

*In the Name of God*



**Shahrood University of Technology**

**English Language Department**

**M.A. Thesis in Language Teaching**

# **An EAP Needs Analysis: Assessing the English Language Learning Needs of Iranian Postgraduate Students of Islamic Philosophy and Theology**

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### فرم شماره (۳) صور تجلیسه نهایی دفاع از پایان نامه دوره کارشناسی ارشد

با نام و یاد خداوند متعال، ارزیابی جلسه دفاع از پایان نامه کارشناسی ارشد آقای صادق زندی با شماره دانشجویی ۹۷۰۸۷۰۴ رشته زبان انگلیسی گرایش آموزش زبان تحت عنوان ارزیابی نیازهای زبانی دانشجویان ایرانی رشته فلسفه و کلام اسلامی در مقطع کارشناسی ارشد که در تاریخ ۱۴۰۰/۶/۳۱ با حضور هیأت محترم داوران در دانشگاه صنعتی شاهرود برگزار گردید به شرح ذیل اعلام می‌گردد:

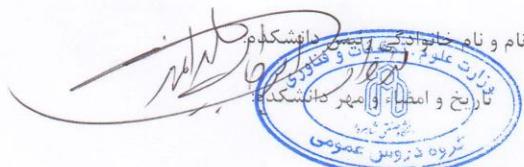
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*To All My Beloved Ones*

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### مالکیت نتایج و حق نشر

- کلیه حقوق معنوی این اثر و محصولات آن (مقالات مستخرج، کتاب، برنامه‌های رایانه‌ای، نرم‌افزارها و تجهیزات ساخته شده است) متعلق به دانشگاه صنعتی شاهرود است. این مطلب باید به نحو مقتضی در تولیدات علمی مربوطه ذکر شود.
- استفاده از اطلاعات و نتایج موجود در این رساله بدون ذکر مرجع مجاز نمی‌باشد.

## Abstract

In consideration of the fact that no studies have investigated the English language learning needs of Iranian postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology, the present study attempted to assess the needs of the aforementioned students. To this end, a total of 72 students along with 8 subject-specific instructors who run the English courses were selected according to convenience sampling. The data of this mixed methods research was obtained by using different instruments, including semi-structured interviews with students and instructors, needs analysis questionnaires, as well as a document analysis protocol. The quantitative data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics and the qualitative data obtained from the interviews and document analysis were analyzed by using a thematic analysis approach. In addition, an independent sample t-test was used to examine whether students' and teachers' views on language learning needs differed significantly. The required data were collected in the fall semester of 2020-2021. First, the researcher interviewed the related stakeholders to identify the English language needs of the students as well as their opinions towards the EAP courses. Then, the final versions of the needs assessment questionnaires were distributed to the participants. The questionnaires consisted of two main sections; one, elicited the viewpoints of the participants toward the four macro language skills along with general study skills, and the next section of the questionnaire dealt with the respondents' attitudes towards language instruction, length of the course as well as the content, syllabus, and methodology of the English course. Results of the data analysis revealed that most of the students perceived that reading comprehension followed by writing, speaking, and listening respectively are the most important language skills. The students also expressed their dissatisfaction with various methodological issues related to the English classes. Likewise, the subject-specific instructors' responses indicated their dissatisfaction with their students' language skills. The results also revealed that both groups of the participants were disappointed that no needs assessment was carried out to identify students' needs. In addition, analysis of the course description indicated that the current EAP course is poorly documented and does not meet the needs of students. The findings of this study provide considerable information for improving the EAP courses offered to students of Islamic philosophy and theology in Iran.

**Keywords:** EAP, Needs analysis, Language needs, Islamic philosophy and theology

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## List of Abbreviations

<b>ESP</b>	English for Specific Purposes
<b>EAP</b>	English for Academic Purposes
<b>EGP</b>	English for General Purposes
<b>NA</b>	Needs Analysis
<b>TEFL</b>	Teaching of English as a Foreign Language
<b>TESL</b>	Teaching of English as a Second Language
<b>ELT</b>	English Language Teaching
<b>EST</b>	English for Science and Technology
<b>EBE</b>	English for Business and Economics
<b>ESS</b>	English for Social Studies
<b>EOP</b>	English for Occupational Purposes
<b>EFL</b>	English as a Foreign Language
<b>SP-LT</b>	Special-Purpose Language Teaching
<b>GE</b>	General English
<b>EEP</b>	English for Educational Purposes
<b>EGAP</b>	English for General Academic Purposes
<b>ESAP</b>	English for Specific Academic Purposes
<b>GEP</b>	General English Proficiency
<b>EMP</b>	English for Medical Purposes

# **Chapter One**

## **Introduction**

## 1.1 Introduction

Over the last decades, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has taken a major role in the teaching of English language. According to Strevens (1977), ESP has influenced both theoretical development and innovative practice in English language teaching since its development in the late 1960s. While teaching language for specific purposes dates back to the Greek and Roman empires (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998), the rise of ESP as a discipline, however, was caused by developments in the world's economy during the 1960s. Johns and Dudley-Evans (1991) further described that the international community considered the importance of learning English as a means of knowledge and communication, as well as a neutral language, to be used in international communication. Anthony (2015) explains the overall concept of ESP by stating that "ESP is an approach to language teaching that targets the current or future academic or occupational needs of learners, and focuses on the language, skills, discourses, and genres that are needed to address these needs through discipline-specific teaching and learning methodologies" (p. 2).

ESP, indeed, is a sort of umbrella term for many specific areas. In this respect, several scholars have provided different classifications of ESP. For instance, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) in the 'Tree of ELT' break down ESP into three branches: a) English for Science and Technology (EST), b) English for Business and Economics (EBE), and c) English for Social Studies (ESS). Each of these subject areas is further divided into two branches: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). In addition, Carver (1983) classifies ESP into three types; that is, English as a restricted language, English for Academic and Occupational Purposes, and English with specific topics. Likewise, according to Kennedy and Bolitho (1984), there are two major classifications of ESP situations; English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) and English for Academic Purposes (EAP).

The term EAP was first used in 1974 by Tim Johns at the University of Birmingham (Jordan, 1997). According to Anthony (2018), the most influential branch of ESP is English for Academic Purposes (EAP), which mainly focuses on ESP in academic settings. As Hyland (2006, p. 1) describes, "EAP has evolved rapidly over the past two decades. From humble beginnings as a relatively fringe branch of ESP in the early 1980s, it is today a major force in English language teaching and research around the world". Flowerdew and Peacock (2001, p. 8)

define EAP as “the teaching of English with the specific aim of helping learners to study, conduct research or teach in that language”. EAP and the domain within this course, according to Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), should be described in terms of local contexts and the learning needs of a particular group of students. In a like manner, Ypsilantis and Kantaridou (2007) describe that EAP is referred to “the academic needs of students and of future professionals who would seek a career in the academic environment” (p. 69).

Hyland (2006) outlines the major progress of EAP over the last two decades, stating that EAP instruction and classes are based on certain core areas such as needs assessment, syllabus/curriculum design, materials development, and communication skills tailored to specific disciplines. An ideal EAP class, according to Sharndama et al. (2014), should address three important points: recognizing students’ needs before, during, and after the course, adapting materials and methods to fit the needs, and training instructors who are aware of and capable of meeting those needs. As believed by Charles and Pecorari (2016, p. 9), “in contrast to general ELT, where the assumption is that all students follow the same syllabus, the needs of different groups of EAP students can be extremely varied, and thus the content of EAP teaching is ideally based on an analysis of the needs of the particular group of learners”.

Taking the above-cited descriptions into account, it is can be suggested that EAP is a discipline within applied linguistics which its methodology is based on the specific needs of the learners. Because the term ‘need’ is not as simple as it appears, it is sometimes used to refer to wants, demands, expectations, motivations, lacks, constraints, and requirements (Brindley, 1989). For Berwick (1989, p. 52), needs mean “a gap or measurable discrepancy between a current state of affairs and a desired future state”. Robinson (1991) defines needs by making a distinction between objective and subjective needs, authority-perceived versus learner-perceived needs, and target versus learning needs. Hutchinson and Waters (1987), as well, make a basic distinction between learning needs (i.e. what the learner needs to do to learn) and target needs (i.e. what the learner needs to do in the target situation).

Perceived as a data collection process (Nunan, 1988), needs analysis is the process through which researchers gather, analyze, and assess different sources of information in order to meet the specific needs of ESP students (Gea-Valor et al., 2014; Huhta et al., 2013). For Weddel and Van Duzer (1997, p. 2) needs assessment is a tool to “examine what kinds of English, native

language, and literacy skills the learner already believes he or she has; the literacy contexts in which the learner lives and works; what the learner wants and needs to know to function in those contexts; what the learner expects to gain from the instructional program; and what might need to be done in the native language or with the aid of an interpreter”.

The importance of needs analysis and its crucial role as a basic assumption and a guide for course development, syllabus design, material selection, and classroom activities cannot be overstated. Riddell (1991, p. 75) pointed to the crucial role that needs analysis plays in syllabus and course design “...through it [needs analysis] the course designer becomes equipped to match up the content of the program with the requirements of the student body [what learners need]”. By the same token, Robinson (1991) is of the opinion that identification of language needs of learners, and the provision of specific content materials should be the focus of the teaching and learning process in ESP.

In Iranian universities, EAP courses are part of both undergraduate and postgraduate EFL programs. Indeed, the students start to learn English when they attend junior secondary school. After that, they join universities, where they are expected to have adequate knowledge of the English language and are offered a three-credit general English course. Following these courses, students must enroll in specialized English (EAP) classes, which are often offered later in their undergraduate or postgraduate program. EAP programs in Iran, in fact, are designed to help the students to communicate effectively in their academic and occupational settings both nationally and internationally and have become an important part of the curricula (Atai & Tahirian, 2003). In effect, these courses have failed to fulfill the actual needs of students, and this failure might be mainly contributed to designing courses without a needs assessment. In this regard, Atai (2002a) points out that EAP courses in Iran were developed incoherently and unsystematically without considering students' needs into account. Likewise, Tavakoli and Tavakol (2018) argue that policy-makers and major stakeholders usually pay no attention to the results of research on EAP instruction in Iran. Similarly, Iranmehr et al. (2018, p. 173) have come to the same conclusion that “contrary to the importance of EAP courses in the university curricula, students lack the adequate proficiency and communication skills needed to satisfy their needs”. Moreover, teaching materials have nothing to do with students' needs and desires. As Mazdayasna (2008) discusses, the contents of the ESP textbooks in Iran are not in line with the needs, wants, and

interests of students, and they are selected based on their topics, not based on genre or discourse of that field of study.

In light of the previously-mentioned deficiencies of ESP/EAP programs in Iran, a number of research projects have been conducted to assess the current status of the English courses in different disciplines. However, a research gap exists as no attention has been given to the language learning needs of students of Islamic philosophy and theology in Iran. For that reason, the present study provides a comprehensive profile of the English language learning needs of postgraduate students of this field who are required to take EAP courses. Needless to say, employing a needs analysis process that reflects the real needs of the students will undoubtedly improve the efficiency of EAP courses and will, without a doubt, benefit many stakeholders involved.

## **1.2 Purpose of the study**

Conducting a needs assessment is one of the fundamental stages of any EFL course development process. As Long (2005) suggests, for a course to be successful, it must have specific or selective goals that cannot be met without a needs assessment. Similarly, Richards (2001) emphasizes the importance of needs assessment in providing a reliable and valid foundation for establishing goals, developing syllabi, designing course contents, as well as evaluating and renewing programs.

Sad to say, ESP/EAP courses in Iran have been developed without any attention to the learners' real needs. Atai (2000) asserts that the required systematic needs analysis before the programs has been often overlooked. Yarmohammadi (2005) criticizes the language teaching programs in Iran, pointing out, "language teaching in Iran doesn't follow any specific purposes, i.e. it can be characterized as the language for no specific purposes" (p. 4). Taken together, due to the significant role of needs analysis in EAP programs, and also to remedy the aforementioned shortcomings of EAP courses in Iran, and to provide more effective EAP courses for language learners, students' key requirements or needs should be identified in advance to prepare them to use English within academic or professional environments. In this regard, the main purpose of conducting this study was to explore the English language learning needs of postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology as well as to explore their views on EAP courses,

focusing on whether the current EAP courses address the students' language learning needs and challenges. The analysis of students' needs was performed by considering the views of different stakeholders including students and instructors.

### **1.3 Research questions**

This study is designed to address the following questions:

1. What are the language learning needs of Iranian postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology based on the students' views and the instructors' perceptions?
2. Are there any significant differences between the students and instructors in their views about language learning needs?
3. What type of methodology, content, and instructor (subject-specific or English teachers) are appropriate in EAP courses for the aforementioned students?

### **1.4 Significance of the study**

Since there has been no empirical investigation in the Iranian context to examine the language learning needs of students of Islamic philosophy and theology, it seemed necessary to conduct this research to examine the needs of students in this discipline. Consequently, this study set out to assess the language learning needs of the students, as well as to provide considerable information on the effectiveness of the current EAP courses provided for them with regard to needs analysis. Addressing such needs will be of great benefit to English teachers, subject-specific instructors, and policy-makers to be more aware of the students' wants to address their needs and challenges. The study also has important contributions to students because it provides opportunities for reflection and self-awareness. Additionally, since needs analysis is the first step in course design (Flowerdew, 2013), a practical needs analysis can provide a framework and help syllabus designers to be more aware of the students' needs to design courses that promote students' interest and motivation. Moreover, the results provide input documentation for adapting, revising, or editing practices, methods, and related EAP textbooks or course contents. Besides, analyzing such needs can give new insights for analyzing similar needs and designing courses for those students who take ESP/EAP courses in closely related fields of study.

## **1.5 Definition of key terms**

**English for Academic Purposes (EAP):** EAP refers to “the teaching of English with the specific aim of helping learners to study, conduct research or teach in that language” (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001, p. 8).

**Needs analysis:** needs analysis is referred to as “the activities involved in gathering information that will serve as the basis for developing a curriculum that will meet the learning needs of a particular group of students” (Brown, 1995, p. 35).

**Islamic philosophy and theology:** here in this study, it means one of the academic disciplines in humanities in the Iranian education system in which the students study both Islamic philosophy and Islamic theology. Islamic philosophy refers to philosophy produced in an Islamic society, and Islamic theology - kalam (literally the science of debate) - denotes a discipline of Islamic thought.

## **1.6 Outline and organization of the study**

This thesis is organized into five chapters:

Chapter one: introduction which includes purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and definition of key terms.

Chapter two: a review of the related literature in which theoretical perspective (including the definition of ESP, the origin and development of ESP, ESP vs. EGP, and major approaches to ESP), classification of ESP, English for academic purposes, language for religious purposes, Islamic English, needs and needs analysis in EAP, methods of gathering information for needs analysis, EAP in Iran, and findings of the related studies are reviewed.

Chapter three: methodology, in which methods and design of the study that provides information about the participants, the instruments, and the data collection procedure of the study are presented.

Chapter four: data analysis in which the findings of the study are reported and illustrated in tables.

Chapter five: conclusion and discussion in which the findings of the study are discussed and some implications for practice are presented.

# **Chapter Two**

## **Review of the Related**

## **Literature**

## **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter will address the following sections. First, it starts with an overview of ESP which includes the definition of ESP, the origin and development of ESP, the differences and similarities between ESP and EGP, and the major approaches to ESP. Then it follows by the classification of ESP. In the next section, needs and needs analysis in EAP programs, and methods of gathering information for needs analysis are discussed. Finally, a short history of EAP in Iran, the current state of EAP in Iran, as well as the available literature related to ESP/EAP will be reviewed.

## **2.2 Overview of English for Specific Purposes**

### **2.2.1 Definition of English for Specific Purposes (ESP)**

Taking into account the available literature, the term ESP has a wide range of definitions. Mackay and Mountford (1978, p. 2) define ESP as, “the teaching of English for a clearly utilitarian purpose”. Since their definition did not include all elements of ESP, Blackie (1979) called for ‘a satisfactory working’ definition of ESP. Thus, Blackie (1979, p. 266) suggests that the term ESP is referred to “programs designed for groups of learners who are homogeneous with respect to aims, and whose specific learning objectives have been quantified and stated in communicative terms”. According to Brumfit (1979), the ESP course is strongly linked to the objectives for which learners require English, which is typically characterized in functional terms.

Krashen (1982) identifies a transition period, which he defines as a perceived gap in the English language and study skills of learners who had completed traditional language programs and those necessary for study purposes in academic settings. He further added up that subject content-based courses can simultaneously convey subject knowledge and linguistic proficiency. What he mentioned is actually what ESP is about

Crocker (1981) argues that ESP should be considered as a language teaching approach. The distinction between ESP courses and language teaching, he believes, lies in the focus of interest; whereas English for general purposes stresses language proficiency, ESP courses primarily deal with something beyond language through the medium of language. Similarly, Hutchinson and

Waters (1987) regard ESP as an approach to language learning rather than a product, claiming that ESP does not require a specific language, method of teaching, or teaching material. They go on to say that with ESP, “all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner’s reason for learning” (p. 19).

Carver (1983) identifies some features of an ESP course; that is, a) authentic material, b) purpose-related orientation and c) self-direction. He further describes that learners would benefit from using authentic texts since such materials help them to build up self-assessment strategies. By purpose-related orientation, he means the simulation of communicative tasks needed to perform in the target situation, including simulation of a conference, involving the preparation of papers, reading, note-taking, writing, and various kind of activities in form of mini-research projects or problem-solving tasks. And, self-direction refers to a feature of ESP in that the learners turn into users. Accordingly, Carver (1983) notes that self-direction occurs when “there is a certain degree of freedom for learners to decide when, what, and how they will study; and when there is a systematic attempt by teachers to teach learners how to learn” (p. 134-135).

In his definition of ESP, Strevens (1988) makes a distinction between four absolute characteristics and two variable characteristics. Accordingly, the absolute characteristics are:

- i. designed to meet specified needs of the learner;
- ii. related in content (that is in its themes and topics) to particular disciplines, occupations, and activities;
- iii. centered on language appropriate to those activities in syntax, lexis, discourse, semantics, and so on, and analysis of the discourse;
- iv. in contrast with ‘General English’.

And the variable characteristics are:

- i. maybe restricted as to the learning skills to be related;
- ii. may not be taught according to any pre-ordained methodology.

Later, in 1998, Dudley-Evans and St. John modified Strevens’ original definition of ESP to form their own.

Absolute Characteristics:

- i. ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learner;
- ii. ESP makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves;
- iii. ESP is centered on the language (grammar, lexis, and register), skills, discourse, and genres appropriate to these activities.

Variable Characteristics:

- i. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines;
- ii. ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of general English;
- iii. ESP is likely to be designed for adults, either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation. It could, however, be for learners at the secondary school level;
- iv. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students;
- v. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language system, but it can be used with beginners.

They argue that “a definition of ESP should reflect the fact that much ESP teaching, especially where it is specifically linked to a particular profession or discipline, makes use of a methodology that differs from that used in General Purpose English teaching. By methodology here we are referring to the nature of the interaction between the ESP teacher and the learners. In more general ESP classes the interaction may be similar to that in a General Purpose English class; in the more specific ESP classes, however, the teacher sometimes becomes more like a language consultant, enjoying equal status with the learners who have their expertise in the subject matter” (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998, p. 4).

Jordan (1997) defines ESP according to the relationships between study skills and ESP needs. As for a broader definition, he suggests that learners learn English for three types of purposes: 1) General purposes: students learn foreign languages for no specific reason; 2) Social purposes: students learn the language for conversation and communication situations such as shopping, telephoning, and survival English; 3) Special purposes: learners study language

because it is required in their place of employment or university. In the same manner, McDonough (1998) describes ESP as a language program provided for groups or individuals who are learning for a specific purpose and with specific requirements.

### **2.2.2 The origin and development of ESP**

The study of language for specific purposes, according to Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), has a long and interesting history dating back to the Roman and Greek Empires. However, the early examples of special-purpose language teaching (SP-LT) may be found in the sixteenth century, when specialized terms and phrases were prepared for business people, diplomats, and tourists.

The Second World War marked a turning point in the history of the ESP movement. As Strevens (1977, p. 151) explained, “The Second World War engendered massive programs of SP-LT in the armed forces of Britain, the United States, and other nations. It suddenly became necessary, at short notice, to produce large numbers of people with sufficient and appropriate command of a particular language to enable them to do a specific job; this requirement existed in a wide range of languages not normally taught in the public educational system. The degree of specialization aimed at (and frequently achieved) may be illustrated by the example of the Royal Air Force personnel who learned Japanese solely for the purposes of (a) listening to Japanese fighter aircraft talking to their ground control stations; (b) identifying their targets, and (c) using this information to alert RAF interceptor fighters. These students of Japanese never learned to read or write the language, but they achieved the requisite listening-only command of this restricted form of the language in a matter of a few weeks of intensive learning. Other special-purpose courses in German, Russian, Arabic, Turkish, Burmese, Thai, Chinese and several other languages, embraced a great range of specializations and of restricted aims”.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) consider three main reasons for the emergence of ESP; that is, the demands of a Brave New World, a revolution in linguistics, and focus on the learner. As for the first reason, they state that following World War II in 1945, there was an increase in scientific, technological, and commercial activity on a global scale. This growth resulted in a world controlled by two forces of technology and business, which quickly produced a desire for an international language. This position fell to English for a variety of reasons, the most important of which was the United States' economic power in the post-war world. As a result, an

entirely new generation of people became interested in studying English. Considering the second reason, a revolution in linguistics, they describe that historically, the main aim of linguistics was to define the rules of English use, or grammar. The new research, however, moved the focus from describing the formal aspects of language usage to understanding how language is really used in real communication (Widdowson, 1978, cited in Hutchinson and Waters, 1978). Accordingly, the language we speak and write varies greatly and in a variety of ways from one setting to the next. This simple idea then gained ground that the English required by a group of learners might be determined by examining the linguistic features of their field of employment or study. Finally, as mentioned earlier, the last reason for the development of ESP was shifting to a learner-centered approach. In this manner, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) state that learners were seen to have varying needs and interests, which would have a significant impact on their desire to study and, as a result, the efficacy of their learning.

Furthermore, Orr (2008) distinguishes three stages of ESP development, which he calls First generation ESP (First Gen ESP), Second generation ESP (Second Gen ESP), and Next generation ESP (Next Gen ESP). Accordingly, the first phase began following World War II. It is known by English language teaching for academic and vocational reasons, which originated when a large number of non-native English speakers moved to English-speaking nations and needed to learn English to pursue higher education and better employment. The second generation of ESP began in the second half of the twentieth century and continues to exist now. It is characterized by needs-based, purpose-driven English language teaching; considerable growth in research, publication, and professional activities; and an increase in the number of language educators who are recognized as ESP professionals. Finally, in the 1990s, the Next Generation ESP was begun. Rapid developments in technology, economy, and culture provided the initial push for its growth. Next Gen ESP is considered by 1) relocating ESP instruction from the English departments to locations that better suit the needs of learners; 2) the change in ESP staffing, including staff with degrees in applied linguistics and other professional disciplines; 3) the change in ESP content; that is, the content of ESP has shifted from materials developed for general language instruction to resources for experts who require a deep grasp of subject-specific issues; and 4) the change in ESP delivery; the delivery of materials not only by individuals but also by technology.

### 2.2.3 ESP vs. EGP

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and English for General Purposes (EGP) are the two primary categories of ELT (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). In comparison to EGP, ESP is thought to be more focused, practical, and object-oriented (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998). EGP, however, is called ‘TENOR- the teaching of English for No Obvious Reason’ (Abbot, 1981, cited in Jordan, 1997, p. 4). Based on Hutchinson and Waters’ definition (1987), EGP is mainly referred to school-level English language instruction, so that students are familiar with the structure/grammatical basics of the English language in order to pass the exam. On the other hand, ESP has always focused on needs analysis, text analysis, and the training of students to communicate effectively in the tasks prescribed by their academic and professional situations (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998).

The difference between ESP and EGP, according to Widdowson (1983), is in how we define and implement the purpose of learning. ESP is objective-oriented learning, in which the specification of the objects corresponds to the aim, whereas EGP is aim-oriented learning, in which the specification of the objective does not correspond to the aim. ESP instruction, as believed by McDonough (1984), should not be considered as a separate development from language teaching in general, despite the fact that interest and development of ESP have increased dramatically since the 1960s. She further noted that it should be viewed as an instructional activity with its own emphases and variety of activities, which is not completely different from other areas of language instruction.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) describe that in theory there is no difference between the two, but in practice, there is a great difference. They added up that the difference between ESP and general English is the awareness of a need, rather than the existence of a need. If learners, sponsors, and teachers know why the learners need English, that awareness affects what is accepted as a reasonable content of a language course and what possibilities on the positive side can be exploited. They put it briefly, “it is not so much the nature of the need which distinguishes the ESP from the General course but rather the awareness of a need” (p. 53). For Robinson (1991), ESP courses are purposeful, designed to successfully fulfill their professional and educational roles. Therefore, it is developed according to the needs of the students and should be tailor-made.

These comparisons between ESP and EGP have led some researchers to create a number of comparisons between ESP instructors and general English instructors. For instance, Strevens (1988) indicate that the ESP instructors are GE instructors who were trained with ESP courses to teach a particular group of learners. Likewise, Anthony (1997) asserts that ESP teachers are GE teachers based on needs analysis and the use of English in specific contexts. Swales (1985) preferred the term 'ESP practitioner' over 'ESP teacher' to make a distinction between an ESP teacher and a general English teacher. In this regard, Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) have highlighted some specific characteristics of an ESP practitioner as an instructor, course designer, material developer, collaborator, researcher, and evaluator. Thus, because of these special characteristics, ESP practitioners differ from GE instructors. Flexibility is seen to be a key to success for ESP practitioners. It is, in fact, "a personal quality which transforms an EGP teacher into an ESP practitioner and helps him/her to instruct successfully various groups of students, even at a very short notice" (Robinson, 1991, p. 80). Thus, an ESP instructor or, more accurately, an ESP practitioner must be well-trained in professional skills and adaptable in approach in order to satisfy the needs of his or her students.

#### **2.2.4 Major approaches to ESP**

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), the development of ESP as a specific approach in English language teaching is the result of five major stages:

- i. Register analysis
- ii. Rhetorical or discourse analysis
- iii. Target situation analysis
- iv. Skills and strategies
- v. A learning-centered approach

#### **2.2.4.1 Register analysis approach**

The term ‘register’ initially became widely used in the 1960s (Leckie-Tarry, 1993). The term was originally used by Halliday in 1964. He characterized it as a diversity based on usage, in the sense that each speaker has a variety of options from which to choose at different times.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 9-10), “this stage took place mainly in the 1960s and early 1970s and was associated in particular with the work of Peter Strevens (Halliday, McIntosh, & Strevens, 1964), Jack Ewer (Ewer & Latorre, 1969) and John Swales (1971). Operating on the basic principle that the English of, say, Electrical Engineering constituted a specific register different from that of, say, Biology or of General English, the aim of the analysis was to identify the grammatical and lexical features of these registers”.

Robinson (1991) states that the term ‘register’ had opened the door to a research topic in the field of ESP. As a result, register analysis of linguistic texts, which allows us to identify how language is maneuvered to generate meaning, has found widespread use in (critical) discourse analysis and (foreign) language instruction pedagogy (Zequan, 2003).

However, the register analysis has been criticized for being merely descriptive. For instance, Robinson (1991) suggests combining the two approaches so that the description leads to the explanation and the explanation is supported by descriptive data. In addition, Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 11) further described that “register analysis had focused on sentence grammar, without any attention to understanding how sentences were combined in discourse to produce meaning”.

#### **2.2.4.2 Rhetorical or discourse analysis approach**

While the first stage of the development of ESP was concerned with language at the sentence level, its second stage shifted the attention to the level above the sentence; as ESP became more involved in the emerging field of discourse or rhetorical analysis (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). The fundamental barrier in learning situations, as suggested by Allen and Widdowson (1974), is the students’ poor knowledge of English use and how communicative acts are manifested in sentences, rather than a lack of knowledge of the English language.

#### **2.2.4.3 Target situation analysis approach**

This phase did not add anything to the existing body of knowledge about ESP. The aim was to put current information on a more scientific basis by developing procedures for more closely linking language analysis to learners' reasons for learning (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

Robinson (1991, p. 9) believes that TSA is objective and goal-oriented, pointing out, "the information sought for TSA may relate to two different stages in the students' lives. Thus the English course may be preparing the students for a further training course, which will be conducted through the medium of English, after which the students will then take up jobs. The English language requirements of the training course and of the later job may well be different but both need to be considered".

According to Jordan (1997, p. 23), "TSA is rigorously devised a model of all in the development of needs analysis in Munby's (1978) communicative needs Processor 'which gives the profile of students' communicative needs. Munby's model gives more emphasis in students' needs at end of a language program and target-level performance preparing students for a later job or for study in a particular context'.

#### **2.2.4.4 The skills and strategies approach**

As stated by Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 13), "the principal idea behind the skills-centered approach is that underlying all language use there are common reasoning and interpreting processes which regardless of the surface forms, enable us to extract meaning from discourse. There is, therefore, no need to focus closely on the surface forms of the language; the focus should rather be on the underlying interpretive strategies, which enable the learners to cope with the surface forms, for example guessing the meaning of words from context, using visual layout to determine the type of text, exploring cognates (i.e. words which are similar in the mother tongue and the target language), etc.".

#### **2.2.4.5 The learning-centered approach**

The fifth stage that Hutchinson and Waters (1987) mentioned is different from the other stages. They further described that "all of the stages outlined so far have been fundamentally flawed, in

that they are all based on descriptions of language use. Whether this description is of surface forms, as in the case of register analysis, or of the underlying process, as in the skills and strategies approach, the concern in each case is with describing what people do with language. But our concern in ESP is not with language use — although this would help to define the course objectives. Our concern is with language learning. We cannot simply assume that describing and exemplifying what people do with language will enable someone to learn it. If that were so, we would need to do no more than read a grammar book and a dictionary in order to learn a language. A truly valid approach to ESP must be based on an understanding of the processes of language learning” (p. 14).

## **2.3 Classification of ESP**

Many researchers have separated ESP into two primary branches: English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), most notably Strevens (1988), Robinson (1991), and Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998). Hutchinson and Waters (1987), in their ELT tree, divide ESP into three branches; that is, English for science and technology, English for business and economics, and English for social science. Each of these branches is further classified into two branches, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). However, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) did not make an obvious distinction between EAP and EOP, pointing out, “clear-cut distinction as people can work and study simultaneously and it is also likely that in many cases the language learned for immediate use in a study environment will be used later when the student takes up, or returns to, a job” (p. 16). In this manner, Cummins (2008) explains that the aim of EAP is to provide academic proficiency, while, EOP is concerned with interpersonal skills.

### **2.3.1 English for Academic Purposes (EAP); Definition and development**

English for Academic Purposes (EAP), formerly known as English for Educational Purposes (EEP) (Shing & Sim, 2011), is a language instruction program that deals with the academic language needs of students and individuals who want to work in academic settings. Pennycook (1997) asserts that EAP has a responsibility to develop students' linguistic and critical awareness in the broadest possible context, much beyond the requirements of certain target fields.

According to Dudley-Evans & St. John (1998, p. 34), “EAP refers to any English teaching that relates to a study purpose. Students whose first language is not English may need help with both language of academic discipline and the specific ‘study skills’ required of them during their academic course. The study skills may involve any of the main skills depending on the context. It is very important to be aware of how, as the study situation changes, the emphasis on different skills needs to change. The key aspect here is the extent to which either English or the national language is used as the medium of instruction for subject courses”. EAP was defined by Flowerdew and Peacock (2001, p. 8), “as the teaching of English with the specific aim of enabling learners to study, do research, or teach in that language”. For McCarter and Jakes (2009), EAP is the English language needs that a student whose first language is not English may face while enrolled in an undergraduate or postgraduate course at a higher education institution.

Hyland (2006, p. 1) further broadened the term by making it a cover term for all areas of academic communicative practice such as:

- i. Pre-tertiary, undergraduate and postgraduate teaching (from the design of material to lectures and classroom tasks);
- ii. Classroom interactions (from teacher feedback to tutorials and seminar discussion);
- iii. Research genre (from journal articles to conference papers and grant proposals);
- iv. Student writing (from essays to exam papers and graduate theses);
- v. Administrative practice (from course documents to doctoral oral defenses).

The development of EAP stemmed from ESP practitioners’ awareness that all university students have diverse language learning demands, which cannot be met by teaching them the same type of English. As stated by Sabariah and Rafik-Galea (2005), dissatisfaction with the lack of generalizability of ESP courses led to the establishment of EAP. In 2007, Evans and Green conducted a needs analysis study and found out that most of the undergraduates “not only require language support at university but also that this support should be oriented towards academic rather than general English” (p. 5). Accordingly, EAP has evolved rapidly over the last two decades, helping students in performing well in the workplace while also addressing the challenges and needs of both instructors and students from different disciplines. Yet, EAP has

established itself at the cutting edge of language instruction, according to Hyland (2006), because it is centralized around the issues such as needs analysis, syllabus design, material development, and subject-specific communication skills.

### **2.3.1.1 English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) & English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP)**

Jordan (1997) suggests that EAP could be classified into two further aspects: ESAP (English for Specific Academic Purposes) or EGAP (English for General Academic Purposes). According to Hyland (2006), “one key issue surrounding the ways we understand and practice EAP is that of specificity, or the distinction between what has been called English for General Academic Purposes (EGAP) and English for Specific Academic Purposes (ESAP)” (p. 9).

Explaining EGAP, Jordan (1997) argues that most of the common core elements are often referred to as ‘study skills’ plus other elements of a general academic English register, incorporating a formal, academic style, with proficiency in the language use. Concerning an EGAP approach, teachers attempt to separate the skills, linguistic forms, and learning activities that are considered common to all disciplines (Hyland, 2006). Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998, p. 41), include the following activities among such a core:

- i. Listening to lectures;
- ii. Participating in supervisions, seminars, and tutorials;
- iii. Reading textbooks, articles, and other material;
- iv. Writing essays, examination answers, dissertations, and reports.

On the other hand, Johns and Dudley-Evans (1991) and Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), are of the opinion that a common core approach cannot meet the specific demands of students in some EFL contexts. ESAP, indeed, “reflects the idea that, while some generalizations can be made, the differences among these skills and conventions across distinct disciplines may be greater than the similarities. ESAP, therefore, concerns the teaching of skills and language which are related to the demands of a particular discipline or department” (Hyland, 2006, p. 9).

The difference between ESAP and EGAP, according to Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), is that ESAP courses focus on the specific tasks that students need to do, whereas EGAP courses

are concerned with more general contexts. Sabariah and Rafik-Galea (2005) also claim that the discrepancies between EGAP and ESAP are due to the level of specificity and assumptions made about them. They further added up that in EGAP, students' performance, good or bad, has nothing to do with the topics related to their discipline, whereas in ESAP, students' performance would vary depending on the nature of the topics included in the course. Here in this study, however, both general and specific academic needs of postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology will be examined.

### **2.3.2 Language for religious purposes**

To delve into the relationship between language and religion, it would be better to give a detailed description of Religious language. Religious language is a field that may be broken up into what Crystal and Davy (1969, pp. 148) have called “several ‘provinces’ and ‘modalities’, the religious language of Scripture does not operate like, and therefore does not show the same features, as the religious English of prayers, hymns, or radio broadcasts”. Also (Crystal, 1975, p. 96) stated that, “the language of sermons, for instance, constitutes a register in its own respect, in as much as it clearly qualifies as religious language, but also has a rhetorical structure of its own, and features many markers (notably at the prosodic level) of public speaking”.

Crystal and Davy (1969, p. 148) underline the fact that “as a source of the linguistic effect, religious language is very evident within the literature, where a deliberate, evocative use may be made of its terminology and phraseology; or in humor, where one may readily cause laughter by discussing a non-religious topic, such as a cricket match, in the tone of voice, grammar, and vocabulary associated with religious language use”.

Language and religion, however, share a long and close history. Since the 1960s there have been numerous English studies on the relationship between language and religion by famous linguists like James Barr - the Semantics of Biblical Language, 1961 - or Stella Brook - the Language of the Book of Common Prayer, 1965. This increased interest in religious language is usually linked to the 1960s, when religious language became a focus of interest at the Vatican II Council, whose ideas on liturgical change brought about the shift from Latin into the vernacular. At the same time, Crystal (1965) published a notable book named ‘Linguistics, Language and Religion’ in which he addressed the theme of the theophoric language, which he viewed as a

branch of stylistics. The early 1970s brought about a near explosion of thought and writing about religious language in which many theologians and famous philosophers took part (e.g. Paul Van Buren, Gerhard Ebeling, Anders Jeffner, and Jean Ladrière; as cited in Lastovickova, 2013). Later in 1981, the Belgian linguist, van Noppen, coined the term of theolinguistics. He published a volume of essays on this subject under the same name ‘Theolinguistics 1’ in which he introduced the term and explained it, which subsequently led to the launch of the very start of this discipline. van Noppen (1995, p. 693) defined the term in the following way, “theolinguistics seeks to describe how human discourse may be employed to refer to the divine, and beyond that, how language operates in ‘religious’ situations in manners which may not meet the narrow standard of direct, univocal reference, but which nevertheless operates with a logic which can be demarcated in terms of known linguistic processes (metaphor, speech acts, etc.)”. Crystal (2008, as cited in Crystal, 2013, p. 3) described theolinguistics as “a term which has been used for the study of the relationship between language and religious thought and practice, as illustrated by ritual, sacred texts, preaching, doctrinal statements and private affirmations of belief”. Thus, van Noppen (2009) explains that faith is more about how individuals live rather than how they talk; however, while it would be an overstatement to say that religion is solely a matter of language, it must be acknowledged that religious practice is, in many ways, a linguistic endeavor; as a result, studying religious language is a necessary tool for comprehending how faith is experienced, expressed, and conveyed.

According to Dazdarević (2012), language is a key instrument for understanding religion, as the major declarations of the Christian/Islamic belief system are documented in a canon of writings, and religious behavior includes reading, reciting, studying, and commenting on these authoritative texts. She further emphasized religion as a linguistic enterprise, emphasizing the relationship between the English language and religion, as well as its importance in the modern world as a conveyor of religious knowledge to the international community, and the different ways in which global cultures, which are often accessible in English, will continue to connect with the religious world. Dazdarević (2012), then, goes on to say that since different linguists have different approaches to language for religious purposes, there are different terms for the use of this type of languages such as English for theological studies, Christian discourse, Islamic discourse, Religious language, English for Bible and theology, theological English, Christian

religious language, Islamic English, the public language of worship, the English religious dialect, a liturgical language, etc.

In Iran, however, teaching language for religious purposes programs are limited to ESP courses for the students in Islamic fields in universities (e.g. Islamic philosophy and theology, Qur'an and Hadith Studies, Religious Studies, Islamic Jurisprudence, etc.) and different language courses for seminarians, teachers, researchers, and scholars who are training as preachers for international context to introduce the genuine Islam scientifically and methodically. International Institute for Islamic Studies in Qom, for instance, provides different courses in the English language in order to educate specialists and competent researchers for introducing Islam in general and Shia Islam in particular in religious and scientific centers in the country or abroad and in international seminars and interfaith dialogues. Jami'at al-Murtaza, another school in Qom, provides different language courses for seminary students not only in English but also in Spanish, Italian, Portuguese, and Chinese. The main aim of conducting these courses is to train missionaries to communicate with foreigners and convey the messages of Islam.

### **2.3.2.1 Islamic English**

One of the experts who believe in the Islamization of English is Al-Faruqi (1986). He wanted to foster the inclusion of a wide range of untranslatable Arabic terms into English, thereby enriching and enlarging English and other languages. For instance, he identifies how it might be misleading to translate 'salat' or 'namaz' as 'prayer' because the term makes no distinction between the obligatory, chronologically appointed salat and the spontaneous supplication of 'du'a'. Al-Faruqi further included some thirty pages of Arabic script terms that were appropriately transcribed and defined to serve as a set of words that were once regarded as English vocabulary. "Islamic English is the English language modified to enable it to carry Islamic proper nouns and meanings without distortion, and, thus to serve the linguistic needs of Muslim users of the English language" (Al-Faruqi, 1986, p. 7).

Muslim users of the English language, according to Al-Faruqi (1986), are Muslim citizens and permanent residents of English-speaking nations and countries where English is an official language, such as Pakistan, India, Malaysia, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, and many more. Apart from the aforementioned, the category also covers all Muslims who have mastered or are

familiar with the English language, and who use it for reading, research, writing, and communication. Moreover, millions of Muslims who speak non-Islamic languages, such as European, Asian, and African languages, must be included in this group.

Jassem (1995) seeks to indicate some of the distinguishing elements of Islamic English in terms of general language levels such as phonology, morphology, syntax, lexis, and discourse, based on Al-Faruqi's description of Islamic English and classification of Muslim users of the English language. He finally comes to the conclusion that there are differences between Muslim native English speakers and that of Muslim non-native English speakers at nearly every level, but the differences are most noticeable at the discourse level. Jassem (1995) further outlined the following salient features of Islamic English:

- i. Islam topics;
- ii. lexis that includes Islamic Arabic vocabulary; some of which is now commonly used in standard English (e.g. Shariah, Fiqh, Fatwa, Islam, Jihad, etc);
- iii. the grammar of Islamic English is plain syntax;
- iv. the discourse includes many Arabic terms (e.g. Bismilla, du'a (supplication), Salaam (greeting), and Gazzaj Allahu Khyra (for thank you));
- v. the audience of Islamic English are Muslims or non-Muslims;
- vi. The Qur'an and Sunnah are primary sources, while secondary sources include the work of Sahaba (the prophet's companions) and Muslim experts from all walks of life.

Jassem (1995) makes a more explicit description by noting that Islamic English includes the topic, lexis, grammar rules, style, audience, and discourse norms that are similar to other English varieties. Therefore, he concluded that Islamic English is a long-standing phenomenon that has been in use since the first Muslims spoke and wrote English.

Abduddalam (1999, p. 6) states, "describing languages as Islamic or non-Islamic normally surfaces while discussing the Islamization of linguistic studies, in the context of difference and similarity between language groups, socio-cultural identity, thought, behavior and beliefs of these groups. In order to offer a clear description, the linguistic features of the Islamic language need clarification. It is unexpected that this description will restrict itself to the commonality

between Arabic and other languages spoken by Muslims commonly on the surface level of lexical borrowing, despite the fact that the influence of Islam on language transcends loan words to discourse and in-depth cultural meaning of borrowed lexicon”.

For all students at Islamic schools and institutes, the importance of learning English is now evident. Despite the fact that some Muslims believe that teaching English in their country is the same as ignoring Islam (Pennycook, 1994), the importance of teaching English for Muslim students is undeniable. Concerning this, Al-Seghayer (2011) considers teaching English in public schools in Saudi Arabia an important step to improve the global understanding and competitiveness of Muslims in an increasingly interdependent and competitive world. Nashruddin (2015, p. 67) points out, “As Arabic is used for the communication inside Islam, English is needed to communicate Islam to other people around the earth both to Muslims or Non-Muslims”. Rohmah (2012) suggests that integrating Islamic messages into English teaching materials may help students feel less confused and less stressed. In this regard, Alonzo (2011) identifies four critical elements in developing English language teaching and learning materials for Asian theologians; these elements are:

- i. the problematic theological concepts for Asian seminary students;
- ii. the common linguistic problems that Asian seminary students face;
- iii. the language skills that Asian seminary students need for their theological training;
- iv. the help that an English program can offer to the seminary.

## **2.4 Needs and needs analysis**

Since there have been different definitions of needs, it seems that it is difficult to provide a clear definition of the concept of needs. Brindley (1984, cited in Richards, 2001) describes that it refers to the learner’s wants, interests, demands, expectations, motivations, lacks, limitations, requirements, and necessities. For Berwick (1989), needs are objective and subjective, perceived and felt, target situation/goal-oriented and learning, process-oriented and product-oriented. Needs, according to West (1994), are how learners should deal with a foreign language in the target situation, and how effectively they master the target language during the training period.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) distinguish between learning needs (i.e., what the learner must do in order to learn) and target needs (i.e., what the learner must achieve in order to learn) (i.e. what the learner needs to do in the target situation). They define target needs as necessities, lacks, and wants. Necessities, according to their definition, are the type of needs determined by the demands of the target situation. However, because ESP is concerned with the needs of particular learners, identifying necessities is not sufficient. As a result, knowing what the learners currently know is necessary in order to determine which of the necessities they lack (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987). Finally, wants are what learners think they require in order to function in the target situation, in addition to the language required by their field of study or work situation (Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998; Berwick, 1989).

#### **2.4.1 Needs analysis in EAP**

According to Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998), the process of determining the what and how of a course is referred to as needs analysis. Also, Nunan (1999, p. 148) nicely states, “rather than fitting students to courses, courses should be designed to fit students”. This, however, means that needs assessment is a thorough process of considering the interests of students who seem to have disparate aims for learning a foreign language.

Furthermore, needs analysis can be viewed as a useful tool for addressing learners' linguistic requirements in a context-specific manner (Long, 2005; Weddel & Van Duzer, 1997). Accordingly, as Flowerdew (2013) points out, if the context and purpose of learning English are ignored, the obtained needs will not accurately reflect what should be followed in the process of ESP/EAP teaching. In addition, Brown (1995) underlines the fact that needs assessment is a process and a phenomenon that is contextualized. He further added that needs analysis is a set of practices that involves collecting and analyzing data about the necessary elements which should be included in the curricula to address the needs. Nunan (1994, p. 54) explains needs analysis as “a set of procedures for specifying the parameters of a course of study. Such parameters include the criteria and rationale for grouping learners, the selection and sequencing of course content, methodology, course length, and intensity and duration”. Moreover, Hyland (2006) defines needs analysis as “the techniques for collecting and assessing information relevant to course design: it is the means of establishing the how and what of a course. It is a continuous process since we

modify our teaching as we come to learn more about our students, and in this way, it actually shades into evaluation – the means of establishing the effectiveness of a course” (p. 74).

Taking into account the definitions presented by the above-cited scholars, it is possible to say that needs assessment is the process of identifying the language and context needed by the students to ensure that the course will contain relevant and useful things to learn.

#### **2.4.2 Methods to collect data for needs analysis**

Needs analysis entails gathering both objective and subjective information, prior to and during instruction (Brindley, 1989). Jordan (1997) claims that a variety of procedures are utilized to gather data for needs analysis. In this manner, Jordan (1997) cites a variety of procedures that range from traditional research tools to informal classroom methods and include the followings:

- i. Questionnaires that may be distributed to language learners or to other people who are familiar with the context in which learners need to use the language;
- ii. Structured interviews involve a series of set questions relating to needs;
- iii. Group discussions with learners;
- iv. Collection and linguistic analysis of authentic spoken and written texts which are typically found in the future context of language use;
- v. Language tests and assessments;
- vi. Case studies of individual learners

The students and their learning environments, as Robinson (1989) indicates, must be considered. The first aspect is mostly connected with the requirements and objectives that students must meet during their training term. And the second one is about the learners' purposes after they complete their training, such as when they apply for a job, or the way they use their English language skills to communicate effectively in that position.

Robinson (1991) also proposed that three key sources of information are required to conduct a needs assessment; that is, the learner, language teaching institutions, and the learner's employment. Furthermore, according to Mackay (1978), there are primarily two formal ways to collect the required data; by using a questionnaire or by conducting interviews.

## 2.5 EAP in Iran

Atai (2002a) has divided EAP instruction in Iran into three generations. In the first generation, Iranian Universities and Western academic institutions collaborated to implement EAP courses. In the 1980s, the government implemented the second generation of programs in the 1980s, which resulted in the compilation of a limited number of EAP textbooks for several macro-disciplines by the Iranian Center for Studying and Compiling University Books in Humanities (SAMT). And the last phase is distinguished by an emphasis on content specificity and the growth of EAP textbooks for highly specialized academic disciplines as a result of collaboration between content teachers and EFL instructors.

EAP programs in Iran are designed to help the students to communicate effectively in their academic and occupational settings both nationally and internationally and have become an important part of the curricula (Atai & Tahirian, 2003). The main objective of the EAP programs is claimed to be “bridging the gap between the students' General English Proficiency (GEP) and their ability to read authentic discipline-specific texts” (Atai, 2006, p. 28).

According to Iranmehr et al. (2018, p. 173), “in terms of EAP programs as an indispensable part of English language teaching (ELT) in Iran, the legislative system and MSRT are the major sources of promoting language acquisition policy and planning. They exert their influence through choosing the language of instruction, deciding on EAP curriculum development and implementation, deciding on the type of teaching instruction, determining the type of textbooks and materials needed to be published mostly through government-led publications”. As stated by Mazdayasna (2008, p. 50), “teaching EAP has a marginal status in Iranian tertiary education, with no clear guidance from the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology (MSRT) as to the expected linguistic or communicative standards. The main aim of EAP classes is to improve technical vocabulary, reading, and translation skills and the textbook seems to represent what the students need to ‘know’ in order to pass their exams. It has been hoped that if students improve their general language skills early in the course or learn the technical vocabulary in their first year, then they will be adequately equipped to handle subject-specific textbooks in their discipline-specific courses”.

Thus far, numerous researchers have criticized EAP programs in the Iranian academic setting. For instance, Atai (2002a) believes that EAP courses in Iran have been developed

unsystematically and policy-makers have based their decisions on intuitions and general statements of the goals. According to Mazdayasna (2008), “the type of highly specialized language input which has characterized most ESP materials is probably inappropriate for the needs of many EAP learners, focusing as it has tended to, on the performance repertoire rather than the underlying competence needed by the learners for the communication in the target situation. Concerning the development of the four macro language skills, only reading has been emphasized. While, listening, reading, and writing have been neglected”. In this manner, Suzani et al. (2011) indicate some major problems regarding ESP courses in the Iranian Higher Education Institution, such as inappropriate time of presenting ESP courses, overcrowded classes, inconvenient class hours, lack of authentic application of language knowledge, and teachers’ outdated methods of teaching such as memorizing terms, and translation. Likewise, Iranmehr et al. (2018, p. 173) point out, “contrary to the importance of EAP courses in the university curricula, the findings reveal that students typically lack the adequate proficiency and communication skills needed to satisfy their needs”. Some scholars, also, have criticized ignoring needs analysis in designing and developing ESP/EAP courses. For instance, Soodmand-Afshar and Movassagh (2016) state that despite the fact that needs analysis is widely regarded as one of the most significant phases of ESP education, there have been a few thorough studies aimed to properly address students' needs in the Iranian setting of EAP. By the same token, Tavakoli and Tavakol (2018, p. 29) argue, “there have been a number of critical evaluative studies in post-Islamic Iranian EAP contexts, each pointing to several problematic areas in the university-level EAP education with dire consequences. So, apparently, there exists a research agenda but has not made any significant changes so far. Perhaps because, on the one hand, the results of research on EAP instruction in Iran are either kept somewhere in a university's library to be used only by other researchers for literature reviews or as a model for doing their own research or else published as research articles to have the same readership rather than policy-makers and major stakeholders”.

In terms of ESP textbooks in Iran, the British Council established an ESP program at Tabriz University in 1975 (Dudley-Evans, Shattesworth, & Phillips, 1976; cited in Mazdayasna, 2008) to meet the English language needs of students majoring in medicine, engineering, pharmacy, physics, biology, chemistry, mathematics, and agriculture. This partnership resulted in a number of textbooks that were written specifically for those courses. The Nucleus Series, published by

Bates and Dudley-Evans in 1976, had a core book, General Science, as well as companion books for different subjects. The Nucleus which was communicative-oriented chooses a syllabus based on concepts (notions), such as properties, shapes, location, structure, and process (Mazdayasna, 2008). The approach, however, appears to have succeeded, as the series is by far the best-selling ESP course ever published (Flowerdew, 1990). The Nucleus series has been praised for having well-constructed exercises, appropriate co-text, interest and variety, coherence between vocabulary and grammatical tasks, and contextualization of exercises, according to Robinson (1980). However, the responsibility for materials development was assigned to SAMT (an official organization of university materials development and research affiliated with Iran's ministry of science, research, and technology) in 1985. SAMT textbooks consist of reading excerpts thematically connected to the students' academic disciplines, which are followed by exercises on reading comprehension, grammar exercises, word formation, and understanding meaning in context (Mazdayasna, 2008). Nonetheless, SAMT textbooks faced some critics from different stakeholders for not addressing the actual needs of students. Atai (2000), for example, believes that this program failed because the program designers did not develop the courses based on systematic needs assessment. Moreover, Farhady (2006) mentioned that the activities and exercises in the textbooks do not give students a sense of achievement in terms of reading skills. He also added up that tasks do not engage students in the process of learning.

Correspondingly, it is worth looking at the status of EAP instructors in Iranian Universities. As Mazdayasna (2008) points out, in Iran, ESP courses are taught to poorly-motivated students by untrained instructors with limited resources. And EFL instructors and subject-specific instructors do not work well together. As stated by Atai and Fatahi-Majd (2014 p. 2), "Although some textbooks have been developed through the collaboration between the English instructors and subject teachers under the supervision of SAMT and according to a strict and consistent framework of materials development, there is no cooperation between English language instructors and subject teachers at the classroom implementation level". Some Iranian scholars (e.g. Farhady, 2006; Yarmohammadi, 2005) have argued that English should be taught by English teachers not subject-specific instructors if we believe that our profession demands special training. Sadeghi (2005), citing Hutchinson and Waters (1987), contends that an ESP instructor should possess the same characteristics as a general English instructor. He went on to

say that an ESP instructor should have a) English language skills, b) a thorough understanding of course design, and c) in-depth knowledge of the related field of study.

## **2.6 A selective review of the previous studies on ESP**

To date, numerous studies have been conducted in Iran and other countries regarding the English language needs of students in different majors and fields in a variety of contexts. However, the EAP course for postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology is among the under-researched Iranian programs for which no comprehensive needs analysis has ever been conducted. The following overview provides a sampling of the related studies on ESP/EAP needs analysis conducted in the Iranian setting and Muslim world. The first section describes the studies conducted in Iran intending to identify the language learning needs of students in different disciplines as well as explore the deficiencies of ESP/EAP courses in the Iranian academic setting. And the next part deals with the studies done on the language needs of students in the Islamic context.

### **2.6.1 Empirical studies on ESP/EAP in the Iranian setting**

Thus far, many Iranian scholars have addressed the language needs of learners. For example, in a large-scale study, Mazdayasna (2008) provided a comprehensive profile of the foreign language learning needs of Iranian undergraduate medical sciences students studying in faculties of nursing and midwifery. This mixed-method revealed that most of the students perceived that they need to master their English before they attend their specialized courses. In addition, a great number of students thought that reading comprehension, listening, speaking and writing are the most important language skills. The results of the study also revealed the total dissatisfaction of subject-specific instructors with regard to their students' language skills. Accordingly, they claimed that students do not have sufficient reading, writing, speaking, or listening skills after passing the ESP course. While Mazdayasna's study focused on specialized English courses for the above-mentioned students, Samadi (2018) probed Iranian nursing students' English needs in terms of both EGP and ESP. The results of the data analysis indicated that both nursing students and employed nurses need all four language skills almost equally. As this piece of research suggested, the order of the language skills was reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

Therefore, with a small variation in mean scores, the written skills ranked than oral skills. Her findings, however, were in line with Rostami's & Zafarghandi's (2014) findings; as reported by the result of this study both instructors and students perceived reading as the most important skill for chemistry students.

In an evaluation of the present and target situation academic language needs of undergraduate students of computer engineering, Atai and Shoja (2011) concluded that written skills and language components are important from the viewpoint of the students and the undergraduates had difficulties with some sub-skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In addition, the results showed that the general English proficiency level of the students, as probed by a GEP test and confirmed by self-assessment results and teacher assessment data, was generally low.

In her thesis, Moslemi (2011) investigated the language learning needs of Iranian MA students studying biology, psychology, physical training, accounting, and western philosophy. Seemingly, students struggled with general English rather than technical English, according to the data collected. For instance, the students faced problems in the comprehension of the arrangement of the texts, understanding the relationships between the sentences, and different structural and grammatical issues.

In another attempt, Esfandiari (2015) carried out a survey to investigate the English language needs of Iranian undergraduate students of Law. The results, which were collected quantitatively using researcher-made questionnaires, showed that general vocabulary, technical vocabulary, and using general bilingual dictionaries were considered as the most important target needs. At the same time grammar, pronunciation, and guessing the meaning of the words from suffixes and prefixes were regarded as the present needs of BA students. Furthermore, data analyses revealed statistically significant differences in responses to target needs from BA students, MA students, and subject-specific teachers.

In a nationwide study, Soodmand-Afshar and Movassagh, (2016) investigated the current status of EAP education in Iran in terms of needs assessment. According to their findings, despite the fact that the stakeholders involved in the study had significantly different views of needs,

they all agreed that reading comprehension was the most important language skill for EAP students.

Shahmoradi and Izadpanah (2017) reported the results of a needs analysis survey which was carried out to identify the English language needs of the Persian literature university students from teachers' perspectives. Accordingly, reading comprehension was the most important skill in academic studies of the Persian literature university students, speaking perceived as the most essential skill in their future profession, and writing was considered as the most important skill in their private/social life.

In a very careful study, Bahmaninia (2017) provided a description of the language needs of Iranian science students majoring in biology, chemistry, and physics in the Science Faculty of Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz. The science students ranked reading, speaking, writing, and listening respectively as important skills. This study also concluded that the instructors and course designers should take into account students' needs and interests to better prepare the students to use the English language in their future careers. For a similar purpose, Zand-Moghadam et al. (2018) addressed the language needs of Iranian EAP students of Humanities and Social Sciences. This piece of the paper suggested that writing, speaking, and listening skills were not given the attention they deserved, but that the grammar and vocabulary sub-skills were well covered in the EAP courses.

Through a needs assessment protocol, Zahednejad (2019) endeavored to make changes in the ESP curriculum provided for Iranian physics students. The study revealed that the students lacked many language skills and components, even reading comprehension which was the focus of the course. Accordingly, reading comprehension and writing were considered as the necessities the undergraduates of physics needed to acquire in this phase of their academic careers. It was also realized that the learners' needs were not the same in different phases of their academic studies.

Khalil (2020) made an effort to examine the English language needs of Iranian medical students. To do so, the quantitative and qualitative approaches of data collection with questionnaires, interviews, and observations were utilized. The findings indicated that in terms of language skills, all four skills were worth practicing in the ESP course. However, listening and

writing were mostly ignored and speaking was not practiced systematically. Reading was the only skill that was emphasized.

Finally, in one of the most recent and comprehensive studies, Ranjbar and Soodmand-Afshar (2021) conducted a study to compare needs in EAP from the perspectives of both students and instructors as well as to examine how satisfied students are with the current EAP teaching and assessment methods used in EAP classes. They concluded that there was a difference in perceptions of needs between instructors and students, implying that they have different perceptions of the outcomes of language instruction; and they assert that difference might have a negative impact on language learning outcomes.

According to the available literature, different issues with regard to ESP courses have been also examined by Iranian scholars. For instance, Esmaeili (2016) confirmed that the majority of students majoring in computer and mechanical engineering at Islamic Azad University of Shiraz were dissatisfied with the textbooks, teaching methods, and evaluations. Furthermore, classroom observations revealed that English to Persian translation, technical terms translation, and reading activities are the most common classroom activities. Similarly, Soodmand-Afshar and Movassagh (2016) cited teaching materials, students' general English proficiency level, class duration, students' and instructors' motivation level as the most problems concerned by the stakeholders.

In his dissertation, Ershadi (2018) attempted to evaluate the ESP program in the Iranian setting focusing on its goal, teaching methodology, and textbooks through the eyes of the stakeholders. A conclusion was reached based on the results obtained that the ESP program is ineffective due to its course structure, teaching goals, methodology, and materials being inappropriate. However, this is mostly due to a lack of needs analysis and systematic evaluation, which has led to the program's failure. By the same token, Sharifian (2019), found out that the ESP students mostly attributed their demotivation to lack of individual competence, teachers, and course content. In another study entitled "Assessment of academic English language needs of Iranian post-graduate students of psychology", Atai and Hejazi (2019) analyzed the needs of psychology students. As for the problems, low level of general English proficiency, lack of well-trained ESP practitioners, lack of a coherent curriculum, lack of up to date methodology and

textbooks, lack of audio-visual aids, and real situations in Iran to use specialized English in psychology were the most reported problems mentioned by the stakeholders.

Also, in one of the most recent studies, Khalili (2020) indicated that the students were dissatisfied with the presented materials and methodology. Furthermore, ESP practitioners did not pay attention to some significant issues such as students' needs and challenges, introducing target discourse communities, practicing relevant genres, providing supplementary materials, and using authentic materials. In addition, according to the findings of this study, ESP instructors and students cited some barriers to achieving the goals and objectives of English for Medical Purposes (EMP) courses, including limited time, the number of credit hours, credit distribution, and heterogeneous classes.

In the case of ESP materials, Baleghizadeh and Rahimi (2011) found that the systematic evaluation of textbooks is rarely done and students' needs and opinions about the materials developed for them are overlooked in Iran. Likewise, Shokati's (2020) study on the evaluation of two core ESP textbooks of law students under the title Law Texts revealed some fruitful results. It was concluded that these two textbooks are ineffective and have some drawbacks such as being outdated, not being in line with students' needs, containing inappropriate vocabulary, and inadequate grammar presentation. Besides, according to the needs analysis results, students believed that all language skills, grammar, and vocabulary were needed.

## **2.6.2 The related studies on needs analysis in the Islamic context**

The importance of needs analysis in teaching English for specific purpose was also investigated by some Muslim scholars. Abudhahir and Ali (2018) surveyed 30 Malaysian students of Islamic studies on their perception of English as well as the most important skills and materials to be included in the English for Islamic studies course. Their findings revealed that a great number of students highly rated the importance of English, and perceived speaking as the most needed language skill as they want to become Islamic preachers. Similarly, Sianipar (2019) researched to determine what the theology students of Institut Agama Kristen Negeri (IAKN) Tarutung need to learn in their English class and what the English lecturers do to meet that need.

In another attempt, Maharani et al. (2019) conducted a study with the aim of exploring the specialized vocabularies used in Islamic Studies texts written in English for EFL Islamic students and to classify the word class of specialized vocabulary in English for Islamic studies.

Furthermore, Aljadani and Alsolami (2020) used a quantitative approach to identify the English language needs for religious guides at The General Presidency of The Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque. Accordingly, listening and speaking were found to be the most important language skills, with reading being fairly important and writing being unimportant. In addition, English is highly regarded as a tool for properly carrying out their tasks in terms of preaching and advising visitors and pilgrims.

On the whole, reviewing the available literature, the researcher came to the conclusion that this survey is needed as no studies have investigated the English language learning needs of Iranian postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology. As for the possible implications, the findings of such analysis would bring benefits for all the stakeholders involved and yield better results in implementing future EAP courses for students.



# **Chapter Three**

## **Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter of the study deals with details of the methodological procedure adopted for this study including four sections. In the first section, the overall design of the study is presented. Section two provides a full description of the participants of the study. Section three deals with the description of the instruments utilized for collecting data. Finally, section four explains the data collection procedures of the study.

### **3.2 Design of the study**

To provide a better understanding of the concepts in research questions (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2007), the present study enjoyed a mixed-methods survey basis in which both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection were employed. Accordingly, the instruments of the study were semi-structured interviews, needs assessment questionnaires, and a document analysis protocol to have triangulation. The quantitative data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics and the qualitative data obtained from the interview and document analysis were analyzed by using a thematic analysis approach.

Two sources of data in this study were students and instructors. Their perceptions regarding the English language needs of students of Islamic philosophy and theology would be helpful to reveal what the students need.

### **3.3 Participants**

The subject of the study included 72 students of Islamic philosophy and theology at the Master's level. The sample comprised 49 (68.1%) male students, and 23 (31.9%) female students with an age range of 24 to 37 years. The participants were selected according to convenience sampling from eleven different Iranian universities where Islamic philosophy and theology is taught including Qom, College of Farabi (University of Tehran), Tehran, Isfahan, Allameh Tabataba'i, Baqir al-Olum, Mofid, Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies, Alzahra, Islamic Azad University, and University of Religions and Denominations. In addition, 8 instructors who taught EAP courses at some of these universities participated in this research. The distribution of participants who took part in this research is illustrated in Table 3.1. It should be noted that at

first, the researcher wanted to assess the language needs of students of Islamic philosophy at the different educational levels, but after reviewing the course description, it was found that the specialized English courses are recently offered only to the students at Master's level. First, some of the instructors and some of the students were interviewed to lead the researcher into a better understanding of the language learning needs of the students. After that, a needs analysis questionnaire was administrated to all participants to indicate the details of the students' language learning needs.

**Table 3.1**

*The distribution of the participants who participated in this study*

<i>University</i>	<i>Postgraduate students</i>	<i>Subject-specific instructors</i>
Qom	21	3
College of Farabi	11	1
Tehran	7	-
Isfahan	6	1
Allameh Tabataba'i	5	-
Baqir al-Olum	5	2
Mofid	4	1
Institute for Humanities and Cultural Studies	4	-
Alzahra	2	-
Islamic Azad University	5	-
University of Religions and Denominations	2	-

### **3.4 Instruments**

As was suggested by Jasso-Aguilar (1999) and Long (2005), in order to increase the validity and reliability of the results, a triangulation of the instruments and sources was used in this study. Thus, three instruments were used in this study: 1) interviews, 2) needs analysis questionnaires, and 3) document analysis. The description of each instrument will be presented in the following sections.

### **3.4.1 Interviews**

Mackay (1978) advocated the advantage of using interviews when investigating learners' needs. Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) also emphasized the interview, as one of the main data collection methods. In this regard, at the beginning of the study semi-structured interviews with some of the students and some of the instructors were conducted. The purpose of conducting the interviews was to find out what problems students of Islamic philosophy and theology might have when learning English. To do so, a list of questions (see appendix C & D) was prepared that addressed issues such as the most important language skills, different aspects of the English language in which students need more to efficiently carry out their studies, major problems of teaching and learning EAP in Iran, also the respondents' attitudes towards different methodological issues related to English classes and the syllabus description. The interview questions were finalized after receiving comments from experts in applied linguistics as well as subject-specific experts. The interview data was further analyzed by the researchers, using the thematic content analysis approach proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006).

### **3.4.2 Needs analysis questionnaires**

Another instrument used in this study included two sets of needs analysis questionnaires (see appendix A & B); that is, students' needs analysis questionnaire, and subject-specific instructors' questionnaire. According to Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010), the popularity of questionnaires is due to the fact that they are easy to construct, extremely versatile, and uniquely capable of gathering a large amount of information quickly in a readily processable form. As Gillham (cited in Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010, p. 6) described, "the main attraction of questionnaires is their unprecedented efficiency in terms of a) researcher time, b) researcher effort, and c) financial resources. By administering a questionnaire to a group of people, one can collect a huge amount of information in less than an hour, and the personal investment required will be a fraction of what would have been needed for, say, interviewing the same number of people".

The questionnaires were developed after examining several needs analysis questionnaires developed by other scholars. In this respect, a modified version of a questionnaire developed by Mazdayasna (2008) was adopted. Since some parts of the original version were found unrelated to the purpose of this study, some items were deleted and some items regarding general study

skills were added to the aforementioned questionnaire. The first section of the students' questionnaire gathered background information about the participants. In the next section, the viewpoints of the participants towards the four language skills along with general study skills were elicited. And the last part of the questionnaire asked for information about language instruction, length of the course, course materials, syllabus, and methodology of the English course in the form of multiple-choice items. The students' questionnaire consisted of 38 items and used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (To a very great extent). Moreover, the instructors' questionnaire consisted of 35 items and used a five-point Likert scale as mentioned above. In order to secure the participants' understanding of the items and to remove potential misunderstandings on behalf of the participants, the Persian language was used. To ensure content validity of the questionnaires, one expert in applied linguistics and two experts in the field of Islamic philosophy and theology, who were also the participating subject-specialists, were asked to give their feedback on the questionnaires. The reliability of the questionnaire was also calculated after the first draft of the questionnaire was developed and a pilot study was conducted on 12 students. Accordingly, Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the questionnaire was 0.88 which demonstrates its high-reliability measure.

### **3.4.3 Document analysis**

Document analysis is a useful data collection and analysis instrument, especially when dealing with policies made at higher-order levels of the educational system and with whether these policies have been implemented at lower levels (Bowen, 2009; cited in Iranmehr et al., 2018). The main objective of the document analysis was to see to what extent the current course description meets the needs of students. The only EAP document found in the present study was a corpus of EAP course description document in the 'Islamic philosophy and theology' curriculum which was retrieved from the website of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology (MSRT) in Iran. The syllabus description was carefully reviewed by the researcher and after making a justification between the document and research findings, subjected to qualitative thematic analysis for further interpretation.

### **3.5 Data collection procedure**

The required data for the study were collected in the fall semester of 2020-2021 as described below. First, the researchers interviewed students and subject-specific instructors to specify the needs. Prior to distributing the questionnaires, in order to measure the reliability of the questionnaires, the first drafts of the two sets of needs analysis questionnaires were prepared and a pilot study was performed on 12 students. Then, final versions of the questionnaires were administered to the participants after being revised based on the pilot study and experts' judgment. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in universities' closures all across the country, the questionnaires were distributed online via e-mail and online messenger applications. It almost took 14 weeks to administer the questionnaires and to conduct the interviews. Finally, the obtained data from the questionnaires were analyzed by Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) using descriptive statistics (i.e. mean, standard deviation, and independent sample t-test). The semi-structured interviews were transcribed by the researchers and then analyzed for further explanation.

## **Chapter Four**

## **Data Analysis**

## **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results and the findings of data analysis. First, the researcher provides a short description of the procedure undertaken for analyzing the data gathered from the sample population. Then, the data collected through students' and subject-specific instructors' questionnaires will be analyzed and discussed. Finally, the responses provided by the participants elicited during the interview sessions as well as the document analysis will be analyzed.

## **4.2 Data analysis procedure**

As mentioned earlier, the data were collected from two groups of participants classified as postgraduate students, and subject-specific instructors. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for statistical operations needed for analysis of the questionnaires' data. The results of the questionnaires were coded and analyzed descriptively (i.e. tabulation, percentages, and mean scores). Furthermore, an independent sample t-test was used to see whether postgraduate students and instructors differ significantly in terms of language learning needs. The interview results were transcribed by the researcher and then subjected to thematic content analysis for further interpretation.

## **4.3 Analysis of the responses of students' and subject-specific instructors' questionnaires**

In this part, the perspectives of both groups of the participants regarding each skill have been introduced in the form of 2 tables. In the first table, the responses were cross-tabulated for each question and the data was summarized. The second table illustrates the mean score and the standard deviation of each question as well as the independent sample t-test result of that skill. The options are given values from 0 for 'not at all' to 5 for 'to a very great extent'.

The first twenty-six questions in both questionnaires were similar; consequently, the responses of the participants in the questions (1-26) were compared and analyzed.

### 4.3.1 Opinions about listening skills

Items (1-5) on the students' and subject-specific instructors' questionnaires elicited opinions from both groups regarding the use of listening skills in different situations such as listening to lectures (Q1), listening to conversations on general topics (Q2), listening to English mass media (Q3), listening to presentations in class (Q4), and listening to students and classmates (Q5).

Table 4.1 shows the percentile frequencies of responses on each question by the participants of the two groups regarding the importance of listening sub-skills.

**Table 4.1**

*Cross-tabulation for listening skills*

Items	Group	Not at all %	A little %	To a moderate extent %	To a great extent %	To a very great extent %	Total count %
1	Student	6.9	11.1	23.6	36.1	22.2	72
	Instructor	0.0	12.5	37.5	50.0	0.0	8
2	Student	9.7	19.4	27.8	34.7	8.3	72
	Instructor	0.0	12.5	37.5	50.0	0.0	8
3	Student	8.3	33.3	25.0	23.6	9.7	72
	Instructor	12.5	12.5	37.5	37.5	0.0	8
4	Student	16.7	13.9	26.4	31.9	11.1	72
	Instructor	0.0	12.5	37.5	12.5	37.5	8
5	Student	27.8	18.1	33.3	13.9	6.9	72
	Instructor	0.0	37.5	25.0	12.5	25.0	8

Table 4.2 illustrates the mean score for listening skills regarding each group as well as the independent sample t-test results. Regarding the comparison of the Sig. (2-tailed) value, there was no significant difference between instructors' perceptions and those of students.

Accordingly, the results showed that there was a consistency between students' and instructors' perceptions about item 1, the importance of listening skill for listening to lectures ( $t = 0.429$ ,  $p = 0.669 > 0.05$ ). Both instructors and students were also in agreement regarding item 2, the importance of listening skill for listening to conversations on general topics ( $t = -0.612$ ,  $p = 0.542 > 0.05$ ). Views of two groups of the respondents regarding item 3 which checked the importance of listening skill for listening to English mass media were not also significantly different ( $t = -0.164$ ,  $p = 0.870 > 0.05$ ). The findings also indicated no significant different concerning item 4, the importance of listening skill for listening to presentations in class ( $t = -1.459$ ,  $p = 0.149 > 0.05$ ). And finally, both students and instructors had the same viewpoints about item 5, the importance of listening skill for listening to students and classmates ( $t = -1.536$ ,  $p = 0.128 > 0.05$ ).

Considering the mean scores, the students and the instructors got mean scores of 3.04 and 3.35 respectively. Thus, the respondents in the two groups consider this skill to be more than moderately important. Examining in more detail in Table 4.2, the mean scores revealed that with regard to listening skills, the highest means were 3.56 (S) and 3.75 (I), related to the needs for listening to lectures and listening to presentations in class. And the lowest means were 2.54 (S) and 3.00 (I), related to the needs for listening to students and classmates and listening to English mass media.

**Table 4.2**

*The independent sample t-test results for listening skills*

Items	Mean score		Std. Deviation		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed) p-value
	Students	Instructors	Students	Instructors			
1	3.56	3.38	1.161	0.744	0.429	78	0.669
2	3.13	3.38	1.125	0.744	-0.612	78	0.542
3	2.93	3.00	1.142	1.069	-0.164	78	0.870
4	3.07	3.75	1.260	1.165	-1.459	78	0.149
5	2.54	3.25	1.233	1.282	-1.536	78	0.128
Total	3.044	3.350	0.8983	0.7387	-0.926	78	0.357

### 4.3.2 Opinions about speaking skills

Items (6-10) on the students' and subject-specific instructors' questionnaires listed a series of situations where students have to use their speaking skills such as participating in academic discussions (Q6), speaking at seminars, meetings, and presentations (Q7), asking and answering questions in class, seminars and real situations (Q8), interacting with lecturers and students (Q9), and interacting with professionals in real situations (Q10).

Table 4.3 indicates the percentile frequencies of responses on each question by the participants of the two groups concerning the importance of speaking sub-skills.

**Table 4.3**

*Cross-tabulation for speaking skills*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Not at all %</i>	<i>A little %</i>	<i>To a moderate extent %</i>	<i>To a great extent %</i>	<i>To a very great extent %</i>	<i>Total count %</i>
6	Student	23.6	16.7	12.5	34.7	12.5	72
	Instructor	0.0	25.0	0.0	25.0	50.0	8
7	Student	11.1	22.2	19.4	31.9	15.3	72
	Instructor	0.0	25.0	12.5	25.0	37.5	8
8	Student	13.9	13.9	19.4	36.1	16.7	72
	Instructor	0.0	12.5	12.5	50.0	25.0	8
9	Student	18.1	19.4	13.9	25.0	23.6	72
	Instructor	0.0	25.0	37.5	12.5	25.0	8
10	Student	6.9	12.5	19.4	27.8	33.3	72
	Instructor	0.0	25.0	25.0	37.5	12.5	8

Table 4.4 clarifies the mean score for speaking skills regarding each group and the independent sample t-test results for this skill. As the comparison of the Sig. (2-tailed) value,

there was a significant difference between instructors' and students' perceptions on item 6 which checked the importance of speaking skill for participating in academic discussions ( $t = -1.997$ ,  $p = 0.049 < 0.05$ ). Views of the two groups in selecting the options for item 7 which checked the importance of speaking skill for speaking at seminars, meetings and presentations were not significantly different ( $t = -1.211$ ,  $p = 0.230 > 0.05$ ). The results also showed that there was a consistency between students' and instructors' views about item 8, the importance of speaking skill for asking and answering questions in class, seminars, and real situations ( $t = -1.264$ ,  $p = 0.210 > 0.05$ ). Both students and instructors had the same opinion about item 9, the importance of speaking skill for interacting with lecturers and students ( $t = -0.390$ ,  $p = 0.697 > 0.05$ ). And, it was found that there was no significant difference between the two groups concerning item 10, the importance of speaking skill for interacting with professionals in real situations ( $t = 0.662$ ,  $p = 0.510 > 0.05$ ).

As the table revealed, the students and the instructors got mean scores of 3.25 and 3.67 respectively. Accordingly, it can be inferred that the respondents in the two groups consider this skill to be important. Going into more detail in Table 4.4, the mean scores revealed that with respect to speaking skills, the highest means were 3.68 (S) and 4.00 (I), related to the needs for interacting with professionals in real situations and participating in academic discussions. The lowest means, however, were 2.96 (S) and 3.38 (I), related to the needs for participating in academic discussions and interacting with lecturers, students, and professionals in real situations.

**Table 4.4**

*The independent sample t-test results for speaking skills*

Items	Mean score		Std. Deviation		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed) p-value
	Students	Instructors	Students	Instructors			
6	2.96	4.00	1.409	1.309	-1.997	78	0.049
7	3.18	3.75	1.260	1.282	-1.211	78	0.230
8	3.28	3.88	1.292	0.991	-1.264	78	0.210
9	3.17	3.38	1.454	1.188	-0.390	78	0.697
10	3.68	3.38	1.254	1.061	0.662	78	0.510
Total	3.252	3.675	1.1681	1.0793	-0.976	78	0.332

### 4.3.3 Opinions about reading skills

Items (11-15) on the students' and subject-specific instructors' questionnaires listed a series of questions concerning the importance of reading field-related texts (Q11), reading articles (Q12), reading texts on the internet (Q13), reading English newspapers, and magazines (Q14), and skimming and scanning the texts (Q15).

Table 4.5 indicates the percentile frequencies of responses on each question by the participants of the two groups concerning the importance of reading sub-skills.

**Table 4.5**

*Cross-tabulation for reading skills*

Item	Group	Not at all %	A little %	To a moderate extent %	To a great extent %	To a very great extent %	Total count %
11	Student	2.8	4.2	13.9	26.4	52.8	72
	Instructor	0.0	0.0	12.5	50.0	37.5	8
12	Student	4.2	5.6	11.1	25.0	54.2	72
	Instructor	0.0	0.0	12.5	25.0	62.5	8
13	Student	2.8	5.6	13.9	38.9	38.9	72
	Instructor	0.0	0.0	62.5	12.5	25.0	8
14	Student	8.3	23.6	25.0	15.3	27.8	72
	Instructor	0.0	12.5	62.5	25.0	0.0	8
15	Student	4.2	8.3	20.8	31.9	34.7	72
	Instructor	0.0	0.0	50.0	37.5	12.5	8

Table 4.6 clarifies the mean score for reading skills regarding each group along with the independent sample t-test results. Concerning the Sig. (2-tailed) value, no statistically significant difference in the means of item 11, the importance of reading skill for reading field-related texts,

was observed ( $t = -0.075$ ,  $p = 0.941 > 0.05$ ). Both groups also had the same opinion about item 12, the importance of reading skill for reading articles ( $t = -0.758$ ,  $p = 0.451 > 0.05$ ). As regards item 13, the importance of reading skill for reading texts on the internet, there was no significant difference between the instructors and the students ( $t = 1.158$ ,  $p = 0.250 > 0.05$ ). Concerning item 14 which checked the importance of reading English newspapers and magazines, the difference between both groups of the respondents was not significantly different ( $t = 0.378$ ,  $p = 0.706 > 0.05$ ). And, regarding item 15, the importance of skimming and scanning the texts, there was no significant difference between the instructors and the students ( $t = 0.546$ ,  $p = 0.587 > 0.05$ ).

The data on this table shows that the students and the instructors got mean scores of 3.92 and 3.82 respectively. Consequently, it can be inferred that the respondents in the two groups consider this skill to have a great level of significance. Going into more detail in Table 4.6, the mean scores indicated that with regard to reading skill, the highest means were 4.22 (S) and 4.50 (I), related to the need for reading field-related texts and reading articles. Moreover, the lowest means were 3.31 (S) and 3.13 (I), related to the need for reading English newspapers and magazines.

**Table 4.6**

*The independent sample t-test results for reading skills*

Items	Mean score		Std. Deviation		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed) p-value
	Students	Instructors	Students	Instructors			
11	4.22	4.25	1.024	0.707	-0.075	78	0.941
12	4.19	4.50	1.109	0.756	-0.758	78	0.451
13	4.06	3.63	1.005	0.916	1.158	78	0.250
14	3.31	3.13	1.328	0.641	0.378	78	0.706
15	3.85	3.63	1.122	0.744	0.546	78	0.587
Total	3.925	3.825	0.9305	0.5897	0.296	78	0.768

#### 4.3.4 Opinions about writing skills

Items (16-20) on the students' and subject-specific instructors' questionnaires listed a series of questions concerning the importance of writing skill for taking lecture notes (Q16), taking notes from textbooks (Q17), writing field-specific reports and articles (Q18), writing papers for oral presentations (Q19), and writing e-mails to instructors or field experts (Q20).

Table 4.7 illustrates the percentile frequencies of responses on each question by the participants of the two groups concerning the importance of writing sub-skills.

**Table 4.7**

*Cross-tabulation for writing skills*

Item	Group	Not at all %	A little %	To a moderate extent %	To a great extent %	To a very great extent %	Total count %
16	Student	12.5	19.4	25.0	25.0	18.1	72
	Instructor	0.0	62.5	12.5	25.0	0.0	8
17	Student	8.5	12.7	18.3	26.8	33.8	71
	Instructor	0.0	12.5	37.5	50.0	0.0	8
18	Student	6.9	9.7	26.4	23.6	33.3	72
	Instructor	0.0	25.0	37.5	25.0	12.5	8
19	Student	15.3	19.4	26.4	15.3	23.6	72
	Instructor	12.5	0.0	25.0	37.5	25.0	8
20	Student	8.3	16.7	15.3	25.0	34.7	72
	Instructor	0.0	12.5	0.0	50.0	37.5	8

Table 4.8 shows the mean score for writing skill regarding each group as well as the independent sample t-test results for this skill. With regard to the Sig. (2-tailed) value, there was no significant difference between the instructors' perceptions and the students' views about item 16 which checked the importance of taking lecture notes ( $t = 1.153$ ,  $p = 0.252 > 0.05$ ). Also, both

groups were consistent about the selecting options for item 17, the importance of taking notes from textbooks ( $t = 0.581$ ,  $p = 0.563 > 0.05$ ). The findings also showed that there is a consistency between students' and instructors' perception about item 18, the importance of writing articles ( $t = 0.919$ ,  $p = 0.361 > 0.05$ ). Views of two groups of the participants regarding item 19 which checked the importance of writing papers for oral presentations were not significantly different ( $t = -0.975$ ,  $p = 0.333 > 0.05$ ). Finally, both the students and the instructors agreed about item 20, the importance of writing an e-mail to instructors or field experts ( $t = -1.052$ ,  $p = 0.296 > 0.05$ ).

The mean scores of students and instructors, which were 3.44 and 3.40 respectively, indicated that they believed writing skills to have a considerable level of importance. Going into more detail in Table 4.8, the mean scores revealed that with regard to writing skill, the highest means were 3.67 (S) and 4.13 (I), related to the needs for writing articles and writing e-mails to instructors or field experts. The lowest means, however, were 3.13 (S) and 2.63 (I), related to the need for writing papers for oral presentation and taking lecture notes.

**Table 4.8**

*The independent sample t-test results for writing skills*

Items	Mean score		Std. Deviation		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed) p-value
	Students	Instructors	Students	Instructors			
16	3.17	2.63	1.289	0.916	1.153	78	0.252
17	3.65	3.38	1.299	0.744	0.581	77	0.563
18	3.67	3.25	1.233	1.035	0.919	78	0.361
19	3.13	3.63	1.383	1.302	-0.975	78	0.333
20	3.61	4.13	1.338	0.991	-1.052	78	0.296
Total	3.444	3.400	1.1239	0.8618	0.108	78	0.914

### 4.3.5 Opinions about general study skills

Items (21-26) on the students' and subject-specific instructors' questionnaires asked both groups of participants about the importance of general study skills such as, acquiring knowledge of grammar (Q21), acquiring knowledge of general vocabulary (Q22), acquiring knowledge of

technical vocabulary (Q23), learning new words in sentences, synonyms, and paraphrases (Q24), learning how to translate field-related texts (Q25), and learning how to use monolingual and bilingual dictionaries (Q26).

Table 4.9 indicates the percentile frequencies of responses on each question by the participants of the two groups regarding the importance of general study skills.

**Table 4.9**

*Cross-tabulation for general study skills*

Item	Group	Not at all %	A little %	To a moderate extent %	To a great extent %	To a very great extent %	Total count %
21	Student	5.6	8.3	34.7	16.7	34.7	72
	Instructor	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.0	75.0	8
22	Student	2.8	4.2	31.9	27.8	33.3	72
	Instructor	0.0	0.0	37.5	25.0	37.5	8
23	Student	2.8	5.6	11.3	19.7	60.6	71
	Instructor	0.0	0.0	0.0	37.5	62.5	8
24	Student	6.9	2.8	18.1	33.3	38.9	72
	Instructor	0.0	0.0	50.0	25.0	25.0	8
25	Student	6.9	13.9	15.3	22.2	41.7	72
	Instructor	12.5	0.0	12.5	37.5	37.5	8
26	Student	6.9	13.9	20.8	19.4	38.9	72
	Instructor	0.0	12.5	0.0	50.0	37.5	8

Table 4.10 shows the mean score for general study skills regarding each group as well as the independent sample t-test results. Considering the Sig. (2-tailed) value, the results indicated a

significant difference on item 21 which was related to gaining knowledge of grammar ( $t = -2.524$ ,  $p = 0.014 < 0.05$ ). On the contrary, there was no significant difference between the students' and the instructors' perceptions regarding item 22, the importance of acquiring knowledge of general vocabulary ( $t = -0.401$ ,  $p = 0.689$ ). Views of two groups of the respondents in selecting the options for item 23 which checked the importance of acquiring knowledge of technical vocabulary were not significantly different ( $t = -0.863$ ,  $p = 0.391 > 0.05$ ). Both students and instructors had the same opinion about item 24, the importance of learning new words in sentences, synonyms, and paraphrases ( $t = 0.462$ ,  $p = 0.645 > 0.05$ ). As regards item 25, the importance of learning how to translate field-related texts, there was no significant difference between the students and the instructors ( $t = -0.198$ ,  $p = 0.844 > 0.05$ ). And, concerning item 26 which checked the importance of learning how to use monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, the views were not significantly different ( $t = -0.901$ ,  $p = 0.370 > 0.05$ ).

Considering the mean scores, the students and the instructors got mean scores of 3.86 and 4.18 respectively. Thus, the respondents in the two groups consider general study skills highly important. Going into more detail in Table 4.10, the mean scores revealed that with regard to listening skills, the highest means were 4.30 (S) and 4.75 (I), related to gaining knowledge of technical vocabulary and grammar. And the lowest means were 3.67 (S) and 3.75 (I), related to acquiring knowledge of grammar and learning new words in sentences, synonyms, and paraphrases.

**Table 4.10***The independent sample t-test results for general study skills*

Items	Mean score		Std. Deviation		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed) p-value
	Students	Instructors	Students	Instructors			
21	3.67	4.75	1.199	0.463	-2.524	78	0.014
22	3.85	4.00	1.030	0.926	-0.401	78	0.689
23	4.30	4.63	1.061	0.518	-0.863	77	0.391
24	3.94	3.75	1.149	0.886	0.462	78	0.645
25	3.78	3.88	1.313	1.356	-0.198	78	0.844
26	3.69	4.13	1.307	0.991	-0.901	78	0.370
Total	3.868	4.187	0.9686	0.6573	-0.906	78	0.368

#### 4.4 Analysis of subject-specific instructors' questionnaire

As it can be seen, the content of items 1 - 26 in the questionnaires of both groups of the participants was the same. Items 27–31 which were included only in the subject-specific instructors' questionnaire listed a series of questions that asked information about instructors' perspectives on what the students of Islamic philosophy and theology lack after passing the EAP course. In addition, it was noticed that the responses provided for the five options on the Likert scale indicated differences that were sometimes indistinctive. In other words, the differences among the options 1 to 5 were either too small or too large. So, the values in the five levels Likert scale were merged by adding up each neighboring two alternatives so that 'not at all', 'a little', 'to a moderate extent', 'to a great extent' and 'to a very great extent' were reduced to 'insignificantly', 'moderately' and 'greatly', respectively.

Concerning Q27, which asked the instructors to rate their students' listening abilities, 87.5% of them were dissatisfied, indicating that the students' listening abilities had not improved after passing the EAP course. Only 12.5% of instructors indicated that the students' listening abilities improved moderately, and nobody indicated that the students' listening abilities improved significantly.

Concerning Q28, which asked the instructors to evaluate their students' speaking abilities, again 87.5% of them expressed their dissatisfaction and confirmed that the students' speaking abilities had not improved after the EAP courses. 12.5% indicated that the students' speaking abilities improved to a moderate extent, and nobody reported that the students' speaking abilities improved to a great or very great extent.

Regarding Q29, which asked the instructors to rate their students' reading abilities, 37.5% of instructors were dissatisfied, reporting that the students' reading abilities did not show signs of improvement after passing the English courses. 37.5% indicated that the students' reading abilities improved moderately, while 25% indicated that the students' reading abilities improved greatly.

Concerning Q30, which elicited the respondents' attitudes towards their students' writing abilities, 75% of instructors were dissatisfied and affirmed that the students' writing abilities had not improved after passing the EAP course. 25% reported that the students' writing abilities improved to a moderate extent and nobody indicated that the students' writing abilities improved to a great or very great extent.

With regard to Q31, which asked the instructors to assess the students' communicative competence, 87.5% of instructors showed their dissatisfaction by indicating that the students' communicative competence did not show signs of improvement. 12.5% reported that the students' communicative competence improved moderately, and again nobody indicated that the students' communicative competence improved greatly. Table 4.10 illustrates the distribution of the subject-specific instructors' answers to questions 27 – 31.

**Table 4.11***Cross-tabulation of merged results for questions 27 - 31*

Item	Group	Insignificantly %	Moderately %	Greatly %	Total count
Q27	Instructors	87.5	12.5	0	8
Q28	Instructors	87.5	12.5	0	8
Q29	Instructors	37.5	37.5	25	8
Q30	Instructors	75	25	0	8
Q31	Instructors	87.5	12.5	0	8

The next section of the subject-specific instructors' needs analysis questionnaire which consisted of 4 items (questions 32 – 35) aimed to explore the opinions of the instructors regarding their attitudes towards language instruction, and other dimensions of the English courses. Items 32 – 35 were in the format of multiple-choice questions.

Concerning Q32, 100% of the instructors reported that the specialized English course should be offered throughout the whole years of their studies.

Concerning Q33, 50% of the instructors confirmed that the EAP course should be studied three times a week (1 hour), 37.5% indicated that it should be studied two times a week (1.5 hours), and only 12.5% of them indicated that it should be studied once a week (3 hours).

Concerning Q34, 87.5% of the instructors reported that the EAP course should be taught by subject-specific instructors, whereas only 12.5% of them indicated that it should be taught by English instructors.

Regarding Q35, 75% of the instructors held the view that it is important for the students to learn their subject lessons through Persian and English sources, while 25% of them reported that it's necessary for students to learn their subject lessons from English sources.

#### **4.5 Analysis of students' questionnaire**

The second section of the students' needs analysis questionnaire which consisted of 12 items (questions 27 – 38) aimed to explore the opinions of the postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology regarding their attitudes towards language instruction, length of the course as well as the content, methodology, and type of the instructor of the specialized English course.

Concerning Q27, which elicited the students' views concerning their satisfaction with the number of students in their class, 32.4% of the students indicated that they were not satisfied. At the same time, 47.9% of them reported that they were moderately satisfied, and only 19.7% of them indicated that they were satisfied to a great extent.

Concerning Q28, which asked the students to express their satisfaction with their present course materials, 51.5% of the students indicated that they were not satisfied. At the same time, 41.4% of them indicated that they were moderately satisfied, and only 7.1% of them indicated that they were satisfied to a great extent.

Concerning Q29, which elicited the students' views concerning their satisfaction with the content and topics included in their materials/textbooks, 35.3% of them reported that they were not satisfied. At the same time, 47.9% of them indicated that they were moderately satisfied, and only 16.8% of them expressed their satisfaction with the contents and topics.

With regard to Q30, which elicited the students' views concerning their satisfaction with the methodology utilized in their classes, 62.9% of the students reported that they were not satisfied. At the same time, 24.3% of them confirmed that they were moderately satisfied, and only 12.8% of them indicated that they were satisfied to a great extent.

Concerning Q31, which elicited the students' views concerning their satisfaction with their teacher's evaluation method, 62% of the students reported that they were not satisfied. At the same time, 33.8% of them indicated that they were moderately satisfied, and only 4.2% of them reported that they were satisfied greatly.

Concerning Q32, which elicited the postgraduates' views about their satisfaction with the amount of foreign culture taught in their classes, 40.9% of the students indicated that they were not satisfied. At the same time, 47.9% of them indicated that they were moderately satisfied, and only 11.2% of them expressed their satisfaction.

With regard to Q33, which elicited the students' views concerning their satisfaction that the EAP course satisfied their real needs, 69% of the students indicated that they were not satisfied. At the same time, 19.7% of them indicated that they were moderately satisfied, and only 11.3% of them indicated that they were satisfied to a great extent. Table 4.11 illustrates the distribution of the students' answers to questions 27 – 33.

**Table 4.12**

*Cross-tabulation of merged results for questions 27 - 33*

<i>Item</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Insignificantly</i> %	<i>Moderately</i> %	<i>Greatly</i> %	<i>Total count</i>
Q27	Students	32.4	47.9	19.7	72
Q28	Students	51.5	41.4	7.1	71
Q29	Students	35.3	47.9	16.8	72
Q30	Students	62.9	24.3	12.8	72
Q31	Students	62	33.8	4.2	72
Q32	Students	40.9	47.9	11.2	72
Q33	Students	69	19.7	11.3	72

Items 34 – 38 were in the format of multiple-choice questions. In response to Q34, 43.7% of the students indicated that they preferred to work and study individually, 18.3% of them preferred to work and study in pairs, and 38% preferred to work and study in small groups.

Concerning Q35, 76.1% of the students reported that the English course should be offered throughout the whole years of their studies, 14.4% of them indicated that it should be offered two semesters, and only 9.9% stated that it should be offered one semester.

Concerning Q36, 54.3% of the students indicated that the English course should be studied three times a week (1 hour), 35.7% of them reported that it should be studied two times a week (1.5 hours), and only 10% of them preferred to study it once a week (3 hours).

In response to Q37, 70.4% of the students reported that the EAP course should be taught by subject-specific instructors, whereas only 29.6% of them preferred English instructors.

Concerning Q38, 64.8% of the students reported that it is important for them to learn their subject lessons through Persian and English sources, and 28.2% of them indicated that it is important for them to learn their subject lessons through English sources, and only 7% of them preferred to learn their subject lessons through Persian sources.

## **4.6 Analysis of the interviews**

At the beginning of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the postgraduate students and the subject-specific instructors. The interviews were conducted online and the recorded data was transcribed by the researcher. The purpose of these preliminary interviews which were conducted with 8 postgraduate students and 3 instructors was to identify the possible issues related to the English language learning needs of the students as well as current issues of the EAP course. To this end, a list of open-ended questions was prepared (see appendix C & D) and the respondents' attitudes towards the most important language skills, different aspects of the English language in which students need more to efficiently carry out their studies, major problems of teaching/learning EAP in Iran, and also their perceptions towards different methodological issues related to English classes were analyzed qualitatively. The following section will summarize the interviewees' views from two different perspectives; that is, the students' perspectives, and the subject-specific instructors' perspectives.

### **4.6.1 The students' perspective**

Regarding macro language skills, the students reported that they need to develop their skills in the English language. They perceived reading comprehension, writing, speaking, and listening respectively as the most important skills in their field of study. Most of the students were of the

opinion that reading skill is of the utmost importance. In this regard one of the participants explained:

*“The way I see it, all skills and components are equally important and the best way of teaching/learning is the one which focuses on all skills and connects different areas of language. But if I have to choose one skill, I’ll pick reading comprehension – of course, I’ve decided by considering different issues, most notably my field of study. As a philosophy student, my reading skills are important to my success in university, and without mastering them, I’ll be deprived of all kinds of academic activities. I believe that improvement in reading skills would bring positive effects on writing, speaking and even listening”.*

Focusing on the importance of reading skills and the way it is taught in the English course, one of the interviewees stated:

*“Though reading texts has been the main focus in the English course, students’ reading ability does not improve at all. That’s because instructors try to give students fish instead of teaching them how to fish! They prefer to stick with the traditional methods of teaching while paying little or no attention to teach reading strategies or applying various kinds of reading activities”.*

As it was mentioned earlier, it was taught by the interviewees that improving writing skills is essential. Reiterating the significance of writing skills in writing academic essays and corresponding with foreign experts, one of the students argued:

*“Knowing how to write in an academic style is the primary difference between a well-educated person and a non-educated one; that’s why writing is crucial to me. Besides, in today’s world, we are in an urgent need to communicate with foreign experts in our field of study, and corresponding via e-mail is the most convenient way to do so”.*

In response to the second question which sought to ask information about areas of language that students need to develop, most of the students who took part in the interview contended that they need to develop their knowledge of field-related terms and vocabulary. They expressed their need to learn technical terminology and the differences that common verbal terms have in

Western philosophy and Islamic philosophy. Besides, some of them felt that they need to master the techniques and principles of translating philosophical texts. One of the students suggested:

*“Whether you are an undergraduate student, a postgraduate student, or an instructor of philosophy, if you spend a lot of time studying philosophical texts, a basic comprehension of philosophical terms is required. I believe that many misunderstandings could be avoided by learning field-specific terminology. However, I don’t mean that I only want to memorize plenty of terminology parrot-like! I need to learn their meaning, their usage, and their differences in Western and Islamic philosophy”.*

Concerning the question that whether the number of EAP courses is adequate, some of the postgraduate students expressed their satisfaction with the number of specialized English courses; however, the majority of them demanded more specialized English courses. The students believed that EAP courses should be offered through the whole years of their study;

*“Not only do we need more specialized English courses, but we also need more general English courses at different educational levels. Language learning is not just about memorizing a set of rules or technical words. There is a lot to learn; different skills and sub-skills such as writing specific types of texts, using correct vocabulary and grammar, knowing the differences between formal and informal language, and many other areas that should not be expected to be covered in such a limited course. Consequently, the more hours we study English, the better language learners we will be”.*

Regarding the methodology, the students expressed their dissatisfaction with the instructors’ methodology utilized in EAP classes, maintaining that instructors follow the outdated grammar-translation methods in EAP classes;

*“There is no interaction between the students and the instructor. The lecturer acts as a storyteller, trying to explain everything by translating. Whatever it is, I’m sure that it doesn’t inspire me to learn more. As a student, I prefer a more interesting learning environment which motivates me and helps me to become a better language user”.*

Also, one of the participants explained the importance of applying the best teaching methodology as follows:

*“Most of the instructors take their teaching methodology as gospel! They should not be biased towards their teaching methodology or practices. A good EAP practitioner must carefully think about his/her methods of teaching and apply the ones most liked by the students and modify the ones less liked”.*

The instructor's evaluation method was another part of the verbal investigation. The students expressed their disapproval of evaluation methods. They complained that the instructors follow rather cliché evaluation methods mostly in form of translating texts from English to Persian and creative methods of evaluation had no place in their course. One of the postgraduate students discussed:

*“Our instructor's evaluation method was based on the translation of a text which was given to the students. In my humble opinion, the ability to translate is different from the ability to understand the text; that's why I believe that such a criterion is not appropriate for evaluating the language proficiency of a person”.*

Discussing the type of EAP instructor, the majority of the students suggested that due to familiarity with philosophical contents and terminology, subject-specific instructors are in a better position to run the specialized English courses. Supporting this view, one of the interviewees stated:

*“Subject-specific instructors who are fluent in English are more competent than English teachers for the reason that they are much familiar with the technical terms, words and specialized texts of this field of study”.*

At the same time one of the interviewees believed that English instructors take priority over subject-specific instructors because the main aim of the course is learning English, not learning philosophy or theology;

*“It is the language that should be taught, not a specific subject! Most of the content instructors who teach English do not have an acceptable linguistic knowledge.” He added, “Just being fluent in English doesn't mean that you are a good ESP practitioner.*

*Teaching (any type of) language requires language knowledge; that is, knowledge about teaching methodology, testing, grammar, structure, and so on. That's why I think ELT instructors who have a basic knowledge about specialized topics are more qualified to run the specialized English courses”.*

Another participant took the view that the best way of teaching is team-teaching which would achieve through cooperation between language instructors and subject-specialists.

*“Neither linguistic knowledge nor philosophy is sufficient. An English instructor who doesn't know the terminology of philosophy cannot have a comprehensive understanding of the specialized texts; similarly, a philosophy instructor who is unfamiliar with the subtleties of language cannot have a deep understanding of English texts. Perhaps the best way is a collaboration between language teachers and content teachers”.*

Considering content and materials, few of the students indicated that they studied the textbook published by SAMT (The Organization for Researching and Composing University Textbooks in the Humanities); that is, “English for the Students of Islamic Philosophy and Theology” – the book, has been written for undergraduate students of this field. But the majority of them reported that they studied a collection of different materials in their field of study. It seemed that neither the first group nor the latter group was completely satisfied with their teaching materials, demanding authentic materials which are presented via various media.

*“No particular textbook was taught; instead, we read some texts from different philosophers. I didn't find those highly specialized texts useful because they had nothing to do with learning the language or improving students' level of English. It is up to instructors whether they use published materials or develop their own materials but they should consider different issues in choosing or developing them, most importantly the students' needs and their level of English proficiency”.*

Considering the importance of using different teaching/learning materials, one of the participants suggested:

*“Teaching materials come in different shapes and sizes; so, instead of limiting teaching to just reading the specialized texts, instructors can also use audios, videos or other up-to-date materials in class”.*

Concerning the successfulness of the EAP course in meeting the students' language learning needs, the respondents unanimously were of the opinion that the current EAP courses have failed in satisfying their needs. In this regard, one of the students stated:

*“In my opinion, the English course meets the language learning needs of students to a very little extent. If students have a good level of English proficiency, then they do not need such a course; and, if a student does not have an acceptable level of English knowledge, he/she will not benefit from these classes! In fact, the EAP course is not very useful for both groups”.*

Focusing on the significant role of needs assessment in the successfulness of the EAP course, one of the respondents claimed:

*“There is no needs assessment in regard with designing courses, curriculum development, preparing materials, setting the goals, teacher training, etc. Therefore, it's not surprising that the English course does not satisfy my needs”.*

The students were also questioned about the problems of learning EAP in the Iranian academic setting. In this manner, they identified some major problems, including designing courses without needs assessment, teacher-centered learning approach, students' inadequate level of general English proficiency, as well as emphasizing one skill. They stated that many problems, such as demotivated students, bad syllabus, poorly prepared materials result from developing courses without considering students' needs, wants, and desires; thus, curriculum developers have to attend to the students' and instructors' perceptions in designing any course. Some of them demanded a more active role and critical learning environment which leads to educationally significant learning and personal growth. The interviewees also complained that instead of learning English in EAP classes, they were taught content. Besides, some of the respondents suggested that language learning does not occur at the postgraduate level or particularly in universities; consequently, general English courses, as well as EAP courses at

different educational levels, should be problematized and developed based on the main parties' views.

#### **4.6.2 The instructors' perspective**

During the interview, the instructors gave priority to reading and writing and chose speaking and listening skills as the later priorities, noting that these two skills are strongly linked to the academic success of the students. However, this viewpoint seems reasonable because the subject-specific instructors expressed strong disapproval of the reading abilities of the students;

*“Students only memorize and translate the limited amount of technical words and phrases, while they need to know how to read, interpret, make the inference, summarize and paraphrase texts and articles in their field of study”.*

In addition to four macro language skills, the respondents suggested that students need to master philosophical/theological terminology and get familiar with specialized words and expressions in their field of study. They also mentioned that the students should develop their knowledge of grammar to understand the structures and arrangements of complicated texts.

*“Knowing the meaning of words or their synonyms is not enough for understanding the texts. By learning proper grammar and the structure of language, students can enhance their knowledge of the language and thus be in a better position to use it correctly”.*

Regarding the use of technology in EAP classes, the instructors reported that they usually don't use a variety of modern technological tools when it comes to teaching English. However, they noted that there are some barriers to teachers' use of technology like insufficient facilities in most of the universities and faculties.

*“I'm a big fan of using technology in class. But there are some barriers to using technological tools, such as financial problems, limited class hours, technical problems – most notably slow internet connection – and inadequate technical support. Except for video projectors, there are not any other forms of instructional equipment in most of the classes”.*

Discussing the type of EAP instructor, the respondents maintained in their interviews that subject-specific instructors are in a better position to run the EAP courses;

*“As I see it, English instructors are not appropriate for running the specialized English course, since lack of philosophical/theological knowledge may lead to misunderstanding of technical terms, notions, and topics in the specialized texts”.*

Regarding course content and material, the interviewees, unanimously, reported that they prefer to not use the published textbooks for EAP courses. When asked why they gave different reasons for that;

*“I believe that there is a lack of fit between the students’ needs and the textbooks’ contents and topics. Moreover, students’ level of proficiency has not been considered in designing these textbooks. Thus, to give the students the supports they need, it’s up to us ‘the teachers’ to select appropriate teaching/learning materials based on various authentic sources”.*

They also called on policy-makers and material developers to consult with the stakeholders to design an EAP textbook for the postgraduate students;

*“I think policy-makers are wise enough to recognize that each educational level has its own needs. Thus, they should consult with related stakeholders in order to compile a specific textbook for postgraduate students”.*

Concerning the major problems of teaching and learning EAP in Iran, the instructors enumerated a list including students’ low proficiency, students’ limited knowledge of specialized vocabulary/terminology, as well as developing EAP courses with unexamined purposes. Almost all the participants believed that the main reason behind the low language proficiency of students stems from the inadequate instruction presented to the students during the years of study in schools and undergraduate level.

*“EAP course at postgraduate level is not a course for learning or improving general English. Therefore, to achieve positive outcomes in the course, students must pass enough English courses in their previous educational stages and enter the postgraduate program with a basic knowledge of English”.*

Addressing this problem, another instructor explained:

*“I think the biggest reason for fruitlessness of the English courses is that most of the students in EAP classes suffer from the low level of English language proficiency which stems from the poor language instruction. As an instructor, I have to decide whether to teach general English or to teach more specialized topics, since it is impossible to improve both of them in such a limited course”.*

Furthermore, the instructors held that view that considering students' needs must be the very first key step in curriculum development and then complained that none of the main parties' attitudes are considered or attended to in designing the EAP courses.

## **4.7 Document analysis**

As mentioned earlier, the only EAP document found in the present study was a corpus of EAP course description document in the 'Islamic philosophy and theology' curriculum which was retrieved from the website of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology (MSRT) in Iran (see appendix E). After reviewing the course description and collecting the interview and questionnaires data, we conducted a thematic analysis around three main themes; that is, course goals, language skills and components, and methods and materials.

### **4.7.1 Course goals**

According to the academic course descriptions, postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology must pass two courses of two credits of English and get informed about English in the field of philosophy as well as be able to understand, analyze, and argue in English in their field of study. The participants, however, believed that the goals mentioned in the syllabus are so idealistic and it is practically impossible to achieve those goals during a limited course. Thus, it is necessary to revise the goals according to dedicated time for the course, students' real needs, as well as students' proficiency level.

#### **4.7.2 Language skills and components**

Among language skills and components only reading comprehension was emphasized. The recorded data, however, revealed that both groups of the participants felt that students need to improve in all language skills. In addition, the prerequisite for EAP courses and the required language level of proficiency should be considered in the course description.

#### **4.7.3 Methods and materials**

The only propositions included in the syllabus were related to the specifications made about the number of units and hours that should be devoted to the course and some topics and resources for the study; whereas other issues like setting criteria for selection of the recommended resources and topics, as well as teaching methodology had been neglected in the document. According to the syllabus description, during the EAP course, students should study the works of eighteen philosophers in English. But the participants believed that the number of topics mentioned in the syllabus is not commensurate with the number of dedicated credits and hours. Moreover, some of the topics in the syllabus are outdated; the selection criteria for studying the works of mentioned philosophers are left unexplained and course designers should explain why they decide to not involve, for example, the works of modern and post-modern philosophers. In addition, students are supposed to learn language through content, but some of the topics are not appropriate for learning English. The recommended sources for study are two sets of encyclopedias of philosophy. Such sources may be useful for learning philosophical terms, but it's better to select authentic materials that develop students' language skills and their academic knowledge at the same time.



# **Chapter Five**

## **Summary, Discussion, and**

## **Conclusion**

## **5.1 Introduction**

The last chapter of the study includes a summary of the aims and the procedures of the study, a discussion of the findings, the implications of this study, as well as recommendations for further research.

## **5.2 Summary of the aims and procedures**

The study investigated the English language learning needs of postgraduate students majoring in Islamic philosophy and theology. The analysis of learners' needs was carried out with the help of different stakeholders including postgraduate students enrolling in EAP courses, postgraduate students who had passed EAP courses, and subject-specific teachers. The required data for the study were collected over the fall semester of the 2020-21 academic year. A variety of procedures including interviews and questionnaires were used to elicit information about the language learning needs of students. Moreover, a document analysis protocol was adopted in this study to find to what extent the goals mentioned in the syllabus match the students' needs. At the beginning of the study, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the students and instructors to identify the possible issues relating to the English language learning needs of the students. Then, a modified version of a questionnaire developed by Mazdayasana (2008) was adopted. Once, the first drafts of the two sets of needs analysis questionnaires were prepared, a pilot study was performed on 12 students to elicit information regarding the content of the items. After being revised based on the pilot study and experts' judgment, the questionnaires were administered to the participants. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic which resulted in schools and universities closures all across the country, online versions of the questionnaires were distributed. After collecting the required data, they were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The results of the study revealed that neither the students' nor the instructors' perspectives are taken into account in designing EAP courses for postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology.

## **5.3 Discussion**

The first two research questions in this study investigated information about the types of language learning areas that postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology need to

develop. Based on the results, a good majority of the students indicated that they need to improve their general proficiency in all four language skills. The subject-specific instructors' assessment of students' language skills indicated their total dissatisfaction. They believed that, after passing the specialized English course, do not gain satisfactory proficiency levels in all four skills especially listening, speaking, and writing. Moreover, the majority of the instructors indicated that students' communicative competence developed to a little extent.

As the study showed, the students were of the opinion that reading comprehension, followed by writing, speaking, and listening are the most important language skills. However, the instructors echoed reading, speaking, writing, and listening respectively as the most important language skills. As it was noted, there was almost a consistency of opinions among the students and subject-specific instructors that the most echoed skill was reading. This finding, also, echoes the conclusions of a great deal of the previous studies (e.g. Atai & Shoja, 2011; Bahmaninia, 2017; Mazdayasna, 2008; Rostami & Zafarghandi, 2014; Samadi, 2018; Shahmoradi & Izadpanah, 2017; Soodmand-Afshar & Movassagh, 2016; Zahednejad, 2019). Though the initial and constant focus in teaching ESP in Iran has been on the skill of reading (Hayati, 2008), the students reported that they experienced difficulties when reading content subjects through the medium of English. They perceived the need for learning reading strategies in order to be critical learners. The students said that although reading is necessary for enhancing academic performance, instructors pay little attention to reading strategies. They complained that instructors only give them reading passages in their field of study and want them to read and translate. Furthermore, in light of the conclusions, the participants in the study indicated that it is important for the students to develop their writing skills.

As for the perceptions of the instructors, speaking was the second priority. Besides, the students indicated that they greatly needed to use their speaking skills for performing in different situations, most notably for interacting with professionals. Accordingly, it can be inferred that communicative skills were neglected in the EAP courses. This may be explained by referring to Zand-Moghadam et al. (2018) who stated that the EAP courses did not pay the deserved attention to writing, speaking, and listening skills. These findings were also in line with the study conducted by Khalili (2020) exploring the English language needs of Iranian medical students. He concluded that in terms of language skills, all four skills were worth practicing in ESP

classes; however, listening and writing were mainly neglected and speaking was not practiced systematically.

The findings of this study also attest to the necessity of taking into consideration the general study skills needed by postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology. Data analysis revealed that the majority of respondents felt the students need to develop their general study skills to 'a great extent'. This is in agreement with the findings of Esfandiari (2015) that students regarded general vocabulary, technical vocabulary, and using general bilingual dictionaries as the most important target needs. Considering translation, the collected data reported that based on the students' perception, learning how to translate field-related texts must be a high priority in the EAP courses. The students, however, indicated that there is something wrong with the translation activities in the English classes; that is, they are required to memorize the meaning words or field-specific terms to use them in translating long complicated texts. The instructor only corrects students' mistakes without explaining the reason or presenting any technique or strategy to them. In this regard, Waters and Waters (2001, p. 379) maintained, "by posing study problems rather than simply providing ready-made answers right from the start of the learning-to-study process, the basic constitutes of effective study become not only the object of the learning but also its means". They contended that students should strengthen their ability to adopt a critical, questioning approach to studying. Similarly, Pennycook (1997) argued that EAP has a responsibility to improve students' linguistic and critical awareness in the broadest possible context, much beyond the needs of specific target disciplines. Besides, it was mentioned by the students that they had problems with the comprehension of specialized terminology related to their field of study. Moreover, the review of the course description revealed that the current EAP program is insufficient in preparing the students to perform academic tasks related to their special course. The insufficiency of EAP programs, however, was widely reported in various studies. According to Iranmehr et al. (2018), EAP in Iran suffers from poor documentation, incoherent policy-making, and lack of supervisory mechanisms; and the poor documentation is not only characteristic of EAP but also the whole language educational system in Iran.

Furthermore, determining whether there is any significant difference between the instructors' and students' perceptions of needs, analyses of the collected data revealed a high rate of consistency between postgraduate students and subject-specific instructors regarding the use

and importance of the four language skills and general study skills. This finding, however, is not in line with the findings of Ranjbar and Soodmand-afshar (2021) who found a significant difference in perceptions of needs between instructors and students.

The third research question dealt with finding out what type of content, methodology, instructor, and class activities are appropriate for postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology. Most of the students expressed their dissatisfaction with issues of course content, teaching methodology, and instructors' evaluation method. In addition, a considerable number of the students responded that they were moderately satisfied with the number of students in each class, contents, and topics of course materials, and the amount of foreign culture taught in the class. The implication of this is that both instructors and course designers seemed to underestimate the importance of applying proper methodology for teaching and evaluation. As shown in the interview results, the students voiced their dissatisfaction and identified that the outdated grammar-translation method is still dominant in the English classes. Therefore, in order to benefit from the learning opportunities, instructors need to know about students' interests to adopt the best method of teaching. Besides, according to some other findings from the interviews, the students complained that instead of learning English in classes, they were taught content. However, the ideal condition seems to be designing a course that promotes both linguistic and content knowledge. Concerning teachers' evaluation method, the participants groaned that the most common methods to evaluating students' language knowledge were in form of translating texts from English to Persian. They held the view that such a method is ineffective and inappropriate for assessing the proficiency level of students. Also, most of the participants were of the opinion that students must learn their subject lessons through both Persian and English sources. These results, however, corroborate the findings of many of the related studies that asserted ESP/EAP courses suffer from a lack of well-qualified materials, poor methodology, and inappropriate methods of evaluation (e.g. Atai & Hejazi, 2019; Ershadi, 2018; Esmaeili, 2016; Khalili, 2020; Sharifian, 2019; Soodmand-Afshar & Movassagh, 2016). Moreover, the students were asked to express their opinion regarding their preferences for teaching style, in response to a set of multiple-choice questions. Most of the students indicated that they preferred to work and study individually and about one-third of them preferred to work and study in small groups. Only a few of the students preferred to work and study in pairs. This is in agreement with the findings of Bahmaninia (2017), that students prefer the individualized

nature of the teaching-learning relationships that allows them to be selective, initiative, independent, and responsible. Furthermore, the results regarding course duration and course time schedule are compatible with the findings of Mazdayasna (2008). Accordingly, a vast majority of both groups of participants indicated that the current EAP course is insufficient and believed that the EAP course should be offered throughout their whole years of students' studies in order to provide them with enough opportunities to improve their English. As well, most of them felt that the EAP course should be studied in three one-hour sessions per week.

With regard to EAP instructors, the findings of the present study contradicted that of Yarmohammadi's (2005) and Mazdayasna's (2008) where they concluded that English should be taught by English teachers. That is to say, most of the participants believed that subject-specific teachers are more qualified than English teachers to run the EAP courses. Generally speaking, English instructors do not have enough familiarity with the students' subject area; on the other hand, subject-specific teachers may suffer from a lack of linguistic knowledge. However, there is a solution to fix this problem; that is, cooperative teaching of EAP courses. EAP practitioners should collaborate with the subject-specific experts to increase their knowledge regarding the specialist content which they have to teach. The earliest account of systematic subject/language teacher collaboration in EAP is described by Johns and Dudley-Evans (1980), who claim that problems encountered by overseas students in the UK are rarely concerned with 'knowledge of the language', or 'knowledge of the subject' alone, but that these two factors are 'inextricably intertwined' (p. 8). Johns and Dudley-Evans believe that the language teacher, "needs to be able to grasp the conceptual structure of the subject his students are studying if he is to understand fully how language is used to represent that structure; to know how the range of different subjects are taught during the course; and to observe where and how difficulties arise in order that he can attempt to help both student and subject teacher to overcome them (Johns & Dudley-Evans, 1980, p. 8)". Likewise, Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) contend that ESP instructors would benefit if they take the initial step to ask questions, gather information about the students' subject course, and cooperate with subject-specific instructors to identify students' needs as well as produce suitable specialized English materials. Additionally, they suggest that cooperation can help teachers find out the conceptual and discoursal framework of the subjects and to introduce materials from different angles.

Regarding course content, the only textbook for the course was 'English for the Students of Islamic Philosophy and Theology' published by SAMT. However, the book has been written a few years ago for undergraduate students of this field as the main source of specialized English courses, and today it is still used by some instructors as the main content for the EAP courses provided for postgraduate students. During the interview sessions, the participants found some parts of the textbook irrelevant which were not based on the students' real needs. In addition, all of the instructors interviewed believed that material developers do not consider learners' proficiency levels in the textbooks. That's why both groups revealed thought that such a textbook cannot be responsive to their needs and prefer to use and study authentic, appropriate, and up-to-date materials such as articles, available texts on journals or the internet, and even audios or videos. This was in line with what has been reflected in the literature on ESP textbooks and materials in the Iranian context. As Atai (2002b, p. 4) argues, "the materials do not seem to follow some well-established principles of discourse analysis, genre analysis, analysis of reading skills and strategies, analysis of learners' needs, and so on". The results were also consistent with Baleghizadeh's and Rahimi's (2011), and Shokati's (2020) which emphasized the view that the ESP textbooks in Iran are outdated, contain inappropriate contents, and suffer from a deficiency in fulfilling the students' needs, and are outdated and students' needs. Accordingly, this section pointed out the need for considering the language needs of students in designing or selecting teaching materials.

Considering various methodological issues, another conclusion to be drawn revolves around the state of the course syllabus. The analysis of the syllabus indicated that the EAP course provided for postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology suffers from poor documentation, and it is inappropriate in its unrealistic course goals, recommended methods, and materials. Consequently, the revision of EAP programs might be necessary to compensate for the deficiency of the current EAP course description for postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology. Suzani et al. (2011), as well, have reached the same conclusion that ESP programs suffer from the inappropriate time of presenting ESP courses and the place of ESP in the curriculum, lack of enough class hours, crowded classes, lack of authentic application of language knowledge, and teachers' old ways of teaching ESP courses like translation and memorizing the words by the students.

It is suggested that the failure of the EAP program in meeting students' needs is largely due to ignoring needs analysis. On the basis of the results, no needs analysis was conducted to identify the students' language learning needs, course content, methodology, and class activities. The participants felt that the first stage of designing any course is to conduct needs analysis based on the views and perceptions of the main parties involved. Indeed, they believed that the needs assessment should be conducted not only at the beginning of the course but also throughout the life of the EAP program. Interestingly, these findings support the assertion by Atai and Shoja (2011) that "as for target needs of students, it seems that curriculum developers and syllabus designers have neither identified nor defined them operationally in order to formulate specific objectives for the corresponding program" (p. 13). By the same token, Soodmand-Afshar and Movassagh (2016) stated that the EAP curricula, syllabi, and materials should be designed and developed taking the end-users needs into account by conducting systemic needs analysis projects. Similarly, Ershadi (2018) came to the conclusion that minor deficiencies such as inappropriateness in course structure, methodology, and course content may well be attributed to the big suffrage of the program rising from the lack of systematic evaluation. Thus, assessing the students' short-term and long-term needs must be a fundamental stage in designing the English courses. In addition, subject-specific instructors and instructors addressed major problematic areas of EAP education. Accordingly, in line with other studies on needs analysis (e.g. Atai & Hejazi, 2019; Moslemi, 2011), low general English proficiency of students which was caused by poor instruction in the previous years of the study, was the common point of the fruitlessness of the English courses. Given this result, it seems appropriate to develop a holistic program for the development of language instruction by policy-makers.

#### **5.4 Pedagogical implications**

Since the foundation of any educational program is the needs of its attendees, the results of the study reported here provides a framework for policy-makers, curriculum developers, syllabus designers, EAP practitioners, and subject specialists to concern the attitudes of postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology in order to select a proper methodology, content, evaluation method, tasks, and activities. The findings also are considered to be significant for students themselves, as they uncover educational areas that students most need to develop.

Taken together, the study showed that students need to increase their knowledge of technical vocabulary and terminology, grammar, and translation. As far as language skills were concerned, written skills seemed to be more required than oral ones. Given that postgraduate students were mostly concerned about their reading and writing skills, the researcher suggests that EAP practitioners, as well as course designers, should try to design teaching materials and apply methodologies that improve both of these skills. Besides, students need explicit teaching of the different reading strategies to become independent learners. With respect to the instructors' perception, speaking is of particular need as they ranked this skills in the second place. Accordingly, it seems appropriate to take into account a communicative approach to EAP courses as a priority. Compared with the other three skills, listening to both groups of respondents was rated as the least important. However, this may not lead to the conclusion that it does not matter at all. Considering the mean scores for each skill, all were greater than 3, meaning that the majority of participants in this study rated all four skills as essential. Apparently, the best way is to teach all language skills with a slightly different emphasis on reading and writing.

The study also provides information regarding content, type of instructor, and the course description for EAP courses. The obtained data proved that a good majority of participants believed that subject-specific instructors with an adequate mastery of English are more competent than English teachers because they are much more familiar with the technical terminology. However, it seems that not all subject-specialists have good linguistic knowledge. Dealing with this issue, the researcher suggests that universities and institutes can train experts in EAP teaching or use team-teaching; that is, EAP practitioners should co-operate with the content experts to increase their knowledge regarding the specialist content. Concerning course content and textbook, materials developers and instructors should consider stakeholders' attitudes, designing or selecting authentic and genuine teaching materials from various sources that fulfill students' needs. Moreover, to get the best results, teaching materials shouldn't be limited to textbooks or reading passages and EAP practitioners should use various media (i.e. audios, videos, and pictures) in classes. In addition, students explained that they had had few opportunities to interact with the instructors or with each other in class. In this manner, instead of the outdated teaching methods, they need a dynamic learning approach that provides them with the skills and components needed. Also, this study has found that there is a mismatch between

what the students really need and what the course syllabus says about their needs. In light of these findings, the revision of the EAP program might be necessary to compensate for the deficiency of the current EAP course description for postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology.

### **5.5 Limitations of the study**

Some limitations which existed in this study are worth mentioning. First, the size of the statistical population of the study among postgraduate students was relatively small to generalize the findings. Second, since the researcher couldn't find any EFL instructors who teach English to students of Islamic philosophy and theology, all the instructors that participated in this study were subject specialists. The other limitation was related to the participants' gender; while male and female students might have different opinions regarding language learning issues in EAP courses, the effect of the participants' gender on the results of this study has been ignored. In addition, female students did not participate in the interview; therefore, the findings in respect of interview analysis might not apply to female students.

### **5.6 Suggestion for future research**

In this part, a few suggestions for further research are presented.

- i. A similar study can be carried out to explore the differences between the attitudes of male and female participants.
- ii. This study only used participants from a limited number. A future study can be carried out with a larger population sample.
- iii. Future research is needed to be conducted in other similar fields of study such as religious studies, Islamic history, Muslim civilization, etc.
- iv. Future studies can be done to design EAP materials for the postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology based on their perceived needs.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Students' questionnaire

Dear Participants,

The following questionnaire is part of a master thesis project which investigates the English language learning needs of postgraduate students of Islamic philosophy and theology taking English for academic purposes (EAP) as a required course.

#### Background Information

Name and family name (optional): .....

Age: .....

University: .....

Sex: (a) male (b) female

The first section of the questionnaire aims to explore the opinions of the students of Islamic philosophy and theology on their expressed needs in using the four macro English skills as well as general study skills for their studies. Please tick (✓) the relevant choice for each question.

#### Listening skills

As an Islamic philosophy and theology student I need English for...	not at all	a little	to a moderate extent	to a great extent	to a very great extent
1. listening to lectures					
2. listening to conversations on general topics					
3. listening to English mass media					
4. listening to presentations in class					
5. listening to students and classmates					

#### Speaking skills

As an Islamic philosophy and theology student I need English for...	not at all	a little	to a moderate extent	to a great extent	to a very great extent
6. participating in academic discussions					

---

7. speaking at seminars, meetings and presentations  
 8. asking and answering questions in class, seminars and real situations  
 9. interacting with lecturers and students  
 10. interacting with professionals in real situations

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### Reading skills

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As an Islamic philosophy and theology student I need English for...	not at all	a little	to a moderate extent	to a great extent	to a very great extent
11. reading field-related texts					
12. reading articles					
13. reading texts on the internet					
14. reading English newspapers and magazines					
15. skimming and scanning the texts					

---

### Writing skills

---

As an Islamic philosophy and theology student I need English for...	not at all	a little	to a moderate extent	to a great extent	to a very great extent
16. taking lecture notes					
17. taking notes from textbooks					
18. writing articles					
19. writing a paper for oral presentation					
20. writing e-mail to instructors or field experts					

---

### General Study Skills

---

As an Islamic philosophy and theology student I need English to...	not at all	a little	to a moderate extent	to a great extent	to a very great extent
21. acquire knowledge of grammar					
22. acquire knowledge of general vocabulary					
23. acquire knowledge of technical vocabulary					
24. learn new words in sentences, synonyms, and paraphrases					
25. learn how to translate field-related texts					
26. learn how to use monolingual & bilingual dictionaries					

---

The second section aims to explore the opinions of the students of Islamic philosophy and theology regarding their attitudes towards language instruction, length of the course as well as the content, syllabus, and methodology of the specialized English course. Please tick (✓) the relevant choice for each question.

---

As an Islamic philosophy and theology student...	not at all	a little	to a moderate extent	to a great extent	to a very great extent
27. I feel satisfied with the number of students in my class					
28. I feel satisfied with the present course materials/textbooks					
29. I feel satisfied with the content and topics included in the course materials/textbooks					
30. I feel satisfied with the methodology utilized in my class					
31. I feel satisfied with my teacher's evaluation method					
32. I feel satisfied with the amount of foreign culture taught in my class					
33. I feel satisfied that EAP courses satisfied my real needs					

---

Please tick (✓) the relevant choice for each question.

34. I prefer to work and study .....

- A. Individually
- B. In pairs
- C. In small groups

35. How long should specialized English courses be offered to M. A. students of Islamic philosophy and theology?

- A. One semester
- B. Two semesters
- C. Throughout the whole years of their studies

36. How often do you like to study the specialized English course?

- A. Once a week (3 hours)
- B. Twice a week (1.5 hours)
- C. Three times a week (1 hour)

37. EAP courses should be taught by .....

- A. English teachers
- B. Subject-specific instructors

38. It is important for me to learn my subject lessons .....

- A. Through Persian books and sources
- B. Through English books and sources

- C. Through Persian and English sources

## Appendix B: Subject-specific instructors' questionnaire

Dear Participants,

The following questionnaire is part of a master thesis project which investigates the English language learning needs of the students of Islamic philosophy and theology taking English for Academic Purposes (EAP) as a required course.

This section of the questionnaire is designed to explore the opinions of the subject-specific instructors about the expressed language needs of the students of Islamic philosophy and theology in using the four macro English skills along with general study skills for their academic studies. Please tick (✓) the relevant choice for each question.

### Listening skills

The Islamic philosophy and theology students need English for...	not at all	a little	to a moderate extent	to a great extent	to a very great extent
1. listening to lectures					
2. listening to conversations on general topics					
3. listening to English mass media					
4. listening to presentations in class					
5. listening to students and classmates					

### Speaking skills

The Islamic philosophy and theology students need English for...	not at all	a little	to a moderate extent	to a great extent	to a very great extent
6. participating in academic discussions					
7. speaking at seminars, meetings and presentations					
8. asking and answering questions in class, seminars and real situations					
9. interacting with lecturers and students					

---

10. interacting with professionals  
in real situations

---

### Reading skills

The Islamic philosophy and theology students need English for...	not at all	a little	to a moderate extent	to a great extent	to a very great extent
11. reading field-related texts					
12. reading articles					
13. reading texts on the internet					
14. reading English newspapers and magazines					
15. skimming and scanning the texts					

---

### Writing skills

The Islamic philosophy and theology students need English for...	not at all	a little	to a moderate extent	to a great extent	to a very great extent
16. taking lecture notes					
17. taking notes from textbooks					
18. writing articles					
19. writing a paper for oral presentation					
20. writing e-mail to instructors or field experts					

---

### General Study Skills

The Islamic philosophy and theology students need English to...	not at all	a little	to a moderate extent	to a great extent	to a very great extent
21. acquire knowledge of grammar					

---

---

22. acquire knowledge of general vocabulary

23. acquire knowledge of technical vocabulary

24. learn new words in sentences, synonyms, and paraphrases

25. learn how to translate field-related texts

26. learn how to use monolingual & bilingual dictionaries

---

The second section aims to explore the subject-specific instructors' views in terms of what the students of Islamic philosophy and theology lack after passing EAP course. Lacks are reflected in subject-specific instructors' assessment of their students' language skills on the scale as described below. Please tick (✓) the relevant choice for each question.

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	not at all	a little	to a moderate extent	to a great extent	to a very great extent
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27. I judge the Islamic philosophy and theology students' listening ability has been improved

28. I judge the Islamic philosophy and theology students' speaking ability has been improved

29. I judge the Islamic philosophy and theology students' reading ability has been improved

30. I judge the Islamic philosophy and theology students' writing ability has been improved

31. I judge the Islamic philosophy and theology students' communicative competence has been improved

---

The next section aims to explore the opinions of the subject-specific instructors regarding their attitudes towards language instruction, and some other aspects of the specialized English course. Please tick (✓) the relevant choice for each question.

32. How long should specialized English courses be offered to the students of Islamic philosophy and theology?

- A. One semester
- B. Two semesters
- C. Through the whole years of their studies

33. How often do you think the specialized English course should be study?

- A. Once a week (3 hours)
- B. Twice a week (1.5 hours)
- C. Three times a week (1 hour)

34. EAP courses should be taught by .....

- A. English instructors
- B. Subject-specific instructors

35. It is important for the students to learn their subject lessons .....

- A. Through Persian books and sources
- B. Through English books and sources
- C. Through Persian and English sources

## پرسشنامه دانشجویان

### شرکت کنندگان گرامی

پرسشنامه پیش رو بخشی از یک پروژه تحقیقاتی پایان نامه کارشناسی ارشد می‌باشد که هدف آن بررسی نیازهای زبانی دانشجویان مقطع کارشناسی ارشد رشته فلسفه و کلام اسلامی است که ملزم به گذراندن واحد زبان تخصصی انگلیسی می‌باشند.

### اطلاعات زمینه‌ای

نام و نام خانوادگی: (اختیاری)

سن:

دانشگاه محل تحصیل کارشناسی ارشد:

جنسیت: الف. مرد      ب. زن

بخش اول این پرسشنامه با هدف دستیابی به نظرات دانشجویان رشته فلسفه و کلام اسلامی در مورد نیازهایشان به استفاده از چهار مهارت اصلی زبان و همچنین مهارت‌های عمومی زبانی انجام می‌شود. لطفاً برای هر سوال پاسخ مناسب را علامت بزنید.

### مهارت‌های شنیداری

به عنوان یک دانشجوی فلسفه و کلام اسلامی اینجانب در موارد زیر به زبان انگلیسی نیاز دارم:	هرگز	کم	در حد متوسط	زیاد	خیلی زیاد
۱. گوش دادن به سخنرانی‌ها					
۲. گوش دادن به مکالمات در موضوعات کلی					
۳. گوش دادن به رسانه‌های انگلیسی زبان					
۴. گوش دادن به ارائه‌های کلاسی					
۵. گوش دادن به دانشجویان و همکلاسی‌ها					

## مهارت‌های گفتاری

به عنوان یک دانشجوی فلسفه و کلام اسلامی اینجانب در موارد زیر به زبان انگلیسی نیاز دارم:	هرگز	کم	در حد متوسط	زیاد	خیلی زیاد
۶. شرکت در مباحث درسی					
۷. صحبت کردن در جلسات، سمینارها و ارائه‌ها					
۸. پرسش و پاسخ در کلاس، سمینارها و موقعیت‌های حقیقی					
۹. صحبت کردن و ایجاد ارتباط با دانشجویان و اساتید					
۱۰. صحبت کردن و ایجاد ارتباط با افراد متخصص در موقعیت‌های حقیقی					

## مهارت‌های خوانداری

به عنوان یک دانشجوی فلسفه و کلام اسلامی اینجانب در موارد زیر به زبان انگلیسی نیاز دارم:	هرگز	کم	در حد متوسط	زیاد	خیلی زیاد
۱۱. خواندن مطالع علمی مرتبط با زمینه تحصیلی					
۱۲. خواندن مقاله					
۱۳. خواندن مطالع در اینترنت					
۱۴. خواندن روزنامه‌ها و مجلات انگلیسی زبان					
۱۵. مرور متن انگلیسی برای بدست آوردن اطلاعات کلی و مرور متن انگلیسی برای بدست آوردن اطلاعات خاص					

## مهارت‌های نوشتاری

کم	هرگز	به عنوان یک دانشجوی فلسفه و کلام اسلامی اینجانب در موارد زیر به زبان انگلیسی نیاز دارم:
در حد متوسط	خیلی زیاد	۱۶. یادداشت برداری از سخنرانی‌ها
در حد متوسط	خیلی زیاد	۱۷. یادداشت برداری از کتاب‌ها
در حد متوسط	خیلی زیاد	۱۸. نوشتن مقاله
در حد متوسط	خیلی زیاد	۱۹. نوشتن مقاله برای ارائه شفاهی
در حد متوسط	خیلی زیاد	۲۰. نوشتن ایمیل برای اساتید و متخصصان

## مهارت‌های عمومی

کم	هرگز	به عنوان یک دانشجوی فلسفه و کلام اسلامی در این موارد به زبان انگلیسی نیاز دارم:
در حد متوسط	خیلی زیاد	۲۱. آموختن دانش دستور زبان
در حد متوسط	خیلی زیاد	۲۲. آموختن واژگان عمومی
در حد متوسط	خیلی زیاد	۲۳. آموختن واژگان تخصصی مرتبط با زمینه تحصیلی
در حد متوسط	خیلی زیاد	۲۴. آموختن واژه‌های جدید در جملات، واژه‌های مترادف و تعبیر و تفسیرها به زبان انگلیسی
در حد متوسط	خیلی زیاد	۲۵. ترجمه متون مرتبط با زمینه تحصیلی
در حد متوسط	خیلی زیاد	۲۶. آموختن نحوه استفاده از فرهنگ لغت‌های تک زبانه و دو زبانه

بخش دوم از پرسشنامه با هدف دستیابی به نظرات دانشجویان مقطع کارشناسی ارشد رشته فلسفه و کلام اسلامی در ارتباط با نیازهای آن‌ها نسبت آموزش زبان، مدت تدریس، محتوای درس، برنامه درسی و روش تدریس درس زبان تخصصی صورت می‌گیرد. لطفاً برای هر سوال پاسخ مناسب را علامت بزنید.

به عنوان یک دانشجوی فلسفه و کلام اسلامی:	هرگز	کم	در حد	زیاد	خیلی زیاد
۲۷. از تعداد دانشجویان در کلاس زبان تخصصی رضایت دارم					
۲۸. از کتابها یا مطالب درسی زبان انگلیسی که تدریس می‌شوند رضایت دارم					
۲۹. از محتوای آموزشی و موضوعات موجود در کتاب‌ها و مواد درسی انگلیسی رضایت دارم					
۳۰. از روش تدریس زبان انگلیسی احساس رضایت می‌کنم					
۳۱. از روش ارزیابی درس زبان انگلیسی احساس رضایت می‌کنم					
۳۲. از فرهنگ خارجی که از طریق درس زبان انگلیسی آموزش داده می‌شود احساس رضایت می‌کنم					
۳۳. (بطور کلی) واحد زبان انگلیسی تخصصی پاسخگوی نیازهای واقعی من می‌باشد					

لطفاً براي هر سوال ياسخ مناسب را علامت يزنيد.

۳۴. ترجیح می‌دهید مطالعه و کارهای علمی، شما به چه صورت باشد؟

## الف. انفرادی ب. دو تایی ج. یہ صورت یک گروہ کوچک

۳۵. بهتر است درس زبان تخصصی انگلیسی در چه مدت به دانشجویان کارشناسی ارشد فلسفه و کلام اسلامی ارائه شود؟

الف. یک ترم      ب. دو ترم      ج. در تمام طول مدت تحصیلی

۳۶. چند ساعت در هفته برای مطالعه درس زبان انگلیسی تخصیص نیاز دارد؟

الف. یک بار در هفته (سه ساعت)  
در هفته (هر بار یک ساعت)

ب. دو بار در هفته (هر بار یک ساعت و نیم)  
ج. سه بار

۳۷. تر جیج می دهید درس زیان تخصصی به وسیله چه افرادی تدریس شود؟

## الف. اساتید زبان انگلیسی      ب. اساتید تخصصی، رشته خود

۳۸. یاد یگیز. طریق از دا تخصصی دروس من مهم است که دریاف.

الف. کتب و منابع فارسی، ب. کتب و منابع انگلیسی، چ: کتب و منابع انگلیسی، و فارسی،

## Appendix C: Students' interview questions

1. What are the most important macro language skills that the students of Islamic philosophy and theology need to develop?

۱. از میان چهار مهارت اصلی زبان، کدام یک برای دانشجویان فلسفه و کلام اسلامی از اهمیت بیشتری برخوردارند؟

2. In addition to four language skills, what aspects of the English language do students of Islamic philosophy and theology need to develop?

۲. به غیر از چهار مهارت اصلی زبان، کدام یک از جنبه‌های زبان انگلیسی برای دانشجویان رشته فلسفه و کلام اسلامی اهمیت دارند؟

3. What do you think of the EAP instructors' teaching methodology?

۳. به عنوان دانشجو، نظر شما در مورد نحوه تدریس استاد درس زبان تخصصی‌تان چیست؟

4. What do you think of the EAP instructor's evaluation method?

۴. به عنوان یک دانشجو نحوه ارزیابی استاد را چگونه ارزیابی می‌کنید؟

5. Who should teach EAP courses?

۵. از نظر شما چه استادی باید زبان تخصصی را تدریس کنند؟

6. What content/textbook did you study for this course? Explain how much does it match your real needs?

۶. برای واحد زبان تخصصی، چه کتاب یا مطالبی را خواندید؟ توضیح دهید که آیا مطالب درسی مورد نظر پاسخگوی نیازهای شما بود؟

7. Have you seen the syllabus for this course? If yes, please explain that to what extent the goals mentioned in the syllabus meet the students' needs.

۷. آیا سرفصل وزارت علوم برای این واحد را نظاره کرده‌اید؟ اگر آن را مطالعه کرده‌اید، لطفاً توضیح دهید که اهداف مورد نظر در سرفصل واحد زبان تخصصی تا چه حدی پاسخگوی نیازهای دانشجویان است.

8. To what extent have the current EAP courses been successful in meeting your language learning needs?

۸. درس زبان تخصصی تا چه حد پاسخگوی نیازهای زبانی شما دانشجویان بوده است؟

9. What are the major problems and challenges of learning EAP in Iran?

۹. مهم‌ترین مشکلات یادگیری زبان تخصصی در ایران از نظر شما چیست؟

## Appendix D: Subject-specific instructors' interview questions

1. What are the most important macro language skills that the students of Islamic philosophy and theology need to develop?

۱. از میان چهار مهارت اصلی زبان، کدام یک برای دانشجویان فلسفه و کلام اسلامی از اهمیت بیشتری برخوردارند؟

2. In addition to macro language skills, what areas of the English language do the students of Islamic philosophy and theology need to develop?

۲. به غیر از چهار مهارت اصلی زبان، کدام یک از جنبه‌های زبان انگلیسی برای دانشجویان رشته فلسفه و کلام اسلامی اهمیت دارند؟

3. Do you use any technology to teach your EAP courses?

۳. آیا در تدریس زبان تخصصی از تکنولوژی استفاده می‌کنید؟

4. Who should teach EAP courses?

۴. از نظر شما چه استادی باید زبان تخصصی را تدریس کنند؟

5. Do you use a special EAP textbook? If yes, please name it and explain your attitude towards it. If not, please explain why you prefer to teach other types of teaching materials instead of the textbooks.

۵. آیا از کتاب درسی خاصی برای تدریس زبان تخصصی استفاده می‌کنید؟ اگر پاسختان مثبت است، لطفاً نظرتان را در مورد آن بگویید. اگر نه، لطفاً توضیح دهید که چرا ترجیح می‌دهید از سایر مطالب آموزشی برای تدریس استفاده کنید.

6. Have you seen the syllabus for this course? If yes, please explain that to what extent the goals mentioned in the syllabus meet the students' needs.

۶. آیا سرفصل وزارت علوم برای این واحد را نظاره کرده‌اید؟ اگر آن را مطالعه کرده‌اید، لطفاً توضیح دهید که اهداف مورد نظر در سرفصل واحد زبان تخصصی تا چه حدی پاسخگوی نیازهای دانشجویان است.

7. What are the major problems and challenges of teaching EAP in Iran?

۷. مهم‌ترین مشکلات تدریس زبان تخصصی در ایران از نظر شما چیست؟

## Appendix E: the EAP course description for students of Islamic philosophy and theology

عنوان درس به فارسی: زبان تخصصی ۱

عنوان درس به انگلیسی: Professional Foreign Language ۱

تعداد واحد: ۲

تعداد ساعت: ۳۲

نوع درس: تخصصی ازامی

نوع واحد: نظری

پیش‌نیاز: ندارد

آموزش تکمیلی: ندارد

اهداف کلی درس: آشنایی با زبان انگلیسی در حوزه‌ی تخصصی فلسفه

اهداف رفتاری: توانایی فهم، تحلیل، و استدلال به زبان انگلیسی در حوزه‌ی تخصصی فلسفه

سرفصل درس:

۱. ارسطو

۲. افلاطون

۳. فلوبین

۴. فارابی

۵. ابن‌سینا

۶. سهروردی

۷. ملاصدرا

بروزه	آزمون‌های نهایی	میان‌ترم	ارزشیابی مستمر
	آزمون‌های توشیتی:	۲۰ درصد	۲۰ درصد

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	۶۰ درصد	
	عملکردی	

فهرست منابع:

Routledge Encyclopedia of philosophy, Edward Craig (ed.), London: Routledge.

فهرست مطالعات:

Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Donald M. Borchert (ed.), New York: McMillan.



عنوان درس به فارسی: زبان تخصصی ۲

عنوان درس به انگلیسی: Professional Foreign Language ۲

تعداد واحد: ۲

تعداد ساعت: ۳۲

نوع درس: تخصصی اسلامی

نوع واحد: نظری

پیش‌نیاز: ندارد

آموزش تکمیلی: ندارد

اهداف کلی درس: آشنایی با زبان انگلیسی در حوزه‌ی تخصصی فلسفه

اهداف رفتاری: توانایی فهم، تحلیل، و استدلال به زبان انگلیسی در حوزه‌ی تخصصی فلسفه

سرفصل درس:

۱. بارکلی

۲. لای

۳. هیوم

۴. کانت

۵. هگل

۶. کی برکلارد

۷. نیجه

۸. هایدگر

۹. فرگ

۱۰. راسل



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#### ۱۱. ویکی‌سایت‌های

پژوهه	آزمون‌های نهایی	میان‌ترم	ارزشیابی مستمر
	آزمون‌های نوشتاری: ۶۰ درصد	۲۰ درصد	۲۰ درصد
	عملکردی		

فهرست منابع:

Routledge Encyclopedia of philosophy, Edward Craig (ed.), London: Routledge.

فهرست مطالعات:

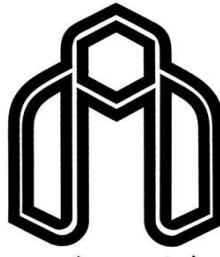
Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Donald M. Borchert (ed.), New York: McMillan.



## چکیده

با توجه به اینکه تاکنون هیچ تحقیقی به بررسی نیازهای یادگیری زبان انگلیسی دانشجویان ایرانی فلسفه و کلام اسلامی در مقطع کارشناسی ارشد نپرداخته است، پژوهش حاضر کوششی است درجهت ارزیابی نیازهای دانشجویان مذکور. بدین منظور، ۷۲ دانشجو به همراه ۸ استاد دروس تخصصی که زبان انگلیسی تخصصی تدریس می‌کنند بر اساس روش نمونه گیری در دسترس برگزیده شدند. داده‌های این تحقیق ترکیبی (کمی-کیفی) با استفاده از ابزارهای گوناگون که شامل مصاحبه‌های نیمه‌ساختاریافته، پرسشنامه‌های نیازسنجی و تحلیل اسناد می‌شند، گردآوری شدند. داده‌های کمی جمع‌آوری شده از پرسشنامه‌ها با استفاده از روش‌های آماری توصیفی و داده‌های کیفی به دست‌آمده از مصاحبه‌ها و تحلیل اسناد با رویکرد تحلیل مضمونی مورد تجزیه و تحلیل قرار گرفتند. علاوه بر این، برای بررسی اینکه آیا دیدگاه‌های دانشجویان و مدرسان درباره نیازهای یادگیری زبان تفاوت چشمگیری با یکدیگر دارند یا خیر، از آزمون  $t$  مستقل استفاده شد. داده‌های مورد نیاز برای انجام این تحقیق در ترم پاییز سال تحصیلی ۱۴۰۰-۱۳۹۹ جمع‌آوری شدند. ابتدا، محقق با افراد دخیل در این حوزه (مدرسان و دانشجویان) مصاحبه کرد تا نیازهای زبان انگلیسی دانشجویان و همچنین نظرات این افراد درباره دوره‌های انگلیسی برای اهداف دانشگاهی را مشخص کند. سپس، نسخه‌های نهایی پرسشنامه‌ها میان شرکت کنندگان توزیع شد. پرسشنامه‌ها شامل دو بخش اصلی می‌شند. بخش اول، شامل نظرسنجی در مورد چهار مهارت اصلی زبانی به همراه مهارت‌های عمومی می‌شد، و بخش بعدی پرسشنامه به نگرش شرکت کنندگان نسبت به مسائل آموزش زبان، طول دوره و همچنین محتوای آموزشی، برنامه درسی و نحوه تدریس دوره تخصصی زبان انگلیسی مرتبط می‌شد. نتایج تجزیه و تحلیل داده‌ها مشخص نمودند که اکثر دانشجویان بر این باورند که مهارت خواندن و درک مطلب و به دنبال آن مهارت‌های نوشتاری، مهارت‌های گفتاری و مهارت‌های شنیداری به ترتیب مهم‌ترین مهارت‌های زبانی می‌باشند. دانشجویان همچنین نارضایتی خود از مسائل مختلف مرتبط با تدریس واحد تخصصی زبان انگلیسی را ابراز کردند. همچنین، پاسخ‌های مدرسان نشان دهنده نارضایتی آن‌ها از مهارت‌های زبانی دانشجویانشان بود. همچنین، هر دو گروه شرکت کننده از عدم انجام نیازسنجی به منظور شناسایی نیازهای زبانی دانشجویان ناخرسند بودند. علاوه بر این، تجزیه و تحلیل برنامه آموزشی مشخص که واحد زبان انگلیسی تخصصی بطور ناقص و نارسا تدوین شده است و ارتباطی با نیازهای دانشجویان ندارد. یافته‌های این پژوهش در برگیرنده اطلاعات قابل توجهی برای بهبود دوره‌های زبان تخصصی ارائه شده به دانشجویان فلسفه و کلام اسلامی در ایران می‌باشد.

**کلیدواژه‌ها:** انگلیسی برای اهداف دانشگاهی، نیازسنجی، نیازهای زبانی، فلسفه و کلام اسلامی



دانشگاه صنعتی شهرود

گروه زبان انگلیسی

پایان نامه کارشناسی ارشد آموزش زبان

نیازسنجی در دروس انگلیسی با اهداف دانشگاهی: ارزیابی نیازهای زبانی  
دانشجویان ایرانی رشته فلسفه و کلام اسلامی در مقطع کارشناسی ارشد

نگارنده:

صادق زندی

استاد راهنما:

دکتر ابوطالب ایرانمهر

شهریور ۱۴۰۰