reasons for it?</td>
<td>(a) Difficult grammar</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Complex ideas and concepts</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Difficult words</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Any other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.69 - Reasons for difficulty in understanding science course materials

Out of the total sample, nine (9) respondents were of the opinion that learner faced difficulties due to complex ideas and concepts in the Science course materials whereas six (6) respondents had said it is due to difficult grammar in the materials. Five (5) respondents selected the option the difficult words in the science materials make it difficult for learners to understand them. Out of all the respondents two (2) had given other reasons for difficulties in understanding course materials which included unfamiliar sentence structures in the materials, lack of flow in the presentation of materials, inadequacy of basic language competency and insufficient background education to understand the current Science materials.

4.3.2.7.6 Learners’ requirement for extra help in learning English

This question focused on the perceptions of the tutors/visiting academics on the necessity for extra support in learning English. The responses to the question are presented below in table 4.70.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Do you think learners need extra help in learning English?</td>
<td>(a) Yes 16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) No -</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.70 – Requirement for extra help in learning English

Sixteen tutors/visiting academics have responded to the question and all the responses (100%) have agreed on the fact that extra help should be provided to the learners in learning English.

4.3.2.7.7 The ways in which extra help can be given in learning English

The focus of this question was on the ways extra help can be given to learners in learning English. The results obtained are presented below in the table 4.71.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>If learner need extra help, in what ways the help should be given?</td>
<td>(a) As supplementary materials 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(b) Workshops 9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(c) Online lessons 8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(d) Any other 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.71 – Ways the extra help can be given

Twelve (12) respondents were of the view that extra support should be given as supplementary materials whereas nine (9) respondents thought extra support should be
given in the form of workshops. The opinion of eight (8) respondents was that extra support should be provided as online lessons. Three (3) respondents had given other ways of providing extra support to the learners which included the following:

- Providing more opportunities for interaction among the learners
- Providing more time and activities for listening and speaking
- Providing regular speech tests and providing more opportunities for learners to overcome the phobia for speaking in English
- Using modern technology and multimedia to provide more learning opportunities.

4.3.2.7.8 Comments of the tutors/visiting academics on EGAP course

Nine out of seventeen tutors/visiting academics responded to the open ended question (question 46), which asked for their overall comments on the EGAP program. The feedback of the tutors/visiting academics on the EGAP program mainly focused on the inadequate knowledge of grammar, of the learners. Five out of nine tutors/visiting academics who responded to the open ended question had pointed out the inadequacy of knowledge of grammar on part of the learners. Further, they had pointed out necessity to include more grammar lessons and activities in order to enhance the grammar knowledge of the learners and to achieve the course objectives. One teacher had pointed out that more attention should be given to particular areas in grammar.

Two tutors/visiting academics out of nine respondents had pointed out the inadequacy of course duration and had suggested that extension of course duration would enhance the effectiveness of the course in catering to the learner requirement and achieving the course objectives. One teacher was of the opinion that face to face interactive sessions be made compulsory as a solution to the low attendance of learners at the sessions. Though this has a valid point in terms of learners’ positive learning outcome with higher attendance, the factors leading to the absence of learners at sessions are diverse and compulsion of attending classes addresses only one aspect of it. Further, DE mode education should ensure the freedom of learners in self-learning and decision making.
One teacher out of nine respondents was of the view that materials should be more interesting and should include interesting activities like poems and passages which are not Science based. This teacher’s opinion was that content should not be Science based and should highlight the interesting aspects of the target language. In contrary to this view, another teacher had pointed out that if the course materials are more science based, it would lead to high level of motivation among learners to learn English.

Another respondent pointed out the differences among learners in proficiency levels had a negative impact on their learning outcome. She further said that the course did not support much to improve the proficiency level of the learners at lower proficiency levels, hence they tend to remain at the same level and leading to failure at the examinations. As a solution, it is suggested the inclusion of content based assignments which would result in higher levels of gaining eligibility and less dropouts. She further pointed out that not grouping learners according to their level of proficiency tends to be discouraging and less satisfying for the teacher.

One more teacher who responded to the open ended question pointed out that the learners were relatively young with less experience in life, hence the essay topics should be simple and their objective should be to assess their language proficiency and it should not be coupled with their knowledge on current affairs. This offered a valid point as when the topic becomes far too challenging for the learners’ level of knowledge, it is a bit difficult to assess whether their weaknesses were due to inadequate knowledge of the target language or inadequate knowledge of facts and content.

The another respondent had pointed out the necessity for providing feedback in terms of answer key to each and every question whereas another teacher was of the opinion that specific attention should be given to the writing ability of the learner as they are weak in writing in the target language. One more respondent had highlighted the fact that learners do not do their home work and less prepared for the class due to many practical issues and hence, she had suggested that the learners should not be over burdened with very lengthy lessons.
One teacher seemed to be quite satisfied with the course materials provided as she had mentioned that course materials in EGAP program are well planned to cater to the needs of the learners in improving their knowledge of English. Further, another respondent is of the view that English language learning in the university should not be limited to the EGAP program and it should be a semester wise continuing program throughout the university education of the learners to keep them tuned in to the language demands of the main study program.

4.3.3 Summary of the interpretation of data from questionnaires

a. Questionnaire for learners

- Majority (81.6%) of the student sample were relatively young (in the age range of 18-24) and as such their interests and requirements should be taken into consideration in designing course materials and deciding on the language requirements.
- A very high percentage (74%) of the sample of learners possessed G.C.E A/L as the highest qualification in English and based on that it can be assumed that their language proficiency varies from lower intermediate to upper intermediate.
- In general, the language use of the learners was more academically oriented though their language requirements extended beyond that to employment and societal needs as well.
- The learning methods, study habits and learning resources of the students were diverse and dynamic.
- Many learners did not have a sound background in English and their societal backgrounds do not provide a strong support for language learning. As such they were much dependent on the EGAP program for their language needs.
- Overall, the learners had shown a high level of satisfaction on the teaching and teaching methods but the learners' responses on this aspect had shown differences across centres
- Learners' opinions showed a high demand for technology aided teaching.
- Overall, the learners had requested for more time, more attention and more resources for language learning, specifically for developing speaking skills.
Overall, the learners had shown a high level of satisfaction on course materials except for the fact that some themes are not so interesting.

A very high percentage (88.74%) of learners were positive that the skills they learnt in EGAP would be useful for their main academic course (Science degree).

There was a significant variation across centres on the effectiveness of the EGAP programme which in turn suggested that more attention should be given to maintaining consistency across centres.

Increasing level of difficulty towards last two units of the course books had posed a high challenge for some learners which can be assumed to be due to their low level of proficiency in English.

Relevance of content to their main discipline (Science) seemed to have had a positive impact on learning.

Learner responses indicate a high demand for extra support in the form of supplementary materials (text materials, online materials, workshops etc.).

A high level of dissatisfaction was shown with regard to infrastructure facilities, equipment and learning resources provided to the learners.

The comments of the learners had drawn attention to the necessity for better organization of the course delivery and contact sessions, better infrastructure facilities and enhanced student support services.

Overall, the sample of students showed an average level of satisfaction on the entire EGAP program which indicates the scope, necessity and potential for further improvement.

b. Questionnaire for tutors/visiting academics

The qualification of the sample of tutors/visiting academics vary from special training in English to post graduate degrees.

The experience of the tutors/visiting academics also vary from a few years up to more than 24 years in teaching English at secondary and tertiary level but their experience in teaching English in distance mode is very less. This strongly suggest the necessity for teacher trading in teaching English in distance mode.
• One dominant observation of the tutors/visiting academics in general, is the vast differences in the proficiency levels of the learners at the point of entry to the EGAP programme and the negative impact it has on their learning.

• The perceptions of tutors/visiting academics indicate an average level of satisfaction on the effectiveness of the EGAP program and the necessity to create more interest and motivation among the learners through materials and the learning process. This strongly suggests the need for more innovative thinking and practical applications to improve the EGAP programme.

• A high level of dissatisfaction was shown across the centres, over the quality of teaching aids.

• Perceptions of tutors/visiting academics indicate a high level of satisfaction on the adequacy of activities per session and also the clarity and student friendliness of instruction.

• Perceptions of tutors/visiting academics indicate an average level of satisfaction on clarity and accessibility of materials, suitability and relevancy of content and suitability of activities to the proficiency level of learners. Further, they show an average level of satisfaction on the course in terms of its responsiveness to the context in use, alignment with other dimensions of the course and potential of the course to promote participation and co-learning. This strongly suggests the areas that needs improvement.

• A very high level of satisfaction is shown about the guidance provided to the tutors/visiting academics but this varies significantly across the centres.

• Perceptions of tutors/visiting academics indicate mixed responses to the evaluation procedure of learners.

• The learner problems in English medium instruction have been mainly attributed to inadequate knowledge of grammar, complex content and difficult vocabulary. Additional support in terms of supplementary materials, online materials, workshops, etc. has been fully endorsed.

• The comments of the tutors/visiting academics stressed on the fact that materials should be more interesting and motivating. The time constraints which have a negative impact on the program and the necessity to find more innovative and interactive methods of knowledge dissemination have been highlighted as factors that needs attention.
4.4 Interpretation of data from Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were carried out with three main stake holders: the tutors/visiting academics, course materials writers and the language experts to obtain their views on many aspects of the EGAP course in general and EGAP course materials in particular. Responses to the course in general and their negotiation with the EGAP materials in particular, issues related to EGAP materials, suggestions for improvement and other relevant and important points expressed by the tutors/visiting academics/visiting academics. The interpretation of the information from interviews with tutors/visiting academics is presented below.

4.4.1 Interview for tutors/visiting academics/visiting academics

The interview was conducted for 19 tutors/visiting academics from six regional centres. One interview (T8) was not recorded due to a technical problem and the remaining 18 interviews were transcribed, coded and interpreted to infer the findings. Interview protocol focused on information ranging from information on tutors/visiting academics, their teaching approaches, students' responses to the courses in general and their negotiation with EGAP materials in particular, issues related to EGAP materials, suggestions for improvement and other relevant and important points expressed by the tutors/visiting academics. The interpretation of the information from interviews with tutors/visiting academics is presented below.

4.4.1.1 Learners’ responses to materials and teaching approaches

T1

- Learners responded well to materials facilitating group work and pair work which allowed for better teaching and learning. They were interactive and interested
- Learners preferred certain themes over others and in general they were interested in all the themes except religions
- Some learners were hesitant to speak as they had a kind of phobia on making mistakes but they could speak a bit at group work
Some learners were only interested in passing the examination and obtaining the certificate whereas some others who were employed and required English knowledge, showed better interest in the lessons.

There was one learner with very low proficiency yet she managed to pass the exam as she was regular and hard working.

Some learners had referred to and depend on internet for their home work but they do not get time in the classroom to do that.

Some tutors/visiting academics said the training they get is their experience and a further training is not much necessary.

More mature learners seemed to be more responsible, may be because they understood the importance of the lessons. Majority seemed to enjoy the lessons and it also depended on the way the teacher delivered it.

T2

The facilitation did not happen much due to shorter duration of the course and the learners’ lack of enthusiasm in coming prepared for the class. Practices of self-learning was not much visible among learners.

Power point presentations were used in the classroom when necessary and if the facilities were available.

The role of the facilitator was inevitable as they were adult learners and DE mode learners.

Some learners had built up an attitude that English is a difficult subject and they cannot learn it but an effort was made to encourage and motivate them.

The books were difficult for some learners because their English language proficiency was low but overall, their cognitive level was high and they could manage well in their other subjects.

The learners were made aware that classroom work was not adequate and they need to work a lot on their own and sometimes they were directed to relevant web-sites.

Some learners showed a high interest in attending the classes.
• One motivating factor for them to work hard was that English was a compulsory component in their degree program and they cannot progress unless they get eligibility in English.
• Some learners could be seen using internet and their smart phones to access internet when needed.

T3
• In EGAP, the tutors/visiting academics tend to deviate from the usual teacher role and become facilitators and that means we try get the learners to work on their own
• An effort was made to make it more learner-centred and to facilitate learning.
• Learners were encouraged to speak and to interact.
• There were very proficient learners in the class and they did a lot of talking. They were able to give constructive criticism during interactive activities.
• The learners were quite happy with the initial lessons (units).
• Some learners could be seen accessing internet to get support for their learning.

T4
• Tutors/visiting academics had limited interaction with learners and the learners were expected to do a lot of work on their own and we were supposed to facilitate that work.
• The learners in general were satisfied about the materials.
• The learners responded well to the EGAP course and their attendance and their cooperation was at a high level.

T5
• An effort was to be a facilitator by making learners to interact a lot and helping them in that as a facilitator. This gradually improved the language proficiency of learners and even the weak ones learnt from the good ones. Even the weaker ones could cope with the materials and they were trying to compete with the good ones.
• Learners had understood the importance of learning English as they were adults and self- motivated learners.
• Only a few learners came prepared for the lesson.
• Some learners could be seen using mobile phones to access internet for study purposes.

T6
• Being a facilitator was our duty but it was not possible due to time constraint and the learning setup.
• How the lesson was taught and the effectiveness largely depended on the teacher
• The very proficient learners were regular learners.
• The learners used internet for study purposes and in the classroom as well.

T7
• Learners were quite interactive in the class and they respond to the materials well.
• They accessed internet and used mobile phones to access internet.
• An effort was made to make them aware of the available online resources.
• Learners were not much involved in self-studies and an effort was made to motivate them.

T8
• Though we had to be facilitators, we had to do quite a bit of teaching at the beginning as most of the learners were straight from school
• Learners’ writing skills needed much attention though they were quite good in reading.
• The schedule had to be followed strictly as the time was limited but things had to be repeated when learners were absent.
• Home work was done by a few learners but the majority did not and the attendance of some were not regular.
• Learners seemed to be satisfied with the course materials and they did not have much choice regarding the same.
• The enthusiasm was there with the learners to learn and move forward and they could be seen even using mobiles to refer to meanings etc.
• Teaching was mostly based on experience and I attended a few workshops too.
• Briefing session, teacher’s guide and answer key were useful.

T10
• I was not really able to be a facilitator in the classroom context. That was because there were certain issues with the infrastructure facilities and the learners’ set up and the time constraint. Most of the time as post teaching activities I have been facilitating the learners to refer to certain online materials and other supplementary materials which were available with the English for General Academic Purposes. Other than that, as per the term says ‘facilitator’ I was not able to facilitate the learners in the classroom setting, whereas I was more like a teacher, a teacher dominated sort of a classroom setting
• Though some learners seemed to be satisfied with the materials, some were of the opinion that the course materials did not cater effectively to their needs and they should relate more to their respective fields of study.
• Overall, the learners were satisfied with the mode of delivery or how the teacher interacted with them.
• The learners were motivated and keen to learn.
• I did not have any formal kind of training in DE except for a few workshops attended.

T11
• Making use of the background knowledge of the learners, the tutors/visiting academics could relate the skills effectively to their target academic discourse.
• The weaker learners, for whom the course was very difficult, were mixed with proficient learners and it was always ensured that they were assigned roles and they interacted.

T12
• Learners were used to a learning culture where they had been taught everything in the class and therefore, they found it difficult to adjust to the new culture of DE.
• It was not possible to get a proper feedback from the learners and it was not very clear how they felt about the materials.
• Learners seemed to be keen and interested in certain themes but my personal opinion was that complicated concepts like religions could not create much interest among the learners.

• Learners referring to other sources of information like internet etc., could not be observed in the classroom and besides they had a very limited time which did not allow such practices in the classroom.

• Learners were not much interested in themes like religions, gender issues and further, as the level of difficulty increased towards the last few units and some learners found it difficult to deal with it. Hence the difficulty level was a constraint.

• Some activities were quite challenging and learners were unable to deal with them.

T13

• Learners paid attention to the materials and got engaged but they were not very interactive in the classroom.

• The learners seldom spoke in the class.

T14

• Apart from the content and the mode of delivery (DE), our role as tutors/visiting academics had not changed much in teaching in EGAP. We really could not be much of a facilitator.

• Though the learners were expected to engage in self-learning, it hardly happened. Sri Lankan learners are so used to being spoon fed that they really do not grasp the concept of self-studying.

• Some learners do not take English very seriously and they do it only as a requirement.

• Many learners were not from affluent backgrounds and their social background too should be taken into consideration.

• Language learning should be as natural as possible with less labelling.
T14

- An effort was made to make the classroom more interactive and to facilitate learning.
- Learners responded well to the materials.
- They were interested in certain themes and lessons.
- Learners’ involvement in self-learning was very less.

T16

- I really could not be a facilitator as I am not used to it and we never got a training on the teaching in DE. I depended on my experience to teach the learners at OUSL.
- The learners were interested in certain lessons as the content was appealing.
- Some learners listened to the DVD at home and came prepared for the lesson.
- Some learners seemed to be accessing internet for study purposes and I have never seen them using their mobile phones for the same.

T17

- Quite a lot of activities were done in groups in order to handle variance in their proficiency levels and due to time constraint.
- The learners’ overall response to the EGAP course was quite positive.
- Learners used internet on smart phones to access information and the dictionary.
- In terms of teacher training, the compulsory course provided when we joined the university as lecturers gave us some exposure and concepts in to teaching in DE. The tutor training workshops and training sessions were very useful.

T18

- There was more teaching than facilitation in class due to the setup, facilities and the nature of the target learner group. The learners were quite young and new to DE mode education.
- Though they were mixed ability groups, I did not see much variation in the level of proficiency and actually most of them were quite weak. At the same time they had the basic knowledge and the intelligence to cope up with the materials.
I went by the skills given in the materials but designed my own activities based on simple things close their lives. The learners seemed to enjoy them. Therefore, I did not even refer to the teacher’s guide or the answer key.

T19

- The learners expected to learn things relevant to their academic courses and I tried to relate it though the EGAP themes are general.
- Science learners are comparatively better than others.
- Learners say that they benefited from the course.
- We target the exam and eligibility as it is compulsory for them to progress further.
- I did more interactive activities like debates in the class to make the learners more confident.

4.4.1.2 Tutors/visiting academics’ opinion on the effectiveness of EGAP materials

T1

- EGAP materials were well designed and interesting.
- The incorporation of all four skills in EGAP course was a good move.
- The learners showed a marked improvement towards the end of the course.
- The presentation of materials was good and overall they suited the proficiency level of the learners.
- Many learners attended the course regularly.
- The university provided adequate facilities and they made a very positive effort in that regard.
- The tutors/visiting academics’ guide, the answer key and the briefing session were quite useful.
- Incorporation of the speaking component was an advantage a some learners do not get the opportunity to practice outside the classroom even if they have the knowledge.

T2

- The first two units were interesting in content and the difficulty level was manageable for the learners.
• The presentation of the lessons was quite interesting and there was a good flow within and across lessons.

T3
• The course materials were designed to be learner centred and to promote self-learning and though it is not 100% successful, it can be considered a good start.
• The course materials in EGAP were quite good in terms of content, presentation and suitability to the proficiency level of the learners.
• The themes were quite interesting and the integration of skills was a good move.
• The assessments effectively and adequately covered what had been taught.
• I could effectively manage the content of the materials due to the support given by the teacher's guide and the answer key.

T4
• The materials used in EGAP were good in terms of the content and all other aspects but some learners struggled with them as their proficiency level was low and also some content was not relevant to them.
• Presentation of EGAP materials was quite good and the skills were well integrated. Further, all four skills were covered effectively.
• Course materials could motivate the learners and the materials were interesting.
• Assessment procedure was effective to a great extent.
• Teacher’s guide proved to be very effective.

T5
• Materials were good and we could make it even more interesting by the way we put it across. Therefore, the tutors/visiting academics role is very important.
• In general the materials were pitched at the proficiency level of the average learner.
• Assessment process was adequate and effective.
• Teacher's guide and the answer key were quite useful.
• Themes were quite okay and learners did not have any issue with them.
T6

- Science students could cope up with the materials well.
- In general the proficiency level of the materials suited the learners (as most of them were average learners).
- The learners seemed to be satisfied with the program and there were no complaints.
- Those who followed classes seemed to perform well at the examinations.
- Teacher's guide, answer key and the briefing session were effective and helpful.

T7

- Materials did not cater well to the grammar requirements of the learners.
- Listening component should be improved.
- Themes and passages were well received by the learners.
- Foreign accent in listening materials was a problem.
- Materials did not cater to the higher and lower proficiency levels.

T8

- Being self-instructional, the materials should be able to get learners involved in self-studies and they should be designed in such a way that it promotes self-learning.
- The materials catered to the average learner effectively and it seemed that it catered to the capacity of the learners.
- Content could keep the learners occupied.
- The presentation of materials catered well to the average learner and the very proficient learners were given more opportunities to talk. So the materials could be used in many different ways to get the learners engaged. Adjustments had to be made to cater to different situations but it was not difficult to use materials as a foundation.
- The assessments were quite successful, given the short span of time of the course.
• Teacher briefing, tutors/visiting academics guide and the answer key was quite good.

T10
• As per effectiveness of materials, I would like to amalgamate my beliefs as well as some of the learners’ perspectives as well. So in this case, I think the lessons in the EGAP book should be more academic based.
• I am not quite satisfied with the presentation of the materials and I feel they did not cater well to the upper intermediate learners.
• The materials should be more subject specific. Teacher also can play a major role in this by relating it to their main discipline and also the supplementary materials would help.
• Content was a challenge to teach as it did not relate to the field.

T11
• Materials were quite accessible to the learners provided they have the basic knowledge of English. Sometimes it was felt that the materials were too easy but they were not.
• Learners responded well to the materials and it seemed they enjoyed it.
• Learners could be seen referring to internet for information and for the dictionary. They were accessing internet in the classroom through smart phones. As the teacher, I encouraged them to do that but the issue is sometimes they copy.

T12
• Target proficiency level in EGAP was suitable for the learners as they were mixed ability groups and it was difficult to cater to individual proficiency levels.
• Presentation in general and in terms of physical factors was satisfactory.
• The assessment tests, tested the required skills effectively.
• The content of the materials are good.

T13
• The materials were well designed, well structured and well presented.
• Integration of skills and inclusion of listening and speaking was a very good move.

• Teacher's guide, answer key and the briefing session proved to be very effective.

T14
• We should be more sensitive to the content presented in materials and it should be simple and close to life.

• Learners at the upper and lower end of proficiency do not make much use of the materials or classes.

• The learners’ response to materials and the course as a whole was poor but they showed interest when the examinations were around the corner.

• The materials had failed to motivate learners or to create interest in them.

T14
• Materials were well structured and presented well.

• The weaker learners found it difficult to cope up with the materials.

• Teacher's guide and the briefing session provided adequate guidance.

T16
• The materials catered to the proficiency level of majority of the learners.

• Learner enjoyed the AV component of the materials.

• Teacher's guide and teacher briefing gave adequate guidance for teaching.

• Most of the learners needed guidance in writing and they were able to cope up with grammar as what was given in the materials was adequate.

T17
• The learners were quite interested in the lessons and what was taught in the face to face sessions.

• Learners were quite comfortable with the first few units but found it a bit difficult to cope with the increasing level of difficulty towards the last three units.

• Teacher's guide was good and useful.
T18

- The materials were clearly organized, well structured and had a kind of flow to it but a bit boring and dry at the same time. In spite of having well structured content and a rationale as to why that content should be there, they did not cater to the interest of that age group.
- The materials were pretty coherent but problem was with the presentation.
- The materials catered to the proficiency level of the learners. T19 –
- Course books are of a very good standard and the content is good
- The facilities available was satisfactory
- The teacher’s guide and the teacher briefing session gives adequate and effective guidance
- Assessment process was quite good

4.4.1.3 Issues related to EGAP materials

T1

- Some reading texts were difficult and not so interesting
- There were learners with very high proficiency level too but they tried to make the maximum out of the course by attending regularly.
- The biggest issue was the learners’ failure to come prepared for the lesson and a few learners did that. Therefore it became a challenging task to cover everything in the class. This even lead to severe time constraints and sometimes some extra time was taken for the class. Further, this leads to more teaching than facilitating.
- The time given for listening in the continuous assessment tests was not adequate.
- Irregular attendance of learners was a major challenge.
- Only one learner came up with an issue about the themes.
T2

- The learner felt that certain themes were not much relevant to them. Further, when the lessons were too difficult and the learners could not understand them, they tend to be de-motivated.
- Time was a huge constraint mainly due to the fact that the learners do not come prepared for the lessons as expected of them. The materials are designed with the expectation of much learners involvement in self-learning.
- Difficult vocabulary posed quite a challenge to the learners but I always supported them with it.
- Grammar is a great weakness among many learners. The materials have not provided grammar knowledge in detail
- Learners did not respond well to the online support provide probably because they have no access to it.
- When marking their script I noticed that they are very weak in writing.
- Inadequacy of infrastructure and technological facilities was a hindrance to smooth functioning and effectiveness of lessons.
- There is always a gap between the books/materials and the assessments.

T3

- One of the biggest issues was that the learners do not work much on their own though it is much expected in DE. Only a very few learners do self-studying.
- There was a big gap between proficiency levels of the learners but even the weaker learners could manage.
- Two sessions on the same day proved to be rather ineffective.
- Huge classes were difficult to manage and it was very challenging to motivate the learners when numbers are high.
- Learners seemed to be less aware of the concept of DE and their role in DE mode education. May be they were slowly learning that.
- The classroom arrangements were fine but external noise was a disturbance.
T4

- Learners with low proficiency level faced difficulties in coping with the materials.
- Classroom facilities were rather unsatisfactory and having two sessions on the same day proved to be less effective.
- Time was a huge constraint.

T5

- Time was a serious constraint. Longer duration of the course could help serve the weaker learners better.
- Low attendance was a problem
- Majority of the learners did not come prepared for the lesson and they expected the teacher to do everything in the class.
- Some lessons took longer time as the lessons were difficult and passages were long

T6

- Time constraint was a huge problem for effectiveness of the course. There was less time for interaction between the teacher and learners.
- Learners were weak in grammar and writing.
- Listening tests had issues with low quality of equipment and the noisy environment.
- Two sessions on the same day proved to be ineffective.
- Problems in organizing led to confusions and waste of time.

T7

- Time and non availability of required facilities were constraints.

T8

- Low attendance of learners had a negative impact on teaching and learning.
- Going through the course and assessment process within a very short span of time was challenging.
T10

- Learners were weak in grammar and writing.
- The topics did not relate to the Science learners.
- There were a lot of issues with infrastructure facilities.
- Grouping and organizing classes had been rather chaotic.
- The teacher-learner relationship was rather distant as the tutors/visiting academics kept on changing. They never had the opportunity to get used to learners and monitor their progress.
- Learners would not be interested in learning something irrelevant.
- Though we were given a brief training in how to teach in DE, the classroom conditions were totally different and we could not implement what we learnt.

T11

- EGAP course is the first experience for learners in OUSL and at that point they are not involved with the theoretical aspects of their main program. They do not have much idea as to how to link the skills with their main course but they had some idea due to their Science background in school.
- Learners do not come prepared for the lesson except for a few rare cases.
- Though awareness programmes were conducted for the learners, it was evident that they could not grasp the concepts well. They would understand it through practice.
- Some subject lecturers complained about the lack of subject specific vocabulary. May be this can be supplemented through additional readings.
- There were complaints from some tutors/visiting academics that the ESP element is missing in the course.
- Assessments were fine but there were issues with the way they were conducted, especially for listening, the equipment were not adequate and that led to many issues.
- A large number of learners in a classroom was a hindrance for more interactive learning and teaching to take place.
• EGAP course is designed to use AV materials and as such proper multimedia equipment should be provided to conduct the classes effectively.

T12
• EGAP course runs only for three months and most of the work is done during the class time. Therefore, there are not many opportunities for the teacher to be a facilitator and the learners to be involved in self-learning as expected in DE.
• The concept of DE is new to learners and as such lack of awareness and inability to adjust quickly to the new system leads to many issues. Apart from those issues, the language barrier posed a bigger challenge for the learners as some of them even did not have the basic knowledge in English Language.
• Conducting oral tests for huge numbers of learners in EGAP course is very challenging.
• The infrastructure facilities and equipment provided by the university has failed to create a conducive environment for learning. Overall, the facilities were very poor.

T13
• Time constraints was a big hindrance.
• The basic language skills were not given through EGAP and as a result the materials did not cater to the lower proficiency learners.
• The learners felt the materials were not relevant to their academic fields or their expectations.
• Due to the pressure of learning English language, some learners tend to drop the main course.

T14
• Poor facilities and time constraints were major issues.
• Learner attendance was low and learners were highly exam oriented.
• The issues in terms of teaching and facilities were not understood properly to address them effectively.
• Poor planning in every aspect of the course was a serious issue.
T15

- Time and the inadequate facilities were the main constraints.
- There were problems in conducting the listening test.
- Learner attendance is very low.
- Learners were rather weak in grammar and writing skills.

T16

- Materials (DVDs) were not provided on time and many learners did not have the facilities to use them at home.
- The very proficient learners as well as the weaker ones did not attend classes regularly.
- Time was a severe constraint.
- Matara learners were not that familiar with certain content in the materials (eg. pop song) and they did not like such lessons.

T17

- Majority of the learners did not come prepared for the lessons and expected everything to be done in the class. The possible reasons for this could be that majority of them were employed and hence, may have found it difficult to devote much time for learning at home and also it could be that they have not clearly understood the concept of DE and self-learning.
- Difficult vocabulary was an issue and some of the videos were very boring.
- There was a huge gap between the proficiency levels and those extremes were difficult to handle.
- The time available for us to bring them up to the required proficiency level was not enough as they needed to learn and internalize things.
- The facilities provided were terrible and the classroom environment was not conducive for teaching and learning.
- Having too sessions in one day proved to be too tiring and very ineffective for tutors/visiting academics and learners alike.
• Grammar is a perennial problem.

T18
• Some materials were too complex in terms of content and did not relate well to the interest of the learners. The presentation of the materials seemed to be the problem.
• In certain activities, I really could not gauge the level of the learners and failed in getting it across.
• The topics were rather boring for this generation of learners and may be they could have been suitable some 14 years ago. With this age group, they just fail to capture the learners.
• The teaching was not organized well and the tutors/visiting academics kept on changing. There was hardly any time for tutors/visiting academics and learners to adjust to each other.
• Sometimes the materials did not make sense.
• The facilities were terrible and it posed a considerable challenge.
• Lack of continuation of the course was a problem.
• We were confused between distance and face-to-face and what we really want and what we were doing.
• Available facilities like NAC, computer labs etc. were not made use of.
• Poor writing skills was a common weakness in the learners.

T19
• Time was the main constraint.
• Learners do not like to be engaged with materials irrelevant to their academic fields.
• Some learners did not have facilities to use AV materials away from the class.
• Poor attendance of learners was a hindrance to the effectiveness of the course.
• There were very weak learners who were much below the level pitched in the materials.
• Learners were very weak in writing.
• Teaching mixed ability groups with an extreme variation was challenging.

4.4.1.4 Suggestions for further improvement

T1
• It would be helpful if more activities were included for grammar and learners need more support in grammar. This can be through supplementary materials or extra time and sessions for grammar.
• It would be useful if we could have further training on areas like teaching methodology and workshops would be a good way of training.

T2
• Additional or supplementary materials would be a good option to cater to the differences among proficiency levels and exposure of the learners in order to bridge the gap. Even the learners requested for them at the discussion we had with them. Some learners specifically requested for supplementary materials for vocabulary learning.
• Learners felt they needed more grammar lessons and also some writing lessons in the increasing level of difficulty would help different proficiency levels and gradually bring them up to the target level of proficiency. They need guided writing as free writing is difficult for them.
• It would be quite helpful if tutors/visiting academics are given more training on distance mode teaching.
• Speaking skills need more time and attention.
• Multimedia facilities should be improved and be used more in the class which in turn could motivate the learners.
• It is important have more spacious and better quality classrooms which facilitate more interactive activities.
T3

- The teacher has to be very enthusiastic for the lesson to be effective. The success of the lesson is largely dependent on how the teacher teaches or facilitates and the teacher’s attitude and kindness, everything matters. The teacher should be motivated to motivate the learners.

- Learners need more support for grammar and it should be given from the very beginning. It is not possible to learn grammar in such a short time.

- Workshops and training programs for tutors/visiting academics would be advantageous.

T4

- If the themes are relevant to their subject areas, the learners will be more motivated.

- Some measures should be taken to cater effectively to different proficiency levels in those mixed ability groups.

- Categorising the learners through a grading test and offering a separate course for weaker learners would be an option.

- Additional support like internet links etc. could help learners better.

T5

- The classrooms should be spacious and well equipped to promote interaction.

- Workshops and more training for tutors/visiting academics would be very helpful.

- Learners need more help in grammar and vocabulary and also parallel writing classes.

- The learners should be provided with supplementary or extension materials which they can do at home. The materials should be interesting and motivating so that they will find time to do them.

T6

- The course should be even more general to teach the general language skills.

- Training for tutors/visiting academics, especially in methodology would be very useful and it will help to update our knowledge in the latest trends.

- More attention should be given to learner attendance.
• Additional material for grammar and writing would support the learners.

T7
• More attention should be given to grammar skills and it should be covered from basics. Additional materials in this regard would be helpful.
• Supplementary materials and online materials could be helpful but some learners may not have the necessary facilities to access online materials.

T8
• The learners should be given more exercises, especially the weaker ones.
• It would be more effective if the time could be stretched a bit.

T10
• Course books need to be revised and it would be better if there are separate books for basic and intermediate.
• The learners should be graded and grouped accordingly.
• The speech module should be revised but reading and writing tasks are okay.
• The learner should be able to regulate the course content as this is a self-study guide.
• Learners need some training in subject specific vocabulary.
• Separate supplementary readers should be there for different disciplines.
• Activities should have a wider range from basic to intermediate.
• New tutors/visiting academics need some training under experienced senior lecturers.

T11
• Regarding the inclusion of ESP element, someone has to answer that through theory and research.
• ESP element can be incorporated through supplementary materials.
• Proper sound equipment should be in place for the success of listening component in the lessons and in assessment.
• Tutors/visiting academics should be given the opportunity to teach the same group regularly as it allows them to know the learners better and to monitor their progress. Further, it will give time for learners to adjust to tutors/visiting academics and their teaching approaches.

• ODL and DE are regularly evolving and regular training is required for tutors/visiting academics to be updated on this.

• Materials should be presented well (glossy, colourful and nice books) to motivate the learners.

T12

• Materials should be revised as they were designed for the social science undergraduates and therefore, the content may not suit other disciplines. But on the other hand, the EGAP course is focusing on generic skills and as such the content should not be a big issue. Supplementary materials would be a solution for whatever difficulties the learners may be facing in this regard but at the same time it is doubtful whether the learners will make good use of them.

• Workshops would be a good option to provide extra support to the learners as online support provided failed as only a very less number of learners accessed online support course.

• Good training for tutors/visiting academics would be very useful as we need to be updated about the techniques we can use in the situations and challenges we are faced with. Workshops would be quite effective in this regard.

T13

• The materials should be more subject oriented.

• Supplementary materials should be given to support them in grammar writing and more difficult areas.

T14

• There should be a basic course to bring learners up to the required level.

• More time should be allocated for the course.
• Infrastructure facilities and technological assistance should be improved.
• Supplementary material in the form of online and text based, should be provided.

T15
• Additional sessions and supplementary materials should be given to develop grammar and writing skills.
• Tutors/visiting academics should be encouraged to develop their own materials to be used in the class to cater to the learners better.

T16
• If the learners get lessons based on science probably they would be more interested. The ESP element should be incorporated into the course.
• Training in the form of workshops would be a welcome move and we are particularly interested to get more training on how to teach in DE.
• Writing should be given more focus and support.
• The longer lessons should be revised and made more manageable.

T17
• There is a need for every individual learner to perform in class, some kind of knowledge for them to engage with the task. This should be looked into in designing materials.
• We have to make sure that the materials are challenging but not too challenging to de-motivate the learners.
• Learning for others or the scaffolding effect is good.
• There should be some kind of motivation for the learners to be prepared for the lesson.
• Course materials should be colourful and attractive to motivate the learners.
• Materials and lessons should not be too complicated, long or boring and should be able to retain the interest of the learner.
• As teachers, we need professional development to change with the evolving methods and changing needs of the learner population.
• The tutors in the EGAP course needs regular training.
• Interaction with peers and exchange of knowledge and experience among tutors would be beneficial.
• There are very innovative tutors/visiting academics and others can get valuable tips from them.
• Grammar should be incorporated into materials rather than teaching it separately. Use of authentic materials would be a good option.

T18
• Materials should be more interesting and should cater to the psyche of the learners
• Tutors/visiting academics should be chosen carefully to cater to the learners effectively.
• The creativity of the teacher matters a lot.
• I do not think the ESP element should be included as general materials are good enough to learn the language. Once the language is learnt, it can be adjusted to the need.
• Writing skills need more attention and support.
• Online support is good but still the materials should be interesting to get the learners engaged.
• We need people to work as a team and more technical assistance.
• Improving the text materials should be the priority as it is tangible and more accessible to many.
• Learners need more engagement with materials and the tutors/visiting academics.

T19
• Extension of time duration could have a better outcome.
• The learners will enjoy the lessons more if the content is relevant to their studies.
• Training for tutors/visiting academics in the form of workshops would be beneficial.
4.4.1.5 Other comments by the tutors/visiting academics/visiting academics

T2
- Learners from outstations have less exposure to English language unlike the learners in city areas like Colombo. This affect the tutors/visiting academics also in a different way as those who are teaching in government schools do not get enough exposure or knowledge to teach at tertiary level.
- In spite of limited resources, the university staff was extremely cooperative and helpful.
- EGAP course is not designed for the teacher to do everything in the class but when the learners do not come prepared, we have no choice other than doing extra work during the contact sessions.
- Teacher's guide was okay but it is not much detailed.

T3
- I got all the training from the Open University.
- In our education system, the learners come from a conventional setup and it takes time for them to grasp the concepts and practises of DE.

T4
- ESP aspects should be catered to some extent.

T5
- Supplementary materials can be designed even for the very good learners so that they can learn additional things which in turn would motivate them and keep them occupied in the class.

T6
- I think Science students are more intelligent and they are better in English as well.
- Some learners are more exam oriented.
• Though time was a constraint, I could manage it well. It would be more effective if additional time could be given.

• This is the learners’ first experience in distance education and they are not totally into self-studies. It may take time for them to understand it and adjust gradually.
• In the EGAP course, we really had to achieve a target and had to move very fast.

• Catering to the diverse learner population effectively is important to reduce the number of dropouts.
• When offering online lessons, we should also check whether the learners have access to it as technology is still a luxury to many learners.
• What we learnt in workshops are hard to implement in the real classrooms which has a very different setting.

• Learners showed a mixed response to the materials. Some learners did not know what they had to do mainly due to their lack of knowledge in English language and those who are proficient in English could manage well. So the blame could not be put on the self-instructional materials.
• Learners need time to adjust to the distance mode learning and it cannot happen within a very short time. They need the tutors/visiting academics help as a nurturer, caretaker and a resource person at this stage of their academic journey.
• We had three categories of learners like in any Sri Lankan ESL classroom, the very proficient, average and the low proficient learners. Out of them, the average is the majority.
• There are two answers to the question whether learners should be categorized according to their level of proficiency. The more logical answer would be yes but my opinion is that in a class when weak learners see a model of what a good
learner is, that becomes a learning experience. The scaffolding effect and a model to aspire to, at least for some learners if not all.

- I do not use teacher's guide for two reasons: one is that the tutors/visiting academics guide tends to sort of put you into one track and I would like to look at it more openly and be a bit more imaginative in the classroom. As I know the course books very well, I really do not need it.

**T13**
- The learners’ problems, needs and interests should be looked into more deeply.

**T14**
- It is important to understand the psyche of the young learners and to design materials accordingly.
- Motivating the learners to do self-studies is a huge challenge which needs to be given more attention.

**T15**
- The attitude and enthusiasm shown by the teacher play a bigger role in motivating the learners.
- I remember that when we were offering a ESP course with relevant materials, the attendance of the learners was better as it related to their main program.

**T17**
- This is the first time the learners are in a university and learning in DE mode. As such they need time to adjust.

**T18**
- The learners do not come out with their problems more often. May be the learners do not have the language to kind of articulate their frustration.
- Understanding the psychology of the learner is important.
• A more compromising attitude between the subject lecturers and the language lecturers is necessary.

• At least there should be supplementary readers to cater to the interest of the learners and make the classroom more lively.

T19

• Even the very proficient learners were interested in learning something new in the classroom and it is largely up to the teacher to use the materials in a way that would benefit learners of all levels.

4.4.1.6 Summary of the interviews for tutors/visiting academics

• The main point emerging through the teachers’ perceptions on the learners’ engagement with the materials is that many learners do not practise self-learning and to a large extent the materials are not used in the way they are designed to be used. Many tutors/visiting academics seemed to be adjusting to this practical reality and try to cater to the learners as much as possible in the classroom. Only a very few innovative tutors/visiting academics try to guide them towards self-learning by providing links to additional learning resources and getting them engaged with self-learning in very subtle ways.

• One positive point is that learners respond well to the interactive learning and even the weaker learners benefit from this kind of team activities. Yet some tutors/visiting academics do not try to promote interactive learning due to lack of infrastructure facilities, time or lack of training in DE. Interactive learning is one point which justifies the face-to-face contact sessions in DE.

• Learners use technology to access internet resources and teacher guidance can greatly enhance this aspect. There is a big variation across regional centres in terms of accessing technology.

• Learner were not equally interested in the themes presented in the materials and they in general disliked the more complex themes like religions and gender.
• Many tutors/visiting academics failed to do an active role as a facilitator due to time constraints.
• None of the tutors/visiting academics, (except for university lecturers) had any kind of formal training in DE mode teaching. They largely depended on their experience.
• Imaginative and creative tutors/visiting academics could make a lot of difference in the classroom but such tutors/visiting academics were few in number.
• Overall, the tutors/visiting academics were satisfied about the quality, content and presentation of materials.
• Majority of the tutors/visiting academics were of the view that ESP component should be included in the course though a few felt general content would be more suitable.
• Time and facilities were a major constraint.
• Many tutors/visiting academics had observed that learners need more support in writing and grammar.
• Supplementary materials in text form and online formats were recommended by many tutors/visiting academics.
• A few tutors/visiting academics pointed out the importance of understanding the psyche of young learners and creating materials and activities to suit their interest. This could be a possible solution to motivate the learners.

4.4.2 Interview for course materials writers

Five course materials writers who were involved in writing course materials for the EGAP program, were interviewed to get their opinions and observations on many different aspects of EGAP materials: the effectiveness of EGAP materials in terms of the various features of DE materials, the issues involved with the materials for EGAP programme, suggestions for improvement and other comments by the course materials writers. The interpretations are presented below.
4.4.2.1 Background and experience in writing DE materials

I. MW1
- Works as a consultant with graduate and post graduate qualifications in TESL. Experience in writing materials in DE is limited to the OUSL.
- Has not undergone a formal training in writing materials in DE and the OUSL has tapped on the experience.
- Has experience in teaching and assessment of the EGAP programme.

II. MW2
- Works as a lecturer in the Department of Language Studies at OUSL and possess graduate and post graduate qualifications in ELT.
- No formal training in writing materials in DE but has experience through writing materials for various courses in OUSL which includes the EGAP course.
- Has been involved in teaching and the assessment procedure of the EGAP course and production of AV materials for the same.

III. MW3
- The educational qualifications comprises graduate and post graduate qualifications in ELT.
- A few years of experience in teaching, assessing and writing materials for EGAP.
- Experience in writing course materials for EGAP and other ELT courses in OUSL but no formal training as such in writing materials for ELT in DE.
- Has followed a course compulsory for lecturers recruited for the university system and has got training and exposure to teaching in a DE mode context. This is a recent development and the lecturers who were recruited recently have been given this training.
IV. **MW4**

- Works as a senior lecturer in the department of Language Studies, OUSL and possess graduate and post graduate qualifications in ELT. MW4 has also undergone many training programs in the same.
- Has been involved in the EGAP programme since inception as a teacher and a course materials writer.
- No formal training in writing materials for DE courses.

V. **MW5**

- Works as a senior lecturer in the department of Language Studies, OUSL and possess graduate and post graduate qualifications in ELT.
- MW4 has been involved in teaching and writing course materials for EGAP course for the past few years and her contribution as a materials writer is largely based on experience and in terms of formal training, the six months course provided to lecturers on joining the university system, provided a background to teaching in DE. This has further provided training through workshops and training sessions on how to teach in a DE environment.

4.4.2.2 **The effectiveness of EGAP materials**

I. **MW1**

- Though the materials were social science oriented, they were well taken by the learners from other disciplines. The teaching was based on the general skills irrespective of the discipline.
- Overall, there was an improvement in the learners in terms of their English language skills.
- Learner feedback at the oral examinations revealed that EGAP course had helped them a lot.
- The themes chosen are very topical and the materials effectively cater to meet the objectives set out for the EGAP course.
• The EGAP materials worked well as they included all four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking).

• The lessons were well taken by the learners and it could be observed that the learners who attended classes performed better at assessments than those who did not.

II. MW2
• Teaching in EGAP program had been a new experience as it included all four language skills. It has a very welcome way of teaching which was taken well by the learners and tutors/visiting academics alike. Even the learners seemed to enjoy learning a language with integrated language skills. Amalgamation of all four language skills gives the learners a complete picture of how the language can be used. So this can be considered as a positive move taken by the department.

• Including listening and speaking in the assessment CA level is a good idea as it prepares learners for the final examination.

III. MW3
• The learners liked the materials and they lend themselves for good teaching methods. They also engaged with the materials given to them though there were no clear evidence as to whether they used them as self-instructional materials.

• The EGAP materials could promote learning and they could motivate the learners.

IV. MW4
• The materials are designed well but the learners should do their part of work to make the maximum out of the materials. They need to be involved in a lot of self-learning.

• The main idea of incorporating DVDs in course materials is to promote self-learning. Hence, the materials are designed to meet the requirements of self-instructional materials.
V. MW5
- In terms of writing and production of materials, we have done a good job with limited resources.

4.4.2.3 Issues related to EGAP materials

I. MW1
- The materials were basically Social Science oriented.
- The learners did not come prepared for the lessons and it could be observed that they had not listened to the AV materials in preparation for the lesson. As such heavy dependency of learners on the tutors/visiting academics and their lack of commitment for self-learning is a hindrance for effective learning to take place.
- There were time constraint throughout the course and there should have been more time allocated for speaking.
- Learners need additional materials and it was not much observed even among the Colombo learners that they referred to additional sources of information like internet, books etc.
- Being a language, EGAP materials cannot be 100% self-instructional and that is a drawback in that.

II. MW2
- In a mixed ability group, it is expected to have very weak learners. There were learners who could not speak or write anything even towards the end of the course. Overall, there was a visible improvement but at the same time it is not 100% effective from the point of view of learners. The very weak learners might find it difficult to keep up with the rest.
- May be the learners find it difficult to grasp the concept of DE. This may be a reason for the poor performance of some learners. As a result, the time management has become an issue too.
- The materials were specifically designed for Social Science learners. The language skills to be learnt are the same though content wise (themes) the
materials may be more relevant to the Social Science learners. The learners from other disciplines might feel that the course was not specifically designed for them and hence, not relevant to their academic fields.

- Learners do not make the most of the materials as they are not oriented towards self-learning. May be they were confused between the conventional methods they are used to and the newly introduced DE mode. Overall, the majority of the learners were not using the materials the way it has been designed to be used.

- Certain grammar points were not focused on in EGAP materials. This would have a negative impact specifically on the weaker learners who did not have the basic grammar knowledge to reach up to the level targeted in EGAP. Hence, the course does not cater to all levels of learners.

- Ideally to suit DE and to be self-instructional, the materials should have a lot of self-assessment questions, activities and answers. Some of those aspects have not been focused on in EGAP materials.

- It would be ideal if the books are more attractive but there are many logistical issues which restrict this.

### III. MW3

- There were many issues regarding assessing listening like non availability and poor quality of equipment.

- We were only touching on certain skills and it needs more in-depth teaching to grasp things better.

- Learners did not come prepared for the classes. They had not done their homework. A very few learners did work on their own. I don’t think it has anything to do with the material and mostly it is because they were not used this culture of DE and it takes time to adjust.

- With regard to time allocation for sessions, we need to think in terms of what they do at home. If they do not do their homework, then it is difficult to take it out on a three hour classroom session.
IV. MW4

- Writing materials for DE mode is a challenging task as our experience is also much limited to the conventional education system. As such it would be very helpful if more training programs and workshops are conducted in this regard.
- A The materials writers do not have the necessary facilities or the time and proper environment to be involved in materials writing.

V. MW5

- Review of materials regularly is necessary though it may be a bit challenging
- There should be a more professional and long term approach to materials development.

4.4.2.4 Suggestions for improvement of EGAP materials

I. MW1

- The tutors/visiting academics should make a conscious effort to relate what is learnt in the EGAP course to application in their relevant disciplines.
- DE is a new and difficult concept for learners. Hence, proper awareness and opportunities should be created for them to get used to it. They should understand the bigger role they have to play in DE in terms of self-learning and being self-directed.
- How to make the EGAP materials more effective for DE mode is largely in the hands of the language experts who are in the process of restructuring the materials.

II. MW2

- ESP element should be incorporated in the course as a supplementary course or as part of the core course.
- As increasing the number of sessions or session duration, it can be suggested that more practice sessions or lab sessions be provided under the supervision of a tutor.
• It is important to have an introduction to the course material at the very beginning. May be at an orientation programme where the learners are taught how to deal with self-instructional material either in writing or in orally or in writing. Some instructions should be given to the learners as to how to manage the materials.

• Tutors/visiting academics’ guide should be able to be clear enough for the tutors/visiting academics to understand how to deal with the course materials.

• Very clear instructions should be given in the materials as to how to deal with each section.

• Answer key should be provided to the learners which will save a lot of time the tutors/visiting academics spend in the class explain answers.

• Authentic listening materials should be used in listening assessments (Eg. TV news) to make it more natural.

• Low cost but effective learning materials should be produced with the use of new technology.

• Online materials would be a good supplement for innovative teaching materials but accessibility on the part of learners and maintain consistency across the learner population on the part of institution will be challenging tasks.

III. MW3

• It could have been useful if the materials writing team could observe classes to see how the teaching-learning procedure takes place in the true practical situations. Further, it would help to talk to tutors/visiting academics apart from class observations. This could contribute towards improving the future materials.

• Supplementary materials can help in giving the additional help they need to learn the required skills better. We have to give them material related to the subject written in the particular discourse that we want them to learn and ensure that they read it.

• There’s a high demand from the learners for more time and focus on speaking skills which they feel is important and should be given more time for practice.
• Constantly changing tutors/visiting academics can be problematic. The teacher should be able to get to know the learners and monitor their progress. This cannot be done effectively when there are gaps in teaching a certain group. So the same teacher needs to be there regularly.

• The course materials should be more attractive, colourful and should maintain quality in terms of paper and printing.

IV. MW4

• The materials should be revised and updated with current topics and issues.

• It can create more interest among the learners if certain concepts can be simplified.

V. MW4

• Review of materials is important. There should be team of internal and external professionals to moderate the materials, and also instructional designers.

• Incorporation of authentic texts in the materials would be more effective.

• Learners’ needs should be taken into consideration when developing materials.

• Developing and using a checklist is important which we have not done so far.

• Involvement of external professionals in the process of materials development will help to get an impartial view.

• Content should be current.

• Objectives and the learning outcomes should be mentioned clearly.

4.4.2.5 Other comments by the course material writers

I. MW1

• The effectiveness of the lesson can be greatly attributed to the way teaching happens. As such, teacher has a major role to play.

• The skills they learn in EGAP course will enable them to transfer the same to their respective disciplines.
II. MW2

- Assessing listening and speaking make them learn better as they see a target at the end and pay more attention to their learning.
- In the Sri Lankan context, still language learning happens mostly in the classroom and the opportunities for the learners to use language outside the classroom is rare.

III. MW3

- In terms of learner engagement with language, specifically with the lesson on religions, there was some sort of resistance as well. But I think there was a very subtle engagement at a different level. The fact that they are resisting is because they are engaging. That’s my theory.
- The learners are new to DE mode learning. They were getting used to a new culture. And also this is not like tuition where you memorize. You have to keep that in mind that they are used to a very tuition culture. So it takes time for them to adjust. But meanwhile learning is happening though the learners are not much aware of it.
- Initially they don’t know what they are doing because this is not like tuitions, this is not the exam oriented mode of learning, this is very subtle learning put it into some very unsuspecting dialogue and the learning is happening

IV. MW4

- In general, different disciplines show much variation in terms of their proficiency levels, interest, attendance and performance at the examinations etc.

V. MW5

- Regional difference in terms of capacity and teaching approaches should be catered to through clear guidance and specially the less experienced tutors/visiting academics should be guided well.
4.4.2.6 Summary of the interviews for course materials writers

- All the course materials writers were highly qualified in ELT as they possessed graduate and post graduate qualifications. In terms of materials writing, they largely depended on experience and expert guidance as none of them have been given a formal training on writing materials in DE for ELT. The newly recruited lecturers had followed a six month course in which they had been trained in general on teaching and materials development in DE.

- All the course materials writers felt that the amalgamation of all four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) in the EGAP programme as a positive move taken by the department.

- Two of the materials writers had felt that as the course intends to teach general skills, the Social Science oriented content did not have a negative impact on the learners whereas other materials writers felt that though the content did not affect the skills that were being taught, it could have had a positive impact on learner motivation if the content had been relevant to their subject areas of the main course.

- All the materials writers agreed on the fact that EGAP course effectively achieved the objectives set out for the course.

- One negative aspect the course materials writers unanimously agreed upon was the learners’ lack of enthusiasm on working on their own or self-learning. This was attributed to many reasons like lack of time as many of the learners are employed, over dependency on tutors/visiting academics and classroom sessions, lack of enthusiasm and capacity to reach out for additional sources of learning etc. But the root course of many of such issues seemed to be the learners lack of awareness about DE mode learning and their inability to adjust to the transformation from conventional to DE mode learning.

- Many of the course materials writers gave special focus to speaking skills thus highlighting the importance of more practice in speaking and giving more time for the same.

- All the materials writers highlighted the importance of revision of materials and also the importance of including current and authentic materials.
• One materials writer was of the view that being a language it is very difficult for materials to be 100% self-instructional where as another had pointed out that materials should be further improved by including self-assessment questions, etc. To make them more self-instructional

• Creating awareness among tutors/visiting academics and learners, making materials more attractive to motivate learners, provision of required facilities and specifically providing training for materials writers on writing DE materials are a few more points that emerged through the feedback of course materials writers.

• Further, the importance of transfer of knowledge and experience across different layers of professionals involved in the EGAP course was highlighted. One materials writer pointed out that it could be more effective if the materials writers could observe the classroom teaching in order to get a better idea of what is happening in the practical reality.

4.4.3 Interview for language experts

Four language experts who were closely involved in the design, development, implementation and decision making of the EGAP program were interviewed to get their views and opinions on course materials and various aspects relevant to course materials of the EGAP program. The information extracted from those interviews is presented below under six major aspects; general information of the language experts, the focus, effectiveness, issues, suggestions for improvement and other comments related to EGAP course materials.

4.4.3.1 General information

Language experts who have been involved in the EGAP program are highly qualified in terms educational qualifications. All four of them possess doctorates and other qualifications in English language teaching and other language related areas. They also have a long experience of work at the English language teaching at the tertiary level and in distance mode. In terms of training and professional development, the opportunities seemed to be limited and the academics depend heavily on their experience in catering to
the language learners in the context of distance education. Further, they expressed willingness to undergo further training and stressed on the importance of being updated on the trends and developments in teaching in DE and specifically teaching English in DE.

4.4.3.2 The focus of EGAP materials

All four language experts had pointed out the main focus of the EGAP program as teaching the all four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) and to develop their competency in the generic skills and study skills relevant to their main academic program. They also stressed on the fact that the benchmark framework was applied to decide the relevant skills for each proficiency level in order to maintain consistency across the university system in the country and further, pointed out the standards were set in line with the benchmark framework and the selected proficiency levels were decided through discussions with the faculty members of the relevant faculties.

4.4.3.3 Effectiveness of EGAP course materials

I. LE1

- The materials were designed in line with the requirements of the respective faculties after discussion with the relevant academics. As such, the learners’ requirements as perceived by the academics of the relevant disciplines had been looked into when designing EGAP materials.
- The books were designed as SIM to promote self-learning among the learners.
- The tutors/visiting academics were trained through training workshop.
- The restructuring of materials are in progress with Science undergraduates in focus and sections the science learners were not happy with are replaced by new materials.
- Skills and competencies remain the same in accordance with the specified benchmark levels whereas the content is being changed to suit the learners needs.
• The benchmark levels have been decided by the department of language studies in agreement with the other faculties.

• Grants provided for the restructuring process is an added benefit in carrying out the work successfully.

• Restructured units have added features like references and links to internet resources for further learning.

• Restructured units have added features like references and links to internet resources for further learning.

II. LE2

• The EGAP component effectively caters to the general academic language skills of the learners.

• The objectives of the course have been effectively transferred to the EGAP materials.

• Currently, the EGAP learners are being offered a supplementary online course.

• The other text books on ELT have been looked across when designing EGAP materials.

• EGAP is a bimodal program where there is a face-to-face element as well as a DE element.

III. LE3

• The EGAP materials fulfil the requirement of SIM but it is a very particular type of learner who could get the full benefit of it: the self–regulated learners.

• The structure of the course materials is good in terms of all four skills we have addressed. The course books are clear, materials are contemporary and situated in our social context and there is a balance of local and international articles. Also the presentation of the materials is good.

• Restructuring of the course, the funding received and incorporation of authentic sources are positive aspects of the course.
• EGAP has set a trend by going for restructuring within 3 years of its inception.

IV. LE4

• Implementing an EGAP approach is a positive move towards catering to a more diverse learner population but at the same time incorporating an ESP element at a later stage might prove to be effective.
• An online course is offered to give the additional help the learners need. It should be developed further to cater well to the learners.
• The EGAP materials have catered well to give learners the general language skills they need.
• The other DE contexts and materials were referred to in designing EGAP materials.
• Training was given to tutors/visiting academics in the form of workshops. They need more support as the materials have changed.

4.4.3.4 Issues related to EGAP course materials

I. LE1

• It was anticipated that learners and tutors/visiting academics would ask for the incorporation of an ESP element. At the initial stage, all the learners get academic language skills through EGAP but an ESAP component will be added at the end of restructuring of materials for science learners.
• The lack of understanding on part of the tutors/visiting academics on concepts in DE mode teaching and as such their inability to put them into practice is a serious lapse.
• The same issue can be observed on the part of learners and the over dependency of learners on classroom teaching is an issue which further leads to request for more classroom time. As a result of the same, majority of the learners do not come prepared for the contact sessions.
• The lack of exposure of tutors/visiting academics to DE mode teaching and the tendency of them to follow the same method of teaching they use in conventional systems is problematic in creating an effective DE environment in teaching.

• The learners’ inability to adjust well to the transition from conventional (school system) to DE mode and them being tutor oriented as a result is a problem that needs to be addressed.

• The current materials being very closely linked to social sciences makes it less relevant to the undergraduate learners of other disciplines and this will be address through ongoing restructuring process.

• It is an accepted fact that there is a group of learners whose level of proficiency is much below the bench mark levels decided for the course. As in any other subject, if they fail the subject, they need to repeat and come up to the required level of proficiency.

• The necessity for more use of technology and internet facilities as per current trends and requirements and low availability and resultant low accessibility to the same could be attributed mainly to the low efficiency and lack of maintenance on part of the IT division.

II. LE2

• The materials are designed for self-study. Though the course is designed for self-learning, initially there should be a preparatory work in the form of contact sessions to facilitate transition to distance mode as some learners are very weak in English language skills.

• There are logistical issues in providing the additional support needed by the less proficient group of learners. It is too big in scope for the department to handle.

• In the current system, the department is simply struggling for more teaching time.

• The time constraints in the program is due to the fact that EGAP course has to fit into the academic cycles of the university.

• Language is one specific area where DE mode has limitations which are difficult to overcome.
III. LE3

- If the learners are not self-regulated, they depend heavily on the teacher and may not get the full benefit of the materials on their own.
- English being an added subject, the motivation to learn English in addition to all the other subjects, is low. The learners tend to consider it as a double burden.
- There is a chance of the supplementary materials not being used as the learners’ main focus is on the core course.
- Large numbers in a class is an issue as teaching and learning in EGAP needs a lot of interaction.
- The outcome of a lesson depends largely on how the tutors/visiting academics teach in the classroom. This is in a way possibly the failure of text based DE as the learners heavily rely on the teacher.
- Lack of motivation is the main factor that hinders learner progress.

IV. LE4

- There is a problem with the learners who are very low in proficiency.
- The logistical problems and lack of resources would be a major hinderance to offer a bridge course for weaker learners to come up to the level of EGAP.
- The logistical problems and lack of resources would be a major hinderance to offer a bridge course for weaker learners to come up to the level of EGAP.
- The materials should be designed in a way it can cater fully to self-learning with features like SAQ etc. We have not catered fully to this and are in the process of revising the materials accordingly.
- The learners may need subject specific language skills in addition to general academic skills. This is difficult to implement due to huge diversity among the learners in terms of subject relevant disciplines. Intra disciplinary things are very difficult to handle in a single course.
- The online course offered to the learners was not accessed by many of them. The main reason could be the lack of facilities.
4.4.3.5 Suggestions for improvement

I. LE1

- Department of Language Studies to take measures to tailor EGAP course designed for Social Sciences to suit the requirement of the other faculties.
- The specific language skills required for different disciplines should be incorporated in the EGAP course and it is strongly advocated that this should come as part two of the course.
- How the part two of EGAP which deals with discipline specific skills will be dealt with but if most of the components are offered online, it will save the time that will cut into faculty time for other subjects. Perhaps, the learners can register and do the course online in their own time. Hope the online component will be available on MOODLE.
- Planning for large workshops for many learners which might disseminate the expertise of experienced academics to a large number of learners at a time. This can be done through video transmission by using NAC and it will further help to reduce the number of contact sessions. Further, this is expected to be more effective in terms of outreach, consistency and achieving goals and this has been proved in the past as well.
- Need to re-educate the tutors/visiting academics on techniques in DE and make them save much of the contact sessions from being used as conventional teaching sessions which need more time.
- Awareness should be created among learners to facilitate effective transition from conventional education system to DE and they should be guided accordingly.
- The content matter which do not relate to the interest of the learners would have to be changed.
- Academic help for learners outside their contact sessions: in the department by an academic on the problematic areas of study, is suggested and recommended.
- Better equipped classrooms are expected with the world bank grant, which will facilitate the use of AV materials and they are expected address the current issues and learner complaints on facilities and teaching.
• The increased efficiency on part of the university support systems need much attention and improvement.
• Discussion among tutors/visiting academics, colleagues, experts etc with a lot of experience is an important factor to give tutors/visiting academics more innovative and effective ideas for teaching.
• Request for more materials and teaching for grammar could be catered for through online lessons in order to save more time for essential classroom practices like speaking skills.
• Knowledge gained by tutors/visiting academics through exposure to expertise and discussions should be transferred to the practical realities in the classrooms to realise the objectives of DE.
• LE1 endorsed a point raised by a teacher that it’s not the language but the passion to learn the language that should be inculcated in the learners.
• We should be modern, updated and move ahead with time in terms of materials and teaching approaches.
• The course should be supplemented by text and online materials.
• More time and attention should be given to speaking skills.
• More materials (specially AV) should be available online through MOODLE.
• Awareness should be created among learners on the available facilities and resources (computer labs, NAC) and tutors/visiting academics should move ahead in time in terms of their competencies in use of technology.
• Learners should be encouraged to make use of their preferences towards modern technology for educational purposes and to extract relevant information.

II. LE2
• There should be an ESP component preceded by the EGAP course
• In terms of the mode of delivery, the EGAP materials should lend itself to self – learning and learner independence
• The weaker learners obviously need more training in language. To fully cater to them, then we have to look at added levels of language training before we come to the EGAP.
• It is recommended that the EGAP learners should be given a further course for each level of their academic work, as an ESP element which should deal with academic genre linked to their own subject. But it is beyond the scope of the department.

• To better cater to DE learner clientele we should further enhance the opportunities for self-learning and further opportunities for face to face sessions as well. Further, there should be an expansion of quality and quantity of materials we currently offer.

III. LE3

• The constant feedback of the learner should add to the restructuring process.

• The materials should be supplemented with more materials, more variety to cover different disciplines and more choice in terms of relevant disciplines. A little bit of ESP element incorporated in this would be helpful.

• The inclusion of a range of items in the materials to cater to different disciplines would help.

• More interesting themes should be included.

• Learners should be motivated towards more internet based activities. Online materials would be the way to go because it makes independent learners and supplementing the current materials with more online materials would help.

• The lack of infrastructure facilities could be overcome to some extent by effective use of the available resources in the university (NAC, computer labs) and outside university (internet cafes).

• Awareness should be created among learners and tutors/visiting academics about the available technology and resources and tutors/visiting academics should play an active role in motivation learners towards this.

• Speaking skills should be given more focus, priority and time.

• To cater to the mixed ability groups, the materials should have a range of activities pitched at different proficiency levels (from very basic to higher levels). Scaffolding effect can be used effectively for a more positive outcome.

• Referring to OER materials would be a good idea.
• An ongoing English program would be an ideal option to cater to the undergraduate learner population.

IV. LE4

• It would be better if a course could be offered to learners of low proficiency levels, before they register for EGAP to bring them up to that level.
• EGAP will serve the learners well perhaps in their first year but at higher levels, they may require more specific academic language skills which need to be catered to through ongoing ESP courses.
• The course could be improved by making the materials more learner-centred and more interactive. Further, learners will be motivated if materials are printed in better quality paper and supplemented by more AV materials.
• Better classroom and infrastructure facilities should be provided. Policy makers at university level should pay attention to this.
• Peer learning, peer interaction and self-learning should be promoted among the learners. Some teacher training is also required in this line to empower tutors/visiting academics to motivate the learners for self-learning.
• Training is necessary for tutors/visiting academics to understand the what distance education is and to make their classes more learner-centred.

4.4.3.6 Other comments by the language experts

I. LE1

• Though tutors/visiting academics and learners ask for more classroom time, it should be minimal in DE. According to literature, it should be one seventh of the actual studying time. as such the classroom time cuts across the principles of distance education and by allowing that we are defeating DE purposes.
• The younger tutors/visiting academics are apparently more attuned to the new techniques in DE and show a greater flexibility in adapting whereas the older tutors/visiting academics tend stick to the more conventional methods and seek more classroom time.
• The weaker learners need to come up to the required proficiency level if necessary by repeating the subject.

• Tutors/visiting academics who are pursuing higher education and post graduate education in ELT have managed to incorporate their knowledge into practical teaching experiences in the classroom and proved to be more effective.

• The training opportunities and exposure that availed the tutors/visiting academics in the recent past has benefited them immensely in terms of becoming more facilitative and interactive tutors/visiting academics where as the older generation of tutors/visiting academics did not have the same level of opportunities and exposure at the early years of teaching.

II. LE2

• To a great extent, the EGAP course was adopted to due to the time frames of the academic calendar of the university. Under the given conditions and requirements, EGAP was the best option available.

• In one of the studies on the course, it was found out that learners are looking towards fulfilling both their academic purposes as well as social purposes. So the EGAP course act as a bridge which where those academic as well as general elements are catered to.

• The outcome of EGAP is not a simple issue of whether the materials are of good quality or not but there are other factors which impinge on the way it is disseminated and used.

• Essentially more language training and more language teaching and learning opportunities can be advocated but it is questionable how practical the implementation would be.

• Learners are interested in the themes relevant to them but the tutors/visiting academics can effectively relate the skills to their main academic course.
III. LE3

- We should look at the materials and practices of other DE mode institutions and incorporate the relevant and useful things in our courses to make them more effective.
- The administrative issues should be sorted out to see a highly motivated learner population and what they are learning to be effectively contributing to their academic work.

IV. LE4

- The target of EGAP to teach learners the transferable generic skills in the respective academic contexts but measures should be taken to collaborate with the relevant disciplines and departments to see whether those skills are effectively transferred to their academic contexts.
- Research should be carried out along this line to gauge the effectiveness of the course in terms of transfer of skills.
- Content of the lessons should not be a big issue as skills taught through that is the main focus of the course.

4.4.3.7 Summary of the interviews for language experts

- All four language experts were in agreement on the lack of autonomy on the part of learners as it should be in distance mode education and the minimal contribution by tutors/visiting academics in enhancing autonomy in learners. Their views varied in the ways and the levels the autonomy should be promoted in learners but on the whole the necessity and significance of learner autonomy in DE and the necessity for active effort on the part of learners and the contribution of the tutors/visiting academics were stressed upon by all.
- Creating awareness among the learners and tutors/visiting academics about the need, importance and approaches to self-learning was highly recommended and suggested by all the language experts
• All four language experts agreed upon the necessity for an ESP element in the course at higher levels of the academic path of the learners. The suitability of the EGAP course at the starting point of their academic journey is pointed out as highly appropriate while highlighting the necessity for ESP at a later stage in the process.

• All the experts agreed on the fact that EGAP materials cater adequately and effectively to meet the objectives set out for the EGAP course but pointed out the scope and necessity for improvement.

• The views of language experts differed on the issue of the low proficiency learners. While LE1 stressed on the fact that those learners should reach the level set out in EGAP through learning and facing the examinations until they reach that proficiency level, the other three experts agreed on that it would be beneficial if additional support and language training could be provided for them to reach up to that level before or during EGAP course.

• Infrastructure facilities were a main concern raised by all the experts but at the same time they pointed out some positive moves taken by the university in providing many facilities under the grants provided. LE3 pointed out that optimum use should be made out of available facilities and it is necessary to create awareness among tutors/visiting academics and learners alike on the same.

• Restructuring of the course materials to suit the needs and interest of the diverse learner population was highlighted as a very positive move towards an effective teaching –learning experience. This is more geared towards making the materials more suitable for self- learning by incorporating relevant themes, web-links, self assessment questions and a variety of activities to suit different proficiency levels etc.

• Teacher training as well as an attitudinal change on the part of tutors/visiting academics was highlighted as a necessity. This was highlighted as an essential point to bring about a positive transformation of the tutors/visiting academics and learners from conventional education system to DE mode education.
4.4.3.8 Points emerging through semi-structured interviews

There were few common points that strongly emerged through the interviews with tutors/visiting academics, course materials writers and language experts.

- The most important factor that emerged is the lack of learner autonomy or learners' failure to be engaged in self-learning.
- The importance of incorporating ESP element into the EGAP course is another point that was highlighted.
- The need to provide extra support through supplementary materials in the form of text or online materials was also pointed out.
- The need for teacher training and the need for an attitudinal change on the part of tutors/visiting academics as well as learners was highlighted.

4.5 Analysis of materials

The course package of the EGAP program consists of three books and one DVD. Course books consist of two units each and in each unit, the activities and texts are based on a major theme. In the first three units the main four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) are taught separately as separate modules whereas in the last three units the four language skills are integrated and units are divided into two parts; part 1 and 2. The listening lessons for each unit are included in the DVD and the DVD is designed to be used in combination with the text materials. The DVD includes listening lessons in the forms of songs, interviews, demonstrations, power point presentations, group discussions etc. The course materials are designed in line with the bench mark frame work as defined for the EGAP program and the lessons are planned to add variety to learning. Further, the materials are designed in increasing level of challenge to cater to increasing proficiency levels of the learners through the course.

As described in chapter 3 (3.6) and in this chapter (4.2.3), the analysis of EGAP course materials (texts) were based on two standardized check lists: Cunnigsworth (1995, see Appendix 3.7) and McGrath (2002, based on Breen and Chandlin, 1987, see
Further, the materials were analysed according to a checklist by Kumar, A. (2000, see appendix 3) which is specific to SIM (see Appendix 3.8).

The Cunnigsworth (1995) checklist for evaluation of course books is a basic reference checklist containing some of the most important general criteria. It in general covers a wide area of categories which includes aims, approaches, design, organization, content, skills, topic, methodology, tutors/visiting academics’ books and practical considerations of and about the materials.

Analysis of the materials according to the checklist by Cunnigsworth (1995), is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Presence of the feature in EGAP Materials</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aims and Approaches</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The aims and objectives are clearly laid out for the whole program as well as for each unit and module. The overall aims of the course and the overall objectives for each skill in relation to their main program are given in the introduction to the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>erin at the aims of the course materials correspond closely with the aims of the teaching program and the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>needs of the learners?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>the teaching program and also both the materials and teaching program correspond with the relevant mark bands of the benchmark framework. The course goes as close as possible to the needs of the learners but the diversity among learners in terms of level of proficiency, exposure, interests, differences in disciplines in the main course, cultural differences and numerous other factors have created gaps in the learners’ needs as perceived by the course design team and as exist in reality when and where materials are in action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is the course book suited to the teaching learning situation?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>The course books were flexible enough to create an interactive learning environment in the classroom but to what extent the book could create a conducive teaching/learning environment was largely dependent on the teacher and to some extent on the facilities available. Further,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
the time limitations, learner factors, facilities etc. affected the effectiveness of the course book. The heavy dependency on the teacher for the effectiveness of the lessons at contact sessions and the learners’ lack of enthusiasm and failure to do work on their own raises the question as to how effective the course books as self-instructional materials in that sense.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>✓</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How comprehensive is the course book?</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>The course books are comprehensive to the extent that they cover the language skills as planned in the aims and objectives. Within those limits they act as good resources for learners and tutors/visiting academics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does it cover most or all of what is needed?</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>The course books are comprehensive to the extent that they cover the language skills as planned in the aims and objectives. Within those limits they act as good resources for learners and tutors/visiting academics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it a good resource for learners and tutors/visiting academics?</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>The course books are comprehensive to the extent that they cover the language skills as planned in the aims and objectives. Within those limits they act as good resources for learners and tutors/visiting academics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the course book flexible? Does it allow different teaching and learning styles?</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>The course books allow flexibility to use different teaching and learning styles. As they consist of many activities which allow varying learning/teaching techniques, they are expected to cater to a range of teaching/learning styles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The EGAP course is designed according to the benchmark standards (4 - 6.2) and organized into six units under six main themes. The four skills are incorporated into each unit in accordance with relevant texts and activities and according to increasing complexity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design and Organization</th>
<th>The entire course package consists of three course books, two DVDs, tutors/visiting academics guide and the answer key for tutors/visiting academics.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What components make up total course package (e.g., learners books, tutors/visiting academics books, cassettes)?</td>
<td>The entire course package consists of three course books, two DVDs, tutors/visiting academics guide and the answer key for tutors/visiting academics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the content organized (e.g. according to structures, functions, topics, skills, etc)?</td>
<td>The content is organized under main themes and the skills to be taught. The skills are organized in increasing level of complexity, leading from teaching skills separately to integrated language skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How is the content sequenced (e.g. on the basis of complexity, “learning ability, usefulness etc.”)?</td>
<td>The content is sequenced on the basis of increasing complexity which in turn reflects the learning ability of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is the grading and progression suitable for the learners? Does it allow them to complete the work needed for any external syllabus requirement?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The grading and progression of materials are suitable for the learners of the target proficiency level but some learners find it difficult to cope with the level of challenge posed by the materials towards the last 2-3 units. There is no external syllabus requirement involved and the course and the course materials are designed for the learners and the learning requirements of the very specific context of EGAP in distance mode.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there reference sections for grammar etc.? Is some of the material suitable for individual study?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course books provide reference sections for grammar as per the grammar items provided in the lessons. The course books are designed as self-instructional materials and hence, meant for and are suitable for individual study.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is it easy to find your way around the course book? Is the layout clear?</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructions are given clearly for each lesson, section and activity and as such navigation through the book</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
is quite easy and dynamic. Further, references are provided back and forth through lessons and sections when and where necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language Content</th>
<th>Language content is general in nature and consists mainly of authentic materials related to current topics.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Does the course book cover the main grammar items appropriate to each level, taking learner needs into account?</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is materials for vocabulary teaching adequate in terms of quantity and range of vocabulary, emphasis placed on vocabulary development, strategies for individual learning?</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
activities to learn and practice vocabulary specifically required for the academic contexts in their respective academic disciplines. Overall, the vocabulary learning has been dealt with sparingly when compared to the focus and time given for other skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does the course book contain materials for pronunciation work? If so what is covered: individual sounds, word stress, sentence stress, intonation?</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation has not been identified as an area that should come under the purview of the EGAP program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the course book deal with the structuring and conventions of language use above sentence level, for example, how to take part in conversations, how to structure a piece of extended learning, how to identify the main points in a reading passage? (More relevant at intermediate and advanced levels.)</td>
<td>✅</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The course books address the structures, conventions of language and discourse features from above sentence level to a higher level like writing a short paragraph, identifying the thesis statement and supporting details in a paragraph, using language structures and vocabulary appropriate to the context, taking part in a conversation etc. The features and skills are</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
demarcated by the benchmark limits set out for the EGAP course

| • Are style and appropriacy dealt with?  
| If so is language style matched to social situation? | The language style has been chosen specifically to suit the mode of delivery (DE). As such the materials are self-instructional and cater to the requirements of academic and social contexts within the scope of the program. |

| Skills | The EGAP program focuses on the study skills in four main language skills required for the studies in the main academic discipline of the learners. |

<p>| • Are all four skills adequately covered, bearing in mind your course aims and syllabus requirements? | Fair time slots are allocated for each skill and for integrated learning of language skills within the restricted time allocation for the whole program. But the feedback of the stake holders (tutors/visiting academics and learners) indicated the necessity for more time for the speaking and listening skills and mainly speaking, |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there material for integrated skills work?</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>The last three units (4, 4 and 6) are designed to teach language skills in an integrated manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are reading passages and associated activities suitable for your learners’ levels, interests, etc.? Are there sufficient reading materials?</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>The materials suit the target proficiency levels for the EGAP course (bench mark level 4 – 6.2) but less challenging and more challenging for the learners above and below those proficiency levels respectively. Materials are sufficient and some tutors/visiting academics and learners were of the view that certain reading texts are too long and too difficult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is listening materials well recorded, as authentic as possible, accompanied by background information, questions and activities which help comprehension?</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Although the listening materials for the course was well recorded, there were complains about certain recordings for listening at continuous assessment tests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is materials for spoken English (dialogues, role plays, etc.) well designed to</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>The spoken materials in the EGAP course were well designed to equip learners for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>equip learners for real life interactions?</td>
<td>real life situations in their academic contexts and beyond that.</td>
<td>• Are guiding activities suitable in terms of amount of guidance/control, degree of accuracy, organization of longer pieces of writing (e.g., paragraphing) and use of appropriate styles?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td></td>
<td>Topics are based on the selected themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is there sufficient material of genuine interest to learners?</td>
<td></td>
<td>The learners seemed to be interested in certain materials. The materials provided were adequate and certain texts seemed to be too long and far too challenging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Is there enough variety and range of topic?</td>
<td></td>
<td>There was sufficient variety in materials in terms of variety of topics, activities and learning approaches but some materials failed to create interest among the learners or to motivate them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Will the topics help expand learners’ awareness and enrich their experience?</td>
<td></td>
<td>To a certain extent, they could but it was not quite evident whether the materials could take the learners beyond the confines of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Recommendation</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the topics sophisticated enough in content, yet within the learners’ language level?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>There were instances the content exceeded the language level of certain learners, especially in the last two units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will your learners be able to relate to the social and cultural context presented in the course book?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>This is fulfilled to a great extent though there were gaps in this regard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are women portrayed and represented equally with men?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>Materials do not indicate any signs of discrimination based on gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are other groups represented, with reference to ethnic origin, occupation, disability etc.?</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>Within the limited scope and objectives of the course, the materials provided are not biased towards any fraction of the society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The methodology of teaching and approaches to learning are mostly defined by the mode of delivery; distance mode.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What approach/s to language learning is/are</td>
<td>√</td>
<td>The materials are designed for self learning and hence interactive in order to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
<td>Answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What level of active learner involvement can be expected?</td>
<td></td>
<td>The lessons and activities are designed to be interactive and different strategies (ranging from individual learning to group discussions and debates) are employed to enhance learner participation. Though the learners vary in their learning styles, the multiple approaches can be expected to cater to their varying learning styles at different levels and introduce them to the new learning approaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What techniques are used for presenting/practising new language items?</td>
<td></td>
<td>The techniques vary from self learning to pair work, group work, class discussions,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taken by the course books?</td>
<td></td>
<td>promote learner involvement. Ideally the materials suit the requirements of the target learner population but certain practical situations demand more flexibility and adaptability on part of the tutors/visiting academics at contact sessions and hence, tutors/visiting academics have been given the space and freedom for such adjustments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is this appropriate to the language learning /teaching situation?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Are they suitable for your learners?

debates, reference to other sources of information like internet and using DVD materials on their own etc. *These techniques and their variation are expected to encapsulate the variation in individual interests and capacities and to further enhance learning through peer learning and scaffolding.

| • How are the different skills taught? | √ | * Initially, in the first three units, the four language skills are taught separately under a common theme. In the last three units the four skills are integrated and taught together under the common main theme. |
| • How are communicative abilities developed?¹ | √ | *The communicative abilities are developed through exposing and teaching the relevant abilities in the class and giving the learners the opportunities to practise them. This could be further supported by giving additional time and space to practise the relevant skills, |

¹ * Though the EGAP materials are designed and developed as SIM, their use in contact sessions demands certain features to be included which complement the conventional teaching methods.
- Does the material include any advice/help to learners on study skills and learning strategies?  

| Does the material include any advice/help to learners on study skills and learning strategies? | ✓ | The introduction to the EGAP course provide advice to the learners as to how the course relates to their academic requirements in the main course and exposes them to different learning strategies in relation to respective language skills. The course provides guidance to develop and enhance their study skills and learning strategies. |

- Are learners expected to take a degree of responsibility for their own learning (e. g., by setting their own individual, learning targets)?  

| Are learners expected to take a degree of responsibility for their own learning (e. g., by setting their own individual, learning targets)? | ✓ | The self- instructional materials are designed to promote self-learning, hence the learners are supposed to take responsibility for their learning. This is restricted to some extent due to the learners’ over dependency on contact sessions and the time limitations in the contact sessions. |

<p>| Tutors/visiting academics’ books | | One tutors/visiting academics guide and an answer key are provided to |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes/No</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Is there adequate guidance for tutors/visiting academics who will be using the course book and its supporting materials?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The guide book gives a very comprehensive description of the materials and adequate guidance for the tutors/visiting academics. This was to a great extent agreed upon by the tutors/visiting academics of EGAP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are the teacher books comprehensive and supportive?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Tutors/visiting academics guide gives very comprehensive guidelines about the course as a whole and how to teach each unit and lesson. The feedback of the tutors/visiting academics indicated a very high level of satisfaction on the guidance given by the tutors/visiting academics’ guide.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do they adequately cover teaching techniques, language items such as grammar rules and culture specific information?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The tutors/visiting academics’ guide focuses mainly on the aims and objectives of the course and the planning and scheduling of the EGAP course to achieve those targets. The teaching strategies and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methods are to some extent demarcated by the activities itself and the tutors/visiting academics are given a greater freedom to adapt to the needs and responses of their learner populations and hence to choose the best teaching methods. As the tutors/visiting academics are experienced and qualified, they are expected to provide the additional grammar knowledge when and where possible and adapt the teaching to provide additional information to suit the learners.

| Do the writers set out and justify basic premises and principles underlying the materials? | √ | The materials are in accordance with the basic principles of ELE, distance education and EGAP which are the overarching determining factors involved in the designing of EGAP materials. Further, it justifies the adherence to the needs of the learners by incorporating the relevant benchmark framework. |
| Are keys to exercises given? | √ | The keys to exercises are |
Practical considerations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practical aspects have a considerable impact on the smooth functioning of the course and hence the final learning outcome.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **What does the whole package cost?**
  Does this represent good value for money? | √ |
| The course package including the teaching component (contact sessions) is fairly reasonable if the smooth functioning of the course, necessary facilities and quality of contact sessions are ensured. Learner and teacher dissatisfaction was expressed in many instances due to lapses in the above mentioned and many other aspects of the course. |
| **Are the books strong and long-lasting?**
  Are they attractive in appearance? | √ |
| The books are strong enough to last through the duration of the course and a little longer if carefully used but they are far from being long lasting and attractive. It is difficult to improve the paper quality and the quality of binding and presentation of the package |
- Are they easy to obtain?
- Can further supplies be obtained at short notice?

<p>| | | |</p>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td>Effectiveness of both those aspects could be ensured through proper course management and coordination but sometimes drawbacks could be observed as the co-ordination is a complicated process which is dependent on many departments of the institution for various functions and tasks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Do any parts of the package require particular equipment, such as language laboratory, listening centre or video player? If so, do you have the equipment available for use and is it reliable?

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>√</td>
<td>The course requires the use of technology to a great extent including multimedia equipment and facilities for use of internet. The multimedia facilities are available though it leads to issues due to inadequacy and non availability of such facilities in certain centres. Further, measures should be taken to make the optimum use of the available net work of NAC (Nodes Access Centres) and computer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
laboratories and also the language laboratory in the main campus in Colombo.

- Multimedia facilities are required and should be sufficiently available to facilitate the listening sessions and the power point presentations which are part of the course.
- Language laboratory could be effectively used for listening component and for practice sessions for the learners. Non availability of language laboratories in the regional and study centres and the large number of learners enrolled in the course can be a limiting factor in this aspect.
- NAC (Nodes Access Centres) are the most potential resource to disseminate expertise across centres through
video conferencing
but the high cost and resultant non accessibility is a limitation in this regard.

- Computer laboratories could be effectively used by the learners for accessing internet and computer facilities to access information and to use the AV materials provided to them. Lack of awareness and motivation on part of the tutors/visiting academics and learners could be limiting factors in this regard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.72</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The checklist for materials analysis, based on Breen and Chandlin1987, as given in McGrath (2002) focuses more intensely on the final outcome as well as the practical considerations and the classroom application of the materials.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Materials Analysis: phase one

What do the materials aim to do and what do they contain?

The materials aim to teach the four major language skills (writing, reading, listening and speaking) in line with the University Bench Mark Framework as per selected bench mark level (4 – 6.2). The materials consist of text and AV materials which are designed to cater to this need through texts, activities, AV mediated lessons, teaching methods and strategies to cater to a wider range of requirements and interests of stake holders.

1. When they finish their course, what should your learners know of and about the target language?

The learners should know about the dynamic nature of the language, its global spread and the possible applications in the contexts of their academic and social usage.

2. What should they be able to do in and with the language?

The learners should be able to perform the expected academic functions (as specified by the relevant benchmark framework) and develop the capacity to transfer those generic skills to adapt to the target academic contexts in their main disciplines (science)

3. What knowledge about language and what guidance for using language appropriately for different purposes in various situations is offered in the materials?

Within the scope of the course, the relevant language skills are dealt with adequately and guidance is provided to some extent to adapt those skills to different contexts. Tutors/visiting academics have been instructed through tutors/visiting academics’ guide to provide extended guidance to relate the skills to their respective disciplines.

4. What does the materials offer which your learners will need to know?

The materials are aimed at teaching the generic skills necessary to function effectively in their academic contexts. Those skills are chosen to suit the average learner (lower intermediate to upper intermediate). The generic skills within this scope are offered through materials and the learners are guided to develop the necessary study skills in accordance with their academic requirements.
5. **What do the materials offer which your learners will be able to do?**
   The materials offer the resources and guidance to learn the generic language skills and study skills necessary at intermediate level of proficiency and the learners are expected to have a fair level of competency and capacity in those skills.

6. **What is missing from the materials?**
   Provision of supplementary materials (text, AV or online) to support the learners who are much below the target proficiency level and to enhance the language proficiency of learners with higher proficiency level than the targeted average group could enhance the course outcome. In addition, more advanced materials as supplementary materials for the learners of above average proficiency level could help and motivate them to access additional knowledge. Further, provision of answer keys to the learners could promote self-learning and learner autonomy as expected in DE courses.

 ▪ **What do the materials make your learners do while they are learning?**
   The materials make them interact, contemplate and interpret information. Further, they make them speak and write and to actively participate in learning which involve all four language skills.

8. **How do you think you best learn a language? What is most useful for learners to do to help them to learn?**
   Exposure and usage do help to grasp and acquire a language. As such it is important for materials to promote interaction among learners, tutors/visiting academics and the materials. Further, in an academic context, it is crucial to know the relevant genre and structures, vocabulary and conventions of the relevant discipline.

9. **What procedure or sequence of work does the learner has to follow in order to be successful at the task?**
   Exposure, interaction, internalizing, interpretation and production of language are important sequential steps in successfully completing a task.
10 Which types of task seem to be more conducive to learning?
The learners seem to enjoy interactive sessions and use of multimedia in the classroom.

11 Which helpful ways of learning seem to be missing from the tasks provided in the materials?
Motivating and providing them access to other sources of learning (internet, teleconferencing, interactive online learning etc.) seem to be missing from the materials. Technology should be introduced to suit the context and the gradual introduction of current and available technology could enhance their level of motivation and access to modern technology.

- How do the materials expect you to teach your learners in the classroom?
The materials are designed in a way that the teacher’s role should become that of a facilitator who guide learner to effectively negotiate with materials.

11. What can I do as a teacher which can best help my learners to learn a new language?
They can be guided best by providing effective guidance in the classroom and extending it to other resources of learning by creating awareness and providing guidance.

12. What are you expected to do to help your learners work successfully through the materials?
To motivate the learners in self – learning and learning through interaction, to give them the necessary guidance in language skills to be learnt and to facilitate them in learning those skills through the course.

13. Do (the) materials give you enough freedom to adopt those roles which for you are the most helpful to learners discovering a new language?
The materials give a lot of flexibility to the teacher/facilitator to use different teaching techniques except that limited time duration of the course and the sessions become a limiting factor in exercising this to great extents.
14. Are you asked to take on roles you do not regard as appropriate?

As a course offered in the distance mode, the tutors/visiting academics’ role is expected to be more dynamic and flexible as a facilitator. Different proficiency levels, the learners’ lack of exposure to the distance mode education, limitations in resources and limitations in time may force the teacher to deviate from the ideal role of a facilitator.

15. Do materials limit what you want to do as a teacher in using them with your learners?

Materials provide a tangible framework and exclusive guidance to aims and objectives of the course, the content, methodology and strategies through which those aims and objectives could be achieved. Depending on the innovation, creativity and dynamism of the teacher as well as proper time management, the materials can be used to get the optimum learning outcome as well as to guide the learners to knowledge beyond the materials. This has been demonstrated by some tutors/visiting academics in EGAP during the face to face interactive sessions.

Materials Analysis: phase two

I. Are the materials appropriate for your learners’ needs and interests?

The learners needs and interests vary considerably mainly due to the huge variation in their socio-cultural backgrounds, educational background, language proficiency and their expectations but the course is designed around a core set of skills and competencies which the course addresses effectively. There is a potential of catering to the extended needs of the learners through additional learning resources and allocating more time.

16. How and to what extent the materials fit your learners’ long term goals in learning the language and/or following your course?

The course is designed as a short term course which can only cater to a clearly demarcated level of proficiency and for a set target (teaching academic English) but at the same time it creates awareness on the future requirements of the language and the necessity to acquire and adapt the skills to future requirements.
17. How far do the materials directly call on what your learners already know of and about the language and extend what they can already do with and in the language?

The activities are designed to tap on their current world knowledge and the language knowledge and take them beyond those to learn the target language and study skills.

18. How far do the materials meet the immediate language learning needs of your learners as you perceive them?

Majority of the learners manage to reach the final objectives of the course whereas the learners of lower proficiency levels find it a bit too challenging.

19. What subject matter (topics, themes, ideas) in the materials is likely to be interesting and relevant to your learners?

The learners seemed to be interested in the current themes with novelty. Further, they seemed to be more inclined towards the topics relevant to their fields.

20. In what ways do the materials involve your learners’ values, attitudes and feelings?

The materials address some social issues as well as spiritual and sentimental aspects of the society. It was noted that such materials were met with mixed responses from the tutors/visiting academics and learners and great care should be taken when including such sensitive issues in course materials as it addresses the sentiments of the stake holders.

21. Which skills do materials highlight and what kinds of opportunities are provided to develop them?

The materials highlight the learning of main four language skills (writing, reading, listening and speaking), in the context of EGAP.

Opportunities are provided for individual learning and interaction at various levels ranging from negotiation with materials to class discussions and debates. At the same time, opportunities for interaction are greatly restricted by time limitations.
22. How much time and space, proportionately, is devoted to each skill?

The time is devoted taking into account the number of hours the learners are expected to work on their own and as such the time given for classroom interaction is limited. The heavy dependency of the learners on contact sessions and their failure to complete the required number of hours of self-studies result in a more demand for classroom time for learning the specified language skills. Both the learners and tutors/visiting academics have pointed out that they specifically need more time for speaking activities as this proves to be the most challenging task for the learners as well as they find less exposure to speaking outside the classroom.

23. How is your learner expected to make use of his/her skills?

The learners are expected to come with a certain level of proficiency as they study English for 12 years in the school and they are expected to build up on their current language skills through the course and achieve the level of competency as expected at the end of the course.

24. How are the learners required to communicate when working with the materials?

The learners are expected to negotiate with materials by engaging themselves with the texts (reading and listening), interpreting meaning and practising productive skills (writing and speaking). Further, they are expected to be involved in interactive activities like pair work, group work and class activities.

25. How much time and space, proportionately, is devoted to your learners interpreting meaning?

Less time is allocated within the contact session for interpreting meaning due to time restrictions but the learners can work at their own space and time in individual tasks meant to be done on their own outside the classroom.
26. How much time and space, proportionately, is devoted to your learners expressing meaning?
Less time is allocated within the contact session for expressing meaning due to time restrictions but the learners can work at their own space and time in individual tasks meant to be done on their own.

27. How and how far can your materials meet the desire of individual learners to focus at certain moments on the development of a particular skill or ability use?
The materials are designed within certain limits to fit into a chosen criterion and a set of skills and hence, the potential of the materials to meet the desires and expectations of individual learners is limited. Nevertheless, to some extent the materials provide the necessary guidance to move beyond and seek additional knowledge. There is a great potential to improve this further by providing supplementary materials in terms of text, AV and online materials as well as by providing links and information to additional sources of knowledge.

II. Are the materials appropriate to your learners’ own approaches to language learning?
The materials are designed in a way to employ multiple learning methods ranging from individual learning activities, pair work, group work and class activities. This allows ample space for learners to practise their own learning methods as well as to experience the potential of less used learning techniques.

28. On what basis is the content of the materials sequenced?
The materials are sequenced on the ‘themes’ as the overarching factor and the lessons are lined up according to the increasing level of difficulty or complexity in terms of the content and the skills to be learnt.
29. On what basis are the different parts of the materials divided into ‘units’ or ‘lessons’, and different sub-parts of units of units/lessons?

Units are designed under overarching themes within which the lessons are divided into sections in the first three units, based on the four languages skills. Last three units present and teach skills in an integrated manner and the units are divided into sections based on the complexity of the lessons and activities along the progression of the units.

30. On what basis do the materials offer continuity? How are relationships made between earlier and later parts?

References are made to the earlier sessions before the start of each new lesson and an introduction is given to the next lesson before summing up. Further, references are made to relevant sections in other lessons and units.

31. To what extent and in what ways can your learners impose their own sequencing, dividing up and continuity on the materials as they work with them?

If the learners work to a great extent on their own, the materials are designed in a way that they can learn at their own space to a great extent but the heavy dependency on the contact sessions, the examination oriented nature of the course and strict time schedules including three continuous assessment tests within the span of around three months and severe time restriction and resource limitations have a negative impact on the space and freedom of the learners for self- learning and learner autonomy.

The checklists by McGrath (2002, based on Breen and Candlin) and Cunnigsworth (1994), look at materials from a general point of view as they are designed for general learning materials. EGAP materials are designed for academic contexts in distance education which in turn make them self- instructional materials. As such, the checklist by Kumar, A (2000, see appendix 3) was selected to evaluate the materials in terms of DE materials and to look into aspects which were not covered by the above mentioned checklists. In the check list (Kumar, 2000) the materials are analysed according to two main aspects; Academic aspects and Physical aspects.
Academic Aspects

1. Selection of Content

- The content of the initial units are adequate in terms of the prescribed syllabus and prescribed time frame. Towards the last three units which are comparatively complex and more challenging for the learners, the content selected for certain reading texts were too long and difficult and on the other hand and time and activities allocated for listening activities were not adequate to conduct the lesson effectively.
- The selected content was adequate in terms of concepts, terms and facts etc.
- The selected content is to a large extent based on the authentic materials
- The content is in accordance with the mental maturity of the learners to a great extent.
- The selected materials contain no redundant materials and the materials are up to date. Further, there are no serious omissions from the prescribed syllabus of the course.

2. Organization of Content

- The content is organized into units and sections with headings and sub headings but units are not further divided into sub units or sub sections. As the lessons are not very long, it was not required to break them down into many sub divisions. In the first three units, each unit is divided into four modules based on each skill but in the last three chapters where the skills are integrated, the units are divided into two parts.
- Each unit has an introduction, objectives pre-activities, activities and a summary but the units do not have self check questions and model answers.
- The length of each unit is appropriate in accordance with the theme and objectives but had time limitations in the practical reality of the classrooms.
- Each unit is self-contained, self-explanatory and self-directed.
- The headings of the units conveys the central idea of the units
- There is proper linkage between the sections and paragraphs of a unit
- An orientation as to how to proceed with the unit is provided to some extent but is not consistent throughout the units.
3. **Presentation of Content**

- Each unit starts with an introduction but a list of content is not provided at the beginning.
- The presentation of content is in accordance with the objectives and different pedagogical considerations and the contents of each unit are presented in a logical order.
- All the main points and sub points are presented in the right order and some of the main points are highlighted for easy reference. Further, linkages to previous units are made where necessary.
- The presentation of the content is in accordance with the readability levels of the target level of proficiency of the learners.
- The presentation of materials promote independent learning to a great extent.
- The content is presented in a way it promotes reinforcement of concepts and references are made wherever appropriate to the supporting media.

4. **Language**

- The language used is simple, precise, correct, clear, unambiguous and comprehensible and the language used is personalized to suit the SIM.
- The materials are very formal and academic and sense of humour is missing through the materials.
- The vocabulary used is to a great extent in accordance with the mental maturity of the learners.
- The structure of the materials is short simple and clear, and hence appropriate for the learners.
- There were not too many clause in a sentence, not too more negative, passive and impersonal words.

5. **Illustrations**

- Illustrations were minimum in the course materials and more relevant and attractive illustrations could have made the materials more effective. Further, the illustrations used could have been used more effectively for instructional purposes than for decorative purposes.
• The use of illustrations included in the texts for the purpose of creating interest, stimulus, imagination, increase comprehension and retention of knowledge/information
• Visual aids are not given to represent important themes
• Overall, the illustrations are not used effectively, suitably and to give variety

6. **Exercises and Assignments**
• Self assessment questions are not included in the course material
• Assignments are not included to cover the important units of the course

7. **Activities**
• A variety of activities are included in the course materials for the learner become actively engaged with the materials and the learning process
• The activities are related to the objectives of the course and necessary advice is given on how to carry out the activity.
• The activities are interesting to a great extent

8. **Preliminaries**
• The title page includes the title of the book, the authors (s’) s name/s and the publishers name and address, etc. This also includes the course team, the editorial board etc. associated with the design and production of materials. Further, the DVD contains the credits minus the list of contents on the cover.
• The reverse of the title page contains information about the year of publication, copy right, the ISBN number etc.
• The table of contents provides only a basic outline of the units, modules and sections. It does not provide a detailed guide of topics, sub topics, page numbers, list of tables, maps, etc.

9. **Back Pages**
• A glossary of important terms or an index of important terms and topics made in the main text are not provided
• There are no appendices giving additional important information which may be relevant to the main text

**Physical Aspects**

1. **Printing, Lay-out and Get-up**
   • The design of the cover page is not that attractive or appealing
   • Sufficient margins were not provided to make short notes
   • The type sizes of the headings, sub headings and activities are appropriate
   • The layout is effective but less eye catching. It could have been improved by using standard symbols to indicate various activities and skills. Further, better and appropriate illustrations could have had a better impact in this regard
   • The length of each line is appropriate and convenient for the eye and the reader is not required to strain too much to read.
   • The spacing between lines and spacing between the words are appropriate and the words and lines are aligned properly to a great extent.
   • The printing is clear and even throughout the book. The shade of printing ink is appropriate but could have been further improved to make it clearer and more attractive.
   • The cutting and brushing of the paper is reasonably smooth.

2. **Durability**
   • The paper used in the book is durable but the binding of the book may not be durable in the long term use.
   • Binding is not attractive at all and it could have been more attractive and convenient if the spiral binding could be used. The current binding does not allow the book to be opened flat.

3. **Size of the book**
   • The size of the book and the pages included in each of the course book is appropriate.
4.5.1 Summary of Analysis of Materials

The overall analysis of materials and the interpretations could be summarized as follows

- The course materials are well designed and have the potential to meet the proficiency levels set out by the selected level of benchmark framework.
- The materials effectively implement a learner-centred approach to learning which gets the active involvement and participation of learners.
- The materials are self-instructional to a great extent in design but show a great scope for improvement to cater to the diverse learner population consistently. The materials could be improved towards this end by supplementing with additional materials to bridge the gaps in existing materials to extend the materials towards more learner autonomy and also to cater to the learners beyond the selected proficiency levels.
- Physical appearance and quality of materials need further improvements to make them more appealing to the learners.
- The activities are varied and employ many techniques which in turn promote more learner involvement and interaction but the illustrations have failed to achieve the same in terms of instructional value as well as drawing the attention of the learners.
- The selection, organization and presentation of content are very much in line with the requirement of self-instructional materials though certain themes and texts did not create much enthusiasm among the learners and tutors/visiting academics as well.
- Publishing the materials has followed the professional standards and conventions.
- Time limitations in terms of contact sessions and the duration of the whole course seem to restrict the time and space for interactive learning and self-learning.
- Overall, the course materials are effective and self-sufficient within the selected confines of the EGAP program though much potential is there for improvement in line with the diverse requirements of the learner population. Further, the requirement to bridge the gaps between the lower proficiency levels up to the levels defined for the EGAP program as well as to continue the learning process towards the ultimate goals of the main degree program (science) seems to be obvious and essential.
4.6 Interpretation of data from group discussions

Group discussions were carried out with the learners in three regional centres: Batticaloa, Kandy and Jaffna. The discussions were carried out as informal discussions among the researcher, the tutor/visiting academic and the learners. The discussion schedule was designed according to seven main points discussed in chapter 4 (section 4.6.2.7) and the emerging ideas and opinions were interpreted and reported under four main aspects of the materials; the effectiveness of materials, issues involved, suggestions for improvements and other comments. The discussions were video recorded and the interpretations were done based on the video recording as well as the notes made after discussions as there were technical issues with two of the recordings.

4.6.1 Effectiveness of EGAP course materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Centre</th>
<th>Batticaloa</th>
<th>Kandy</th>
<th>Jaffna</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effectiveness of EGAP course materials</strong></td>
<td>• Materials cater to learning the desired language skills effectively</td>
<td>• Materials are clear and well organized</td>
<td>• Materials are clear and well organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contact sessions as a whole and specifically the interactive work done in the contact sessions were quite effective</td>
<td>• The materials effectively cover the skills set out in the course objectives</td>
<td>• Incorporation of AV materials in the course is a positive move</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Materials are clear and helpful</td>
<td>• The interactive nature of the materials and the integration of all four skills</td>
<td>• Initial units are easy to cope with but the last two units are quite difficult</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Incorporation of AV materials in the course is a positive move provided a new and interesting experience to the learners

- The course effectively caters to the needs of the learners and is designed in a way to convey a clear idea of the importance and relevance of English for the degree program

- Integration of all four language skills was quite beneficial

4.6.2 Issues with the EGAP course materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Centre</th>
<th>Batticaloa</th>
<th>Kandy</th>
<th>Jaffna</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issues with the EGAP course materials</td>
<td>• The time duration of the course is not adequate to learn the materials provided</td>
<td>• Time given for speaking skills was rather inadequate and as a whole the course duration is</td>
<td>• Time is not adequate to cover the lessons and to conduct the interactive activities more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Certain sections</td>
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and texts were too difficult to comprehend

- The knowledge provided through the course on grammar and vocabulary is rather inadequate

- The infrastructure facilities and equipment provided were rather inadequate at times

- The time given for developing speaking skills is inadequate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>inadequate</th>
<th>effectively</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The EGAP programme starts at the intermediate level and the learners who are very weak in English language skills find it difficult to cope up with the lessons</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- The support of the contact sessions is necessary to understand the materials and therefore the materials do not cater well to self-studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The learners with high language proficiency do effectively</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lack of basic language proficiency in English hinders further progress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Poor infrastructure facilities and equipment is a major constraint</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Some themes are not relevant (religion, gender) and as such the learners are less motivated to follow those lessons</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- The learners referring to other sources of information</td>
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</table>
not gain much from this course and hence, require additional materials or a separate course.  

- Conducting two sessions on the same day proved to be rather ineffective and further, conducting a session before an assessment test proved to be highly unproductive.  

- Offering too many subjects (IT, soft skills and Tamil language) in parallel to EGAP is an overload of work for the like internet, is not evident.
4.6.3 Suggestions for improvement

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Suggestions for improvement</th>
<th>Batticaloa</th>
<th>Kandy</th>
<th>Jaffna</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• More time to be allocated for improving speaking skills and more support to be given for grammar and vocabulary in learners</td>
<td>• More time should be given to improve speaking skills</td>
<td>• An elementary level course should be offered to bring the weaker learners up to</td>
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<tr>
<td>the form of supplementary materials and online materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The duration of the course should be increased (more contact sessions)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• More interactive activities like debates should be included in the contact sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Teaching should be made more effective by using more power point presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>• More visual aids (pictures, posters, maps etc.) should be used in the contact sessions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Additional support is needed for grammar and vocabulary. More grammar activities should be given to fill the gaps between certain proficiency levels as well as learner needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• An orientation linking EGAP and the degree programme will give a clearer view of the academic needs and expectations the learners</td>
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<tr>
<td>the lower intermediate level or such support should be provided through additional sessions and supplementary materials</td>
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<tr>
<td>• More time should be given for the course, specifically listening and speaking</td>
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<tr>
<td>• More support is needed for writing, grammar and vocabulary</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Feedback to be given to learners on CA assessments is important</td>
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</table>
- At the initial stages the learners do not have enough exposure to link the skills they learn to their main programme. As such, an ongoing English course in parallel to their main program will cater well to the changing academic language needs of the learners.

- Feedback on CA tests is essential for learners to

- According to the comments of the learners, an orientation on the EGAP as well as how it could help them in the science degree programme would help learners get a clear view of what they are going to learn and how it helps them in their academic path.
improve on their weak areas of English language.

Table 4.74

4.6.4 Other comments by the learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other comments by the learners</th>
<th>Batticaloa</th>
<th>Kandy</th>
<th>Jaffna</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• According to comments of the learners, skills like reading and writing can be learnt to a great extent at home and as such more time should be given to speaking skills which needs to be practiced in the class</td>
<td>• Inadequate support for the weaker learners may de-motivate them and they may even tend to drop the course as a result</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Many of the learners are aware that a considerable amount of work should be done at</td>
<td>• Higher course fee an overload of unnecessary subjects (soft skills, Tamil, IT) can lead to over stress and may lead to a higher number of drop</td>
<td>• Additional help is needed in learning English as the given time duration, materials and the resources are rather inadequate</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• It was rather challenging for the learners to cope with too much work in parallel to the EGAP course (learning Sinhala, soft skills etc.)</td>
<td>• Some learners tend</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
home in preparation for the contact sessions and this will give more space and time for discussions and interactive activities. Many of them do not do much work at home as they are employed and the time is a limiting factor for them

- Infrastructure facilities, equipment and online learning facilities should be improved.

- Learners seemed to be satisfied with the skills they learn through the course

- The learners’ comments showed that though they do not have any issues with the general

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>outs</th>
<th>to drop the course and the whole degree program due to lack of basic language skills in English</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The fluent learners are not very keen to attend contact sessions yet even many of those learners seemed to be rather weak in writing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4.76

### 4.6.5 Summary of Group Discussions

The important points that emerged through the group discussions conducted with learners of three regional centres are presented below.

- Overall, the learners in all three regional centres agreed that materials were effective and cover the required language skills satisfactorily. The interactive nature of the course materials proved to be highly effective.
- The integration of four skills was highly endorsed by the learners and incorporation of AV materials too proved to be effective as the learners prefer text materials supplemented by AV materials.
- Variance in the proficiency levels and inadequacy of time and infrastructure facilities seemed to be major issues common to all the centres.
- Extra support is recommended in terms of supplementary materials, additional sessions and an ongoing English course in parallel to the main academic programme.
- Maintaining learner motivation through understanding learner issues is crucial in retaining and attracting more learners for the courses.

### 4.7 Interpretation of data from classroom observations

Classroom observations were used in this study as a research tool with the aim of eliciting information on learner negotiation with course materials used in the EGAP course. As mentioned in chapter 4 (section 4.6.1.3, pg 21), classroom observation is selected as a tool based on the fact that how people see and understand their surrounding
play a major role in the way they behave, they act and interact with others, and the way
their actions are perceived by others. As the main objective of classroom observations
was to observe the learner interaction with materials, the analysis was done with special
focus on this aspect and how the other factors influence the learner negotiation with
materials.

The information gathered through classroom observation has been summarized in tables
1 and 2. Information gathered through points 1-4 in the checklist are presented in table 1
and the information gathered through points 6 – 11 in the checklist are presented in table
2.
### 4.7.1 Information derived through observation checklist

**Table - 4.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial No.</th>
<th>Teacher (Tr) No.</th>
<th>Centre &amp; Group No.</th>
<th>Session and time</th>
<th>Preparation for the class</th>
<th>Presentation</th>
<th>Lesson delivery</th>
<th>Class organization</th>
<th>Methods &amp; materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>T4</td>
<td>Colombo Gr. 2</td>
<td>1 9.00-12.00</td>
<td>A satisfactory level introduction was made about the content of the course but linking the lesson to previous and following lessons was not observed. Use of extra teaching materials was also not observed.</td>
<td>A satisfactory introduction was made to the lesson and the language and style adopted by the teacher was appropriate for adult learners</td>
<td>Sufficient time was given for learner activities /practice. The level of interaction between learner-learner and learner-teacher was good. Teacher was very effective in answering learner queries but it was observed that</td>
<td>A good level of integration of skills, summarizing materials during the class and summarizing main points at the end of the class was observed. Further, a satisfactory level of effective use of time, transition from one topic/activity to another was observed. Direction of learner</td>
<td>Well designed materials were provided from the university the teacher employed non lecture learning activities like small group discussion, pair work and learner led activities. Further, the teacher encouraged class discussions. Use of OHP or multimedia equipment was not observed and the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>T12</td>
<td>Colombo</td>
<td>Gr. 1</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Observations</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.00-</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A good introduction to the content of the lesson was made at the beginning of the class. Introduction to the course schedule and use of extra course materials was not observed</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12.00</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A clear introduction to the lesson was made to the learners and the style and language adopted by the teacher was quite appropriate for adult learners.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Time given to learners for activities, clarification of learner queries and opportunities for teacher-learner interaction were satisfactory. Time was a limiting factor in allowing opportunities for interaction.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The skills were well integrated and smooth transition between topics was observed. The teacher periodically summarized the important points of the materials addressed during the lesson and summarized main points at the end of the session. Direction of the Learners for the next class was done fairly well.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Well designed materials were provided in the class. The teacher employed non lecture learning activities like pair and group work and encouraged class discussion to a satisfactory level. Use of other tools like OHP, video, technology etc was not observed</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T16</td>
<td>Mata ra Gr. 1</td>
<td>9.00-12.00</td>
<td>The teacher made a satisfactory level introduction in to the course content and related it to the schedule. Use of extra teaching materials was not observed.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Introduction to the lesson content was made to the class. The style and language adopted by the teacher doesn’t suit much to the adult learners and needs improvement. The style adopted was more appropriate for school learners.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No group activities were observed in the class and learners did not ask questions. Opportunities for Teacher – Learner interaction were less and the teacher seemed to be dominating the session and doing most of the talking.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Success of smooth integration of skills and transition from one topic to another was satisfactory. And also the teacher periodically summarized the materials used during the lesson and summarized the main points at the end of the lesson to a satisfactory level.</td>
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<td>Provides well designed materials and the availability was satisfactory. The non – lecture learning activities: group discussions and learner led activities should be encouraged more. There was not much encouragement for learner discussions from the teacher. Use of other tools/instructional aids like OHP, computer, video was not observed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>T14 Mata</td>
<td>Gr. 2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.00-4.00</td>
<td>Adequate introduction was made to the learners on course content though it was not explained in connection to the course schedule. Use of extra course materials in the lesson was not observed.</td>
<td>A satisfactory level introduction was made to the learners on lesson content. The language and style adopted by the teacher was suitable for adult learners.</td>
<td>The time given for activities/practice was sufficient and clarification of learner queries was satisfactory. Opportunities for teacher–learner interaction were less and needs improvement.</td>
<td>The integration of skills within the lesson needs much improvement and effective transition from one topic to another was not observed and needs improvement. The teacher did not summarize the important points in the lesson periodically. The main points of the lesson were summarized at the end and the teacher effectively directed opportunities for teacher–learner interaction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>T11 Colombo</td>
<td>9:00-12:00</td>
<td>An adequate introduction was given to the course content in line with the course schedule. Use of extra teaching materials was not observed in the classroom.</td>
<td>The lesson content was introduced well to the learners. The teacher’s language and style was highly appropriate for the adult learners.</td>
<td>Time given for activities/practice, opportunities and time given for interaction between teacher–learner and learner–learner were adequate and effective. Teacher effectively attended to clarification of learners for the next lesson. Overall the time was used effectively for learning despite the fact time was a major constraint.</td>
<td>Only one skill (reading) as dealt with in the class. Hence, integration of skills was not observed. The quality of materials provided was satisfactory. The teacher very effectively employed non-lecture learning activities like group discussions, pair work, learner led activities and individual work. It was observed that the teacher encouraged class discussion very</td>
<td>encourage discussion among learners.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
It was observed that many learners asked questions. Use of other technology based instructional aids like computer, multimedia, OHP etc was not observed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.00-12.00</td>
<td>Batticaloa</td>
<td>Gr.1</td>
<td>Extra teaching materials (poster) relevant to the lesson. This was very effective in stimulating curiosity and motivation in learners. The lesson was linked to the course schedule as the lesson progressed.</td>
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<td>The teacher approached the lesson with the use of extra teaching materials and gradually approached the lesson in the text book. This provided a good background to the lesson content.</td>
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<td>The familiarity with the course content was made through extra teaching materials and individual work was sufficient and effective. The teacher clarified the learner queries effectively.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Time given for active participation in group, pair and individual work was well integrated throughout the lesson. Time was used effectively for each skill though limited time was a constraint, specifically in catering to the weaker learners.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Clearly Reading, writing and listening skills were well integrated through the lesson.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The quality of the materials and the use of other technological tools like computer, video, etc. was satisfactory. The teacher possessed considerable competency in technology mediated learning and this helped immensely in...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course content was introduced in the same way. Lesson and created interest. As a result the learners were very attentive and responsive to the lesson. The style and language adopted by the teacher was quite appropriate for adult learners. And learner–learner interaction were sufficient and effective. Demonstrated transition from one topic to another and the teacher effectively summarized materials during the class and summarized the main points at the end of the class. Further, the teacher effectively directed learners for the next lesson by giving a brief introduction to it. Cooperation of technological tools in the language classroom. The teacher effectively employed non-lecture learning methods like group discussions, pair work, individual presentations and group presentations. Teacher greatly encouraged classroom interaction and discussion which created a very active and interactive learning environment in the classroom.
Integration of variety of teaching tools, materials, methods and approaches proved to be effective and interesting for the learners.

<table>
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<th>7</th>
<th>T2</th>
<th>Batti caloa Gr.1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1.00-4.00</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The teacher started the session with a puzzle as an ice breaker. This was quite effective as the learners were tired after the morning session. The teaching was linked to course schedule and the course content while progressing through the lesson. Use of extra teaching</td>
<td>Lesson content was introduced quite effectively to create familiarity with the course content. Style and language used by the teacher was highly appropriate for adult learners.</td>
<td>The teacher allocated sufficient time for learner activities/practice and effectively dealt with learner queries. Learners were keen on asking questions though this was more limited to competent</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The quality of the materials provided was satisfactory. The teacher very effectively employed non lecture teaching methods: Group work, pair work, presentations and promoted discussion in the classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>materials in the class was a very strong point with the teaching process and this proved to be very effective.</td>
<td>learners. All learners took part enthusiastically in activities but weaker learners were hesitant to express themselves. There were adequate opportunities for teacher–learner and learner–learner interactions. Time given for activities/practice was adequate and effective and opportunities for time was utilized effectively. Directed learners for the next lesson effectively by assigning relevant work as home assignments.</td>
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</table>
Teacher – learner and learner – learner interaction were sufficient. If time had not been a constraint, more time for interaction could have given better results. Teacher effectively clarified learner queries and learners were keen to ask questions. A few fluent learners seemed to dominate interactive sessions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>T18</th>
<th>Kandy Gr.1</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>9.00-12.00</th>
<th>Introduction to course content was made at the beginning of the course and it was well linked to the course schedule by recalling what they did in the previous lesson and how this lesson was going to progress. The use of extra teaching materials was not observed.</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Introduction to the lesson content was made at the beginning of the session. The language and style used by the teacher was quite appropriate for adult learners.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Learner activities/practice was given adequate time and teacher effectively clarified learner queries. Adequate opportunities were given for teacher–learner and learner–learner interaction.</td>
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<td>The lesson mainly dealt with writing skills. The time was used very effectively and a clear transition from topic to topic was observed. Effectively summarizing the important points during and at the end of the session was observed and learners were well directed for the next session.</td>
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<td>Though the sessions were interactive, time was a limiting factor in group discussions and learner led activities. Many things had to be covered in preparation for the forthcoming revision test which left less time for interaction. Use of other tools/instructional aids like video, computer, OHP was not observed during the session.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>T18</th>
<th>Kandy Gr.1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1.00-4.00</th>
<th>An adequate introduction to the course content was</th>
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<td></td>
<td>Introduction to the lesson content was</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Adequate time was given for learner</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The smooth integration of skills during the lesson</td>
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<td>The quality of the materials was satisfactory.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
made to the learners at the beginning of the class and the lesson was linked to the morning session. Use of extra teaching materials was not observed and it was not quite necessary as the lesson dealt with listening component and the DVD was used as part of lesson materials.

Language and the style adopted by the teacher were quite appropriate for adult learners.

Language and the style adopted by the teacher were quite appropriate for adult learners. Teacher responded well to the learner queries. The opportunities given for teacher – learner and learner – learner interaction were well managed, adequate and effective.

Teacher periodically summarized the main points and summarized the important points at the end of the lesson. Time was used effectively during the lesson and learners were effectively directed to the next lesson.

Employed non-lecture learning methods like group discussions, pair work and presentations. Teacher effectively promoted class discussion. Use of other technological tools like computer and OHP was not observed but multimedia was used to watch the DVD.

| 10 | T13 | Jaffna Gr. 1 | 9.00-12.00 | Adequate introduction was made to course content and its relevance to the total | Familiarizing learners with the lesson content needs more effort and | Learners did not ask questions and they were passively listening to the | The lesson dealt with reading, writing and listening. The integration of skills needs much | The materials were fairly well designed and the use of other instructional materials was |
course structure but both those aspects need much improvement. The lesson was disrupted by entry of learners from time to time. Use of extra teaching materials was not observed.

creativity. The language and style adopted by the teacher was more suitable for young learners (school children). The teacher’s approach to talking to adult learners needs more contemplation and improvement.

teacher. There was no group or pair work and the teacher seemed to be supervising the individual work giving attention to each learner. Opportunities for teacher–learner and learner–learner interaction were less and needs much improvement.

improvement. Teacher adequately demonstrated effective transition from one topic to another and fairly effectively managed use of time for effective learning. The periodic summarizing of points in the lesson, summarizing main points at the end of the lesson and directing learner preparation for the next class was not observed at all. Since it was the last class of the course, it was not required to satisfy (the DVD was used for the lesson and it had been given to the learners to watch and come prepared for the lesson). The use of non-lecture learning methods: group discussion, learner led activities, were not observed in the class and encouragement from the teacher for discussion was not observed. Learners were mostly involved in individual work and passively listening to the teacher.
further direct them for lessons but the teacher made them aware of the examination procedure and directed them effectively for the revision class to be held on the same afternoon. The learners seemed interested and attentive throughout the lesson.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial No.</th>
<th>Teacher (Tr) No.</th>
<th>Centre Group No.</th>
<th>Session and time</th>
<th>Learner engagement with materials</th>
<th>Teacher – learner interaction</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Rapport</th>
<th>Facilities</th>
<th>Learner responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>T4</td>
<td>Colombo Gr. 2</td>
<td>9.00-12.00</td>
<td>Some learners had done their home work and came prepared for the lesson. There was no evidence to say the learners accessed other resources as required for the lesson (internet, text materials, etc.)</td>
<td>A good level of effective management of group work, presenting challenging questions to stimulate discussion, and encouraging learners to answer difficult questions by providing</td>
<td>The main ideas of the content are very clear and specific which enabled the teacher and learners to stick to them well. Through the progression of the content, supporting information</td>
<td>The teacher maintained a good rapport with the learners and encouraged learners’ thought and participation. Teacher gave praise, commendation and feedback when necessary and dealt with</td>
<td>Availability and quality of infrastructure facilities need considerable improvement. Availability of teaching materials was satisfactory though availability of AV materials for the lesson or for the learners was not observed. The</td>
<td>Attendance of the learners was satisfactory. Participation of learners in learning and practicing and the overall performance of the learners were good. Learners showed a high level of enthusiasm in the learning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
cues and encouragement was observed on part of the teacher. Teacher respected diverse points of view and encouraged learner questions and involvement in debate. Time was a restricting factor in interaction in the language classroom and certain was provided to a satisfactory level. Relevancy of main ideas was clear to a satisfactory level and higher order thinking was required to progress with the lesson. Definitions were given adequately for vocabulary. Distractions effectively and constructively to a satisfactory level. Tailoring the course content and delivery to help many kinds of learners were difficult due to differences in proficiency levels. Classroom atmosphere was very poor and not conducive to learning at all. Process.
discussions had to be restricted due to this. The interaction had to be very focused and less opportunity for free interaction due to time constraints. Learners were not encouraged to answer other learners’ questions and at times teacher tend do more
| 2 | T12 | Colombo Gr. 1 | 1 9.00-12.00 | Learners’ commitment to doing home work and coming prepared for the class was observed to be very poor and needs improvement. Teacher encouraged learner discussion and questions to some extent but it needs improvement. Teacher monitored group work, and asked challenging questions to stimulate discussion, to a satisfactory level. It was observed that tutors/visiting | The main ideas were well presented with supporting information provided in various forms. Relevancy of main idea was well presented. Teaching was done satisfactorily to bring higher order thinking in to | The teacher was effective in incorporating learner thought and participation in the lesson but was not so effective in commending learners for their responses and getting learner feedback. Further, improvement is needed in responding to | The standard of facilities provided was quite good and apart from congestion, the environment was very conducive for learning. Infrastructure facilities available for teaching and the availability of AV materials need improvement. Use of AV materials was | Attendance of learners was good. Participation of learners in the learning process and the overall performance of the learners are satisfactory. |
academics view and activity dominated the class and there was less space for learner views and questions. Limited time was a constraint. The lesson and definitions were provided adequately for vocabulary. Distractions were effectively and the flexibility in catering to the different levels of proficiency among the learners. Limited time was a constraint. The lesson and definitions were provided adequately for vocabulary. Distractions were effectively and the flexibility in catering to the different levels of proficiency among the learners.

| 3 | T16 Mata   | 1 9.00-12.00 | Learner preparation for the lesson was satisfactory and considerable number of learners had done their homework. There was no evidence for teacher–learner interaction was very less. Teacher did not ask many questions or encouraged questions from learners. | The level of main ideas and relevant supporting details in content is satisfactory and relevancy of main ideas. The rapport between the teacher and learners was minimum. The teacher was teaching the lesson in her own way which did not | The AV facilities provided in the classroom were satisfactory and the atmosphere in the classroom was considerably conducive to | Attendance of learners was poor and the participation of learners in the learning/practicing process in the classroom was considerably conducive to |
| 4 | T14 Matara Gr.2 | 2 | 1.00-4.00 | The learner engagement with the materials was minimum and their preparation for the class and The teacher’s encouragement in learner questions and debates was not observed The main ideas in the content and its relevance were quite clear. The teacher did not make much effort to solicit learner feedback and obtain learner feedback. Availability of teaching materials was satisfactory though the DVD required | learner access to other resources like internet and text materials. Group work did not take place in the class and no pair work as well. Interaction among learners was very low. Overall, this aspect of classroom interaction needs much improvement. Group work did not take place in the class and no pair work as well. Interaction among learners was very low. Overall, this aspect of classroom interaction needs much improvement. Definitions for vocabulary were provided adequately. Stimulating higher order thinking in learners in interaction during the lesson needs improvement. Definitions for vocabulary were provided adequately. Stimulating higher order thinking in learners in interaction during the lesson needs improvement. Learning. AV materials were not provided to the learners and this was a drawback in preparation for the class. Learning. AV materials were not provided to the learners and this was a drawback in preparation for the class. Overall performance of the learners needs much improvement. Overall performance of the learners needs much improvement in many different aspects. Overall performance of the learners needs much improvement. Overall performance of the learners needs much improvement in many different aspects. | needs much improvement. Overall performance of the learners needs much improvement in many different aspects. |
self assessment activities need improvement. Learners’ access to other resources as required for the lesson (internet resources, extra text materials) was not observed. The learners were not given the DVD which was needed for learners to prepare for the lesson.

and adequate time was not given for learner questions. Learner interaction in terms of discussions, debates, group and pair work, questions etc was totally missing in the classroom and the lesson was more like a lecture where teacher speaks all the time and the learners were

Supporting information was not provided adequately. Stimulation of higher order thinking was less and definitions were not provided adequately for vocabulary.

thought and participation. Praising of learners for their contribution, making an effort to cater to the different proficiency levels among learners and effective responses to distractions were not observed in the class.

for the lesson was not provided on time. The infrastructure facilities available for learning and their quality need much improvement. Though AV facilities were used in the class the equipment and set up needs much improvement. The classrooms were rather warm and it was a distraction.

the classroom activities was very low and they seemed rather passive and less motivated. Overall performance of the learners needs much improvement.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>T11</td>
<td>Colombo</td>
<td>19.00-12.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learner preparation for the lesson in terms of self assessment activities and completion of work assigned for the learners in each lesson, was not observed in the classroom. AV (DVD) materials required for the lesson was not</td>
<td>passive listeners.</td>
<td>The teacher very effectively monitored group discussions and group activities and allowed group interactions to proceed uninterrupted, adequately allowing time for learner questions and</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Main ideas are very clear and specific and supporting details were provided adequately. Relevancy of main ideas was clear. Higher order thinking was required to some extent and</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Infrastructure facilities available for teaching were quite good and of high standard. Availability of teaching materials was satisfactory but the DVD was not given to the learners. Use of AV materials in the classroom</td>
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</table>
provided to the learners. Further, there was no evidence for learners’ access to other resources as required for the lesson: internet, extra text materials etc. Learners have not been provided with the DVD which they need to watch prior to the class.

allowing diverse points of view of learners. Asking challenging questions to stimulate thinking, encouraging learners to answer difficult questions by providing cues and encouraging learners to answer each others’ questions was not observed. Definitions were not provided adequately for vocabulary.

commendable contributions to the lesson. The teacher was able to handle distractions effectively and constructively. Any special effort on part of the teacher to cater to different levels of proficiency was not observed but this target was achieved to some extent.

was not observed. Classroom atmosphere was quite conducive for teaching – learning, except that the high learner number made it a bit difficult for the teacher to manage the class. It was observed the teacher handled the situation well and effectively.
| Time | T2 | Batti caloa | Only a few learners had done their home assignments and self assessment questions. As such the preparation for the class was not satisfactory. There was no evidence to say the learners accessed extra resources like internet and extra text materials pertaining to the lesson. Learners on part of the teacher. | The time for learner questions was not sufficient and needs much encouragement for learner participation in debate and discussion. Learners’ responses to learner questions were never observed in the class. The teacher encouraged | Main ideas were clear and specific in the materials and supporting information was provided in various forms. Relevancy of main ideas was clear and higher order thinking was required to some extent in dealing with the materials. | The teacher solicited learner feedback and praised the learners for commendable outcome. The teacher fairly effectively incorporated learner thought and participation in the lesson. There was minimum distractions in the class and hence did not through group activities. | Availability and standard of infrastructure facilities and equipment was satisfactory. Use of AV facilities (video) was satisfactory but the learners had not watched the DVD provided to them, in preparation for the class. Classroom was fairly comfortable and created a | Attendance of learners was good and learners had travelled from faraway places to attend the class. Participation of learners in learning/practicing process was good and overall performance of learners was satisfactory. They were |
have been provided with the DVD well in advance but a few had watched it in preparation for the lesson. Learners were encouraged to answer difficult questions by providing cues and discussions to proceed uninterrupted. Definitions were adequately provided for vocabulary. Need much management in that respect. Catering to different proficiency levels was mainly restricted by limitation in time. Conducive environment for learning. The teacher happened to mention that sometimes classes are conducted in schools and those classrooms are much inferior in infrastructure facilities and learning atmosphere it creates. Keen and motivated to learn.
respecting different points of view. Limited time duration of a class was a severe constraint for effective interaction.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>7</th>
<th>T2</th>
<th>Batticaloa</th>
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<th>1.00-4.00</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Some learners came prepared for the lesson and the lesson and had done their home assignments and self assessment questions. A few learners had accessed extra</td>
<td>The teacher encouraged learner questions and allowed adequate time for learner queries. She promoted learner discussions,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
resources like internet, other text materials in relation to the lesson. Some of them had watched the DVD and had prepared themselves for the listening lesson. Majority of the learners depended much on the lesson done in the classroom than what they are assigned to do on their own.

allowed the discussions to proceed uninterrupted and monitored them effectively. Further she presented challenging questions to stimulate discussion and provided cues to encourage learners to answer difficult questions. Learners responding to forms. Relevancy of main ideas was made fairly clear and learners were made to use higher order thinking in understanding the lesson. Definitions were adequately provided for vocabulary and before providing the definition the teacher made the learners praised for commendable learning outcome. There were not many distractions in the classroom and the atmosphere was conducive for learning. It was difficult to pay more attention to the weaker learners individually due to time constraints but they were praised for commendable learning outcome.

was not observed for the session. Classroom atmosphere was conducive for learning.

and for other commitments. The participation of learners in learning/practicing process and the overall performance of the learners were commendable. This could be mainly credited to the well organized, innovative and effective teaching approaches.
learners’ questions was not observed in the classroom and there was no encouragement for that on part of the teacher as well.

Think how the meaning is derived and then provide with the correct definitions for the learners to check their answers.

Only a few learners had done home assignment and self assessment questions and the preparation for the class needs much improvement. There was not Group activities and discussions were carried out effectively depending on the available time. Learner questions were encouraged.

Main ideas were clear and specific. Higher order thinking on part of the learners was required throughout the lesson. Definitions

Teacher and learners maintained a good rapport. Teacher solicited learner feedback and praised them when necessary to

Availability of teaching materials was satisfactory. The AV materials were provided to learners but there were lapses. Some learners had not

| 8 | T18 Kandy | 9.00-12.00 | learners’ questions was not observed in the classroom and there was no encouragement for that on part of the teacher as well. | think how the meaning is derived and then provide with the correct definitions for the learners to check their answers. | made to get maximum benefit through group work (scaffolding). | Attendance of learners was quite satisfactory. Participation of learners in the learning process and their cooperation in spite of many... |
much evidence for learner access to other learning resources like internet and extra text materials, as required for the lesson. AV materials were not required for this lesson. and the group work was monitored effectively. Teacher asked challenging questions to stimulate discussion and encouraged learners to answer questions by providing cues and feedback. Learner responses to the queries of other learners were not for vocabulary were not required based on the content of the lesson. encourage the learners. The lesson required much learner thought and participation. The teacher responded to distractions in terms of poor classroom conditions and noise, quite effectively and constructively. It was observed that the class consisted of got it and the materials were not provided on time in certain instances. Poor infrastructure facilities and poor classroom conditions were the main hindrance to learning. Classrooms were very small and hence congested. Poor lighting, ventilation, furniture and lack of cleanliness were added drawbacks was commendable.
observed in the classroom. The teacher respected diverse points of view and promoted interaction in the class quite effectively.

learner from a vast range of proficiency levels and catering to them adequately was difficult due to the vast difference in proficiency and the limited time frame.

disappointments. In spite of all those set-backs, the effort made by the teacher and learners to teach and learn was commendable.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>9</th>
<th>T18</th>
<th>Kandy</th>
<th>2:00-4:00</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Many learners came prepared for the lesson by doing their self-assessment questions and home assignments. It</td>
<td>Learner questions and discussions were encouraged to some extent and teacher effectively</td>
<td>Main ideas were clear and specific and supporting information was provided in many</td>
<td>Teacher and learners maintained a good rapport. Teacher solicited learner feedback and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance of learners was fairly good. Participation of learners in learning process and their overall</td>
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</table>
was not evident whether learners had watched the video in preparation for the listening lesson. Some learners had accessed other learning resources like internet and text materials required for the lesson. monitored group work. Time was a limiting factor in interactive learning. forms. Relevancy of main ideas was clear and higher order thinking was required to some extent. Definitions were not given for vocabulary as it was not much required for the listening lesson.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>T13</td>
<td>Jaffna</td>
<td>9.00-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was observed that the learners</td>
<td>Sometimes teacher</td>
<td>Main ideas were clear</td>
<td>The teacher managed to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sometimes praised to encourage them when required. Teaching required much learner thought and participation. There were not many distractions and the learners were focusing on the DVD and relevant activities during the lesson.</td>
<td>available on time. Classroom atmosphere was not much conducive for learning.</td>
<td>performance was fairly good.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attendance of the learners
had not done self assessment questions or assignments at home and they had not come prepared for the lesson. Further, it was observed that the learners had not accessed extra resources pertaining to the lesson like internet and extra text materials. According to the teacher, learners do not do these things in general and more or less encouraged learner questions and allowed time for that. But this was not adequate for effective and interactive learning and needs much improvement. No learner discussions or class discussions were observed. The lesson took the form of a teacher dominated and specific in the materials with adequate supporting details. The teacher fairly effectively provided definitions for vocabulary. get learner thought and participation in the lesson to a considerable level and solicited learner feedback. Teacher was soft spoken and her voice did not reach the back of the class but her individual attention to learners compensated for this and it can be available in the classroom need much improvement. Classrooms were not maintained well and the atmosphere was not conducive for learning. The equipment necessary for the use of multimedia was available but low in quality. Need more punctual and trained staff to handle the equipment. was very poor. Learner participation in the learning/practicing process and the overall performance of the learners need much improvement. The learners seemed to be enthusiastic and keen but the external factors and their own personal problems seemed to have a
dependent on the teachings in the classroom. Further they have not used the DVD provided to them in preparation for the lesson.

Lecture where learners were passive learners. Only effective interaction was between teacher and the individual learners when she supervised their work individually. More teacher stimulated interaction among learners is required for the lesson to go in line with assumed as she was more or less catering to the level of proficiency of learners as they were given help individually. This was possible due to low learner attendance and it would not have been possible if the number was high. There were far too many distractions in

Availability of teaching materials was at a satisfactory level. DVD was provided to the learners well in advance but it seemed the learners had not watched it before attending the class.

negative impact on the learning outcome. Further, the classroom teaching seemed to be more exam oriented and this could be a result of severe time constraints.
the objectives and principles of DE mode lessons.

| terms of noise coming from outside and the voice of the other tutors/visiting academics in adjoining classrooms. It was difficult to handle that much of distractions effectively. |
4.7.2 Points emerging from notes made after classroom observations

Table 4.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher No.</th>
<th>Session No.</th>
<th>Things that did not go well in the session</th>
<th>Specific suggestions for improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>• The classroom was congested and was not conducive for successful learning (lack of classroom comfort)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Learners faced difficulties in interaction due to congested nature of the classroom (lack of interaction facility)</td>
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<td>• Teacher was restricted from moving about in the class and monitoring group work, due to lack of space (restricted movement)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Other disturbances like sounds from the road and poor ventilation and light added to the poor classroom conditions (disturbance due to noise)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• More spacious classrooms with necessary infrastructure facilities</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The location of the classroom should be decided in a way to minimize external disturbances</td>
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</table>
| T12  | 2 | • Materials (DVD) not provided on time which led to cancellation of the listening component for the lesson.  
• The teacher was too strict in handling learner queries which seemingly led to reluctance in learners to ask questions  
• Domination by one learner and the friction between the teacher and the learner created a tense situation which proved to be a distraction from the lesson.  
• Though the classroom conditions were fairly good, large number learners in the class made it a bit difficult to manage | • Course materials should be provided on time  
• Teacher should be more learner friendly and should employ more subtle ways of disciplining learners as they are adult learners  
• The integration of language skills in the lesson (teaching) should be more organized |
| T16  | 3 | • Learner attendance was quite low. Though attendance is not a compulsion, low attendance can reflect many aspects like lack of motivation, time constraints and learners’ negative perceptions about the | • Teacher should implement more innovative strategies to motivate the learners and to promote interaction and responsiveness among learners.  
• Infrastructure facilities should be improved to make the classroom more |
course and teaching, etc.
- The ventilation in the classroom was poor and the warm atmosphere was rather distracting and was not conducive for learning. The venue being a government school did not have the standard of facilities suitable for undergraduates.

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<th>T14</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The attendance was very low and the learners were tired. Some of the learners in the morning session were absent for the afternoon session.</td>
<td>Lessons should be more interactive and the tutors/visiting academics should be instructed and trained to do so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening lesson was appropriately scheduled for the afternoon session but the video was too long and the learner concentration level was very low.</td>
<td>Proper instructions should be given prior to listening lesson and long lessons should be broken down into smaller units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The classroom atmosphere was not conducive for learning.</td>
<td>Better equipment and technical support is needed for smooth delivery of lessons.</td>
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<tr>
<th>T11</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The class time tables were not well organized and it led to a confusion which delayed commencement</td>
<td>Measures should be taken to minimize delays in starting classes and proper directions should be given</td>
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and made it difficult for learners to find relevant classrooms. to learners and tutors/visiting academics to find their respective classrooms.

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<td><strong>T2 6</strong></td>
<td>• The participation of less competent learners in interactive activities and presentations was very low. Mostly a few proficient learners were dominating the classroom interaction.</td>
<td>• Since the learners consist of mixed ability groups, more attention should be given to weaker learners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>T2 7</strong></td>
<td>• Differing proficiency levels of learners and the time limitations were main reasons for the more or less differential levels of learner participation and learning.</td>
<td>• At the same time it would benefit the more proficient learner if there are extra activities to improve their knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• It was noted that learners of higher proficiency levels and weaker learners were affected as the course is designed for an average proficiency level.</td>
<td>• Time duration of the session and the program as a whole was a main limiting factor and measures should be taken to space out the course and if possible to have more sessions.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Two sessions in a day proved to be too tiring and inconvenient for learners</td>
<td>• Having two sessions in a day should be avoided.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The limitations of time can be compensated through additional materials in the form of extra materials and online lessons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Activities can be designed through additional materials in the form of extra materials and online lessons.</td>
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<tr>
<td>T18</td>
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| • The classroom was congested, poorly ventilated and gloomy. There was not enough space for group work and the teacher moved around with greatest difficulty to monitor the class activities.  
• Huge difference in the proficiency levels of the learners was observed. Some learners were very fluent and some were very weak while the majority of the learners were of average proficiency level. Due to this there was a mismatch in learner participation in activities. But it could be seen that more proficient learners at the same time have a positive impact on the less competent learners and they too were motivated to respond  
• Some course materials were not provided on time |
| • Infrastructure facilities and classroom equipment need improvement.  
• Classrooms should be more spacious to facilitate interactive learning  
• Materials should be provided on time to the learners and tutors/visiting academics  
• Supplementary materials should be provided to cater to different proficiency levels and activities should be designed to cater to different proficiency levels |
| Time frame was a huge constraint in the success of interactive learning. | Long video sessions should be broken down into smaller sessions |
| Due to limitations in time, the teaching and class proceedings tend to be more exam oriented | Classrooms should be more spacious and the infrastructure facilities and equipment need improvement |
| Video session was too long and the learners seemed to have lost focus | The teacher tend to stick strictly to the textbook and use of extra material or activities was not observed |
| Classroom was small and gloomy. Lack of space led to congestion | Long video sessions made |
| Lack of space hindered effective interaction in terms of group work | Tutors/visiting academics should be properly trained and instructed as to how to deal with DE course materials. |
| The lesson was less interactive and a bit monotonous. Teacher did most of the talking and learners were more or less passive listeners. Group and pair work was totally absent in teaching-learning process | Listening and speaking sessions should be carefully managed to get the optimum outcome. |
| The teacher tend to stick strictly to the textbook and use of extra material or activities was not observed | The lessons should be more interactive |
| Long video sessions made | Learners should get an orientation about using DE course materials and |

T18 9

T13 10
learners lose focus of the lesson after some time
- Poor quality of infrastructure and poor classroom conditions is a hindrance to learner motivation
- the role of the learner and materials in DE setting.
- Infrastructure, classroom conditions and equipment should be improved to create a more conducive learning environment.

4.7.3 Points emerging from general description of classroom proceedings and check lists

a. Majority of the tutors/visiting academics (87.4%) gave an introduction to the lesson in relation to the course schedule, at the beginning of the session but connecting the lesson to the preceding and following sessions was observed only in a few classes. Only two tutors/visiting academics out of 6 (74%) effectively linked the lesson to the preceding lesson and the lessons to follow and also situated the content well within the course structure and the schedule. Only one teacher used extra teaching materials and this was done with a lot of novelty and creativity. The effectiveness of this was evident through learner responses. As such, incorporation of extra teaching materials can be a strong point that other tutors/visiting academics too can include in their teaching.

b. Majority (87.4% -17/20) of the tutors/visiting academics gave a clear introduction in to the content and progress of the lesson. This helped the learners to get a clear overview of the proceedings of the session. Majority of the tutors/visiting academics (74%) adopted a style and language quite appropriate for adult learners. Only two tutors/visiting academics adopted a more conventional and less appropriate approach for adult learners. They were very senior tutors/visiting academics with long years of experience in teaching school children. It is a bit questionable as to whether their approach was a result of lack of flexibility and a clear understanding of DE mode education and the adult learners as a whole.
c. Learner interaction was observed in and across sessions to varying degrees. Minimum interactions were observed in two sessions in which group or pair work was not observed. This happened to be the classes of senior tutors/visiting academics who had a very conventional approach to teaching. Learners were not encouraged to interact among themselves or with the teacher. The influence of teacher’s attitude and approach to teaching and learning was quite evident from the proceedings of those two classes. Two other tutors/visiting academics created a very interactive environment in the class and learners were engaged in group work, pair work, individual work and presentations. The satisfactory quality of infrastructure facilities and equipment and the good classroom atmosphere added to this. Two more tutors/visiting academics were quite active and made a good effort to create an interactive environment in the classroom but lack of space, facilities, materials and external disturbances were hindrances to proper functioning of the class proceedings. The other two tutors/visiting academics were not so effective in creating an interactive environment as one of them was too dominating and the learners were suppressed to some extent. This in turn discouraged them from expressing themselves. The other teacher was not so active probably due to his lack of knowledge in teaching methodology but the teacher managed to retain learner attention through his energetic and enthusiastic nature. Learners’ answers to the questions raised by other learners, was not observed in any of the classes and there was no encouragement for that on part of the tutors/visiting academics as well. Huge gaps in learners’ level of proficiency were evident in many classes and in such cases the more proficient learners were dominating the interactive sessions. More opportunities were denied for less proficient learners due to time constraints. Time was a common limitation in all the sessions.

d. Except for one teacher, other seven tutors/visiting academics followed the prescribed procedure of smooth integration of skills, summarizing points during and after the session and directing learners effectively for the next session. The approach and effectiveness of the procedure differed from teacher to teacher.
Some tutors/visiting academics were quite effective and some need improvement. Some of them followed the exact procedure as prescribed to them whereas some were quite creative and innovative and conducted the session in their own way. The teacher who deviated from the process was paying individual attention to the learners as their number was very low. If there were more learners, there would have been a chance of her employing a different approach. Some of the lessons dealt with only one or two skills where integration of skills was not observed or less prominent. This deviation was mainly due to lack of resources and limitations in time.

e. The materials provided by the university are well designed though they may not be attractive enough to motivate learners in terms of the print, external looks and the quality. This was mainly due to logistical problems and financial aspects. The content and presentation was quite good and materials are designed in keeping in line with DE requirements and keeping distance learners in mind. Teacher has a bigger role to play in connecting the learners well to the materials and helping them to get the maximum benefits from it. Five tutors/visiting academics (62.4%) employed non lecture learning methods like pair work, group work, presentations, class discussions and learner led activities quite effectively. The other three tutors/visiting academics were dominating the classroom procedures which led to a situation in which the learners became passive listeners. Tutors/visiting academics’ influence in getting learner participation in the classroom activities and active negotiation with materials was quite evident through observations. Teacher encouragement and guidance played a major role in active participation of learners in activities and actively dealing with materials provided. Use of other teaching aids like computers, multimedia, OHP etc was observed in certain session. This was dependent on the requirement of such aids for a particular lesson and also on the availability.

f. Learners’ preparation for the lesson in terms of doing their home assignments and self assessment questions was very low and only a few learners in each group had
come prepared. In some groups there were considerable number of learners who had done their work and it was observed this was partly due to the encouragement of the teacher. Only a few learners had watched the DVD and come prepared for the session though the DVD was provided to some centres well in advance. Only in two centres that learners seemed to have accessed other sources (internet, extra materials) as required for the lesson. It seemed the tutors/visiting academics of those two classes had encouraged learners to access other sources of knowledge to enhance their learning in the classroom and out of it. Overall, it was observed that learners’ preparation for the lesson and working on their own need more improvement in terms of time spent on that, access to given and extra materials and the learners’ attitude towards learning in a DE setup.

g. The level of higher order thinking (critical thinking) demanded for the session varied according to the approach of the teacher. Some tutors/visiting academics posed challenging questions and encouraged learners to answer those by providing cues. This encouraged the learners to think beyond the materials and participate actively in the discussion. In some sessions, this active participation was very poor and learners were practically restricted to being passive listeners. Five tutors/visiting academics out of eight were observed to be providing definitions for vocabulary quite effectively. One of them made an extra effort to get the learners to derive the meanings which proved to be quite effective. Another teacher tried to relate the definition in functional terms to the relevant main stream studies (science degree) of the learners which provided a link to their main objective of the English language program and could be expected to have created a clearer picture of the application and practical aspects of language learning in the relevant context. Overall, the creativity and positive attitude of the teacher as well as the awareness of the learners seemed to have a positive influence towards learning.

h. The content of the lessons provided clear main ideas and supporting information to progress with the lesson. The relevancy of the main ideas was clear and added
to make the session coherent. The level and form of additional supporting information provided, differed according to the teacher. Some tutors/visiting academics provided information in many different forms which created interest in the learners and stimulated active participation. It further helped in expanding the focus of the learners beyond the lesson and relating the learning to practical applications. A less number of tutors/visiting academics (three out of eight) seemed to adhere strictly to the course materials which led to more restricted knowledge exchange and interaction in the class.

i. All the tutors/visiting academics (except one) seemed to maintain a good rapport with the learners on their own terms. Four tutors/visiting academics were quite interactive with the learners and made them interact with the teacher and the peers. Their less intimidating and accessible nature seemed to have made learners feel at ease and participate in the lesson more actively. Two tutors/visiting academics were less effective in stimulating learner participation yet maintained a good rapport through their friendly and supporting nature. One teacher was not encouraging interaction among learners but interacted individually with them providing necessary support. Another teacher was quite effective in stimulating interaction among learners and giving feedback and commendation when necessary, but the intimidating nature of the teacher created tension among learners which discouraged the learner interaction with the teacher.

j. The standard of infrastructure and quality and availability of equipment, varied drastically across and within the centres. Colombo and Batticaloa centres had better facilities and infrastructure where as the situation in Jaffna, Kandy and Matara were rather unsatisfactory. In Matara the classes were conducted in government schools where the classrooms are meant for school children. This obviously was not a good setup for learning for undergraduates. In Colombo centre the classes were conducted in the Regional centre during weekdays and in the schools during the weekend. In Colombo also the situation in the weekend classes seemed to be rather unsatisfactory in terms of infrastructure facilities.
Some centres were provided with the teaching–learning materials (course books and DVDs) well in advance where as teaching in some other centres were affected due to lack of the same. Overall, a great inconsistency was observed across and within the centres in terms of availability of facilities and provision of teaching - learning materials. This obviously had a negative impact on the learning outcome.

k. In general, in Colombo, Kandy and Batticaloa centres, the learners’ attendance at the classes was very satisfactory. Further, they showed a keen interest in participating in class activities. Jaffna and Matara in general showed a less learner attendance in classes. Their level of interaction was also quite low. Overall, there was a wide variation in learner attendance and participation in classroom interactive teaching – learning procedure, across the regional centres.
### 4.7.4 Comparison of course objectives and lesson objectives with classroom observations

**Table 4.4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session no</th>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Lesson objectives</th>
<th>Observations in the classroom</th>
<th>Broader course objectives of EGAP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1          | Unit 2 | **Reading**       | The overall objectives of the course were achieved at every level of classroom interaction. Integration of all four skills was not possible in the lesson due to restriction in time and lack of infrastructure facilities and equipment. The effectiveness of learning depended on the level of involvement of the learners in | • To teach the generic academic language skills  
• To provide the learners with an all purpose grounding in academic discourse  
• To teach the general study skills required in an academic context |
<p>|            |        | <strong>Writing</strong>       |                                 |                                   |
|            |        |                   |                                 |                                   |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location of the place</th>
<th>Listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• To be able to describe directions from one place to another</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To describe a place using an organized plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Listening**

- Listen and identify prepositions and prepositional phrases of time, place and direction.
- Deal with the location of a place after listening to a description of place

**Speech**

- Engage a stranger in polite

The learning process. The learners were directed towards group work and interaction among peers, with the teacher and with materials, but stimulating higher order thinking, creativity and applying learning beyond the context of the lesson was less visible.

The teacher effectively introduced lesson objectives and directed learners towards interaction and practice. The
<p>| 3 | <strong>Unit 4</strong> | Eco-tourism Reading, Writing and Listening | Conversation and ask for directions | Give directions | Give instructions | Language structures as given in the lesson objectives were well grasped, learnt and practiced in the class. The teacher’s role as a knowledge disseminator overshadowed the role of a facilitator. This situation led to some inhibition on the part of learners to query and interact with the teacher. | The language structures were well addressed. As it was a follow up session of the DVD, the integration of listening and speech with the |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Unit 4</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Religions Reading, Writing and Listening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dealing with comparison and contrast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enhancing the ability to follow a multi–speaker discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Taking down notes during a multi speaker discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Presenting a short summary of a discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Enhancing vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>taking skills from a spoken text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Deliver an introduction to a short speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religions Reading, Writing and Listening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Identifying discourse markers and understanding their role in speech
- Understanding opinions

and the learners got distracted after some time. The reading and writing sections were expected to be dealt with in the previous session. Beyond unit 2, the skills were more integrated in the lessons and expected to be covered under common lesson objectives. This smooth integration of skills was rather disrupted by the fragmentation of lesson components in to separate sessions. As such the effectiveness of the lesson was questionable.

The lesson dealt only with reading. As the DVD was not give to the learners or was not
played in the classroom, the teacher referred to the DVD during the lesson. Except for integration of all the skills, the rest of the lesson went in line with the lesson and course objectives and beyond. The teacher made an extra effort to motivate the learners to derive definitions. Further, an effort was made to relate the language structures and definitions to the main context of the learners (B Sc program). This seemed have given the learners a sense of relevance and applicability.

| 6 | **Unit 6**
Gender and | The lesson objectives were |
| Representati on Speaking, listening, reading and vocabulary | • The structure of an academic presentation in speech  
• The nature of academic presentation  
• The structure of an academic essay  
• Types of texts  
• Problem – Solution texts and their organization  
• Introduction in an essay | met to a great extent except for the fact that time for practice and individual attention for the weaker learners were restricted by limitation of time. Writing tasks were assigned mostly to be done at home. Smooth and effective integration of skills was observed in achieving the lesson objectives. |
|---|---|---|
| 7 | **Unit 6**  
Gender and Representati on Reading and writing | More attention was given to questioning and discussion. Learners were given effective stimulation for critical thinking and effective responses. Feedback and praise were |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Unit 6</strong></th>
<th><strong>Gender and Representation</strong></th>
<th><strong>Reading and writing</strong></th>
<th><strong>Essay writing</strong></th>
<th><strong>motivating factors for learners. Extra teaching materials proved to be effective</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><strong>Unit 6</strong></td>
<td>Gender and Representation</td>
<td>Reading and writing</td>
<td>Essay writing</td>
<td>Relevant language structures were dealt with effectively through reading, writing and explaining. The lesson objectives were met effectively, yet the classroom conditions were a hindrance for effective learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Unit 6</strong></td>
<td>Gender and Representation</td>
<td>Speaking, listening,</td>
<td>Reading and</td>
<td>Listening component (DVD) was too long and a distraction in keeping in line effectively with lesson objectives. Integration of all four skills in a class was a difficult task due to lack of equipment, infra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>reading and vocabulary</td>
<td>vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The classroom procedures were not so coherent as the teacher was mostly paying individual attention to learners and her voice did not reach the back of the class. The lesson was more examination oriented than keeping in line with lesson objectives. This may be due to the fact it was the last lesson of the course.

Table 4.4 - Comparison of course objectives and lesson objectives with classroom observations

All the tutors/visiting academics followed the objectives of the relevant lesson and the course objectives as a whole. The effectiveness and success of meeting the objectives depended mainly on the attitude, preparation, creativity and the approach of the teacher. The classroom environment and facilities had an impact on the final outcome. The points emerging through observations are rather subtle and subjective hence needed to be triangulated for credibility of the findings.
Further, the department of language studies has set certain guidelines for tutors/visiting academics of EGAP. These guidelines go in line with DE mode education and communicative language teaching. The tutors/visiting academics are expected to follow them in the contact/face to face teaching sessions.

The guidelines for teaching the EGAP program as given at the workshop conducted for tutors/visiting academics on 21st December, 2012, are as follows:

- Use the units to develop/facilitate communication skills.
- Units should not be used mechanically in the order they are presented in the course books but should be used creatively to foster language development.
- Make extensive use of pair and group work to foster communication/generate fresh ideas/prevent classroom becoming teacher—centered.
- Grammar review sections are meant to clarify/reinforce language structure items.
- Allocate session time appropriately so that every session would include all four skills.
- Learners seem to avoid homework—so refrain from giving homework. Aim at completing activities in class time as far as possible.
- It is useful to commence every session with a review of the preceding session.
- At the end of a session—summarize what was done during the session/give an overview of the session and review learner knowledge.

The tutors/visiting academics followed those guidelines to varying degrees depending on their attitudes, approaches towards teaching, learner responses and availability of time. Further, the availability of infrastructure facilities and equipment had an impact on this.

4.7.5 Summary of classroom observations

As mentioned in Chapter 4 (section 4.6.4.4), classroom observations were carried out on a randomly selected sessions across regional centres. Even within the selected sessions, there was a wide variation in the way tutors/visiting academics approached the lesson, teacher attitudes, learners’ responses and the classroom procedures. Learners’ role as
autonomous learners was not clearly evident across centres and they depended on the teacher and the contact sessions for larger part of their learning. The support and guidance given during the contact sessions seem to be rather inadequate to promote autonomous learning within and out of the classroom. The learners’ negotiation with materials was apparently more restricted to classroom procedures and the independent learning was less observed.

The teacher played an important role in learner learning and interaction. Many tutors/visiting academics had understood their role as a facilitator and a monitor, as it should be in communicative language teaching, and practiced it to varying degrees in the classroom. Less number of tutors/visiting academics chose to play the role of a conventional teacher of disseminating knowledge to a rather passive group of learners. Apparently the concepts in DE had not been articulated by the learners and tutors/visiting academics alike. It was clearly evident that the tutors/visiting academics as facilitators could create enthusiasm and interaction in the classroom which led to a more visible positive output.

Time was a main constraint in restricting the interaction within the classroom, among learners and between the teacher and the learners. Yet, it was observed that two tutors/visiting academics out of the eight managed the time very effectively to reach the lesson objectives and productivity in the class to a great extent. This proved that effective planning and classroom management on part of the teacher can play an important role for a better learning outcome. Lack of required facilities in the classroom was another drawback to teaching and learning. Some tutors/visiting academics managed to overcome this through creative adaptation and planning, yet, in certain circumstances this created considerable inconvenience to tutors/visiting academics and learners.

4.8 Comparison of results obtained through different tools

Analysis of materials shows that materials have been designed in line with the standards set for materials development and specifically in line with guidelines for SIM. In a theoretical sense the materials for EGAP comply to a great extent with the accepted
norms of materials design and adhere to the principles of SIM. The three standardized check-lists used for evaluation of EGAP materials supports this claim. Though EGAP materials are designed and developed as SIM, their use in contact sessions demands certain features to be included which complement the conventional teaching methods. As per the findings from data obtained through other tools, the differences among learners in terms of level of proficiency, exposure, interest, differences in the discipline in the main course and other social factors result in gaps in the expectations and reality of the output. Further, the external factors like teaching aids and facilities provided play a major role.

The main and the most crucial factor that emerged through classroom observation was the lack of enthusiasm on the part of learners for self-learning as well as the lack of encouragement for self-learning from teachers. This contradicts the main objective of the materials: self-learning which is ultimately expected to leads to learner autonomy. This sheds light on the fact that autonomy on part of the teacher is instrumental in fostering autonomy among learners. This was evidenced through certain classroom observations and as such the role of the teacher cannot be undermined in learner success. Though the facilities and time constraints hindered the effectiveness of lessons, this could be overcome to a great extent through planning and proper management of time and resources.

The perceptions of tutors emerging through interviews also highlight the fact that lack of enthusiasm and engagement of learners in self-learning. The perceptions of the teachers also indicated the effectiveness of interactive learning in the classrooms and the classroom observations further confirmed this.

The requirement of additional support materials in the form of supplementary text and AV materials, online materials, workshops, etc. was highlighted in the responses obtained through questionnaires for learners and tutors, interviews for tutors, course materials writers and language experts and also through the group discussions with learners. The requirement for an ESP element in the EGAP program is another crucial and common point that emerged through the responses from all these tools.
Time and resource constraints were arguable points that almost all the stake holders highlighted as crucial and need remediation. At the same time the ways and approaches of the stakeholders in coping with those constraints were different and dynamic.

4.9 Triangulation

In the field of social sciences, triangulation refers to the attempt to understand some aspect of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint, often making use of both quantitative and qualitative data in doing so (Brown and Rodgers, 2002). According to Brown and Rodgers (2002), if the data can be observed at least from two points of view, that will maximize the possibility of getting credible findings by cross validating those findings.

The opinions and information on teaching approaches of the tutors/visiting academics were obtained through three research tools: questionnaires, interviews and classroom observations. Out of the sample of 18 tutors/visiting academics, a sub sample of 6 were observed in their classrooms interactions with the learners.

The comparison of interview data and questionnaire data reveals the following points

- Overall, the observation of differences in proficiency levels and the negative impact of this on their learning was clearly indicated in the responses to questionnaires and the interviews for the tutors/visiting academics.
- The less exposure to teaching English in distance mode and as such, the necessity for training in DE mode teaching, is another point that emerged clearly.
- The low level of student motivation, specifically in self-learning was highlighted. This clearly indicates the need for more innovative, creative and inclusive methods and content for teaching.
- The design and content of materials were fairly acceptable to the tutors/visiting academics. At the same time they have shown a high level of
dissatisfaction over the teaching aids, technological assistance and the infrastructure facilities.

- The tutors/visiting academics have indicated satisfaction on the guidance received through teacher’s guide and the briefing session
- The tutors/visiting academics have perceived grammar, vocabulary and the difficult concepts as the more challenging language areas for learners. This has been indicated clearly through data from both tools.
- The tutors/visiting academics have unanimously agreed on the point that learners need additional support for learning in the form of supplementary materials, workshops, online lessons, etc.
- Time constraints was a major issue as have been perceived by the tutors/visiting academics.

Out of the six teachers who have been observed in the classrooms, five had completed the questionnaire and the interview. As such they have been considered as the sub sample. The common points that could be observed in classroom observations which are in line with the data from interviews and questionnaires are as follows.

- Time constraints hindered the effectiveness of the classroom activities specially in terms of interaction, collaborative learning and feedback in the classroom. Further, this has been a constraint in accommodating more time for speaking skills which is a strong requirement of the students.
- The lack of interest shown by the learners in engaging in self-learning affected classroom activities as many students had not prepared for the lesson and extra time was spent on explaining the lesson to them
- It could be observed that differences in the proficiency levels posed a considerable challenge in the classrooms. The weaker students needed more time and the needs of the more proficient students could not be accommodated in the same context at times. It could also be observed these differences could be effectively manipulated for scaffolding and collaborative learning as well.
In addition to these observations, the individual approaches of the teachers, the teaching methods, exposure and their perceptions of the students and their requirements had a tremendous impact on their learners and the learning outcome. Two of the senior tutors/visiting academics had a very traditional and teacher dominated way of teaching. though they were able to disseminate the language focus effectively, the level of interaction and collaboration was very low. Another tutor who has experience in DE mode teaching managed to get the students involved in the activities but the interaction was rather restricted due to the teacher dominance. It could be observed that a tutor who conduct a very interactive session and student involvement was restricted by infrastructure facilities. One of the tutors could conduct a very effective session due good planning, novelty, use of additional teaching aids (realia, poster, etc) and the right attitude and teaching approach. The sub sample of tutors/visiting academics had indicated those traits to a great extent through their feedback through interviews and questionnaires and those factors were reflected to a great extent in the classroom.

4.10 Conclusion

Data analysis and interpretation led to emergence of many similar and contradictory observations, ideas, opinions and attitudes among the stake holders about the EGAP programme. Those observations, interpretations and inferences have led to many insights into the prevailing gaps in the context under research and the possible solutions.