A Needs Analysis Approach: An Investigation of Needs in an EAP Context

Zahra Zohoorian

Department of Languages**,** Islamic Azad University, Mashhad Branch, Mashhad, Iran

Abstract—**Needs analysis, sometimes called Needs Assessment, has been one of the major motives for the emergence of ESP as the umbrella term and thus EAP as a subdivision. Apparently, in such courses, a "one-size-fit-all" approach is discredited and each setting has to be matched with its own context and its own participants' needs. Moreover, several authors have emphasized the vital position that Needs Analysis holds in syllabus design and curriculum development, particularly for EAP. Thus, the present survey aims at adding to the body of knowledge that exists about the Iranian context of EAP and specifically for the students majoring in Computer Engineering as well as Information Technology. Moreover, it aims at investigating the probable mismatch (es) that exist/s between what has been highlighted in literature about the currently most prominent skill included in EAP textbooks in Iran and what the students perceive as their real needs. As the findings of the study suggest, the students preferred to learn productive skills of writing and speaking rather than the reading and listening skills. Similarly, the interview results provided more in-depth information about the sub-kills perceived as necessary by the interviewees.**

Index Terms—**ESP, EAP, needs analysis, language skills, language sub-skills**

I. INTRODUCTION

Communicative language teaching brought with it a change of focus from English being perceived as a system to be studied to English as a means of communication especially in syllabus design. Accordingly, content selection was done based on learners' communicative needs (Carter & Nunan, 2001). Having its root in communicative language teaching, ESP is devised to meet particular needs of the learners and the themes and topics which are covered relate to the occupations or the areas of study (Strevens, 1980). Thus, ESP is designed to build up students' skills in order to enable them to communicate in English language (Tarnopolsky, 2009).On the other hand, it is believed that the prominent foundation based on which ESP emerged was "the diversity and specificity of learners' objectives and needs for learning English" (Amirian & Tavakoli, 2009). Since ESP is an attempt to help learners accomplish their academic and occupational needs and goals, learners' needs have to be assessed cautiously through needs assessment (Belcher, 2004). Nonetheless, the language chosen for ESP is selective rather than general (Strevens, 1980) and the language skills that are included are limited to learners' needs. However, the choice of which skills to include is what constitutes the basis of a focal step in designing and evaluating ESP/EAP courses known as Needs Analysis.

II. NEEDS ANALYSIS

As is mentioned in Long (2005), since the resources are decreasing in the present era, more importance is devoted to the attentive investigation of learners' needs as a requirement for efficient course designing. Thus, Needs Analysis can compensate for the diversity of EAP students' profiles and learning situations as well as the limited duration of such courses (Harwood & Petric, 2011). Having been acknowledged as the leading step in designing any EAP course (Bernard & Zemach, 2003), the significance of Needs Analysis is emphasized in research when designing courses, preparing text books, and deciding on the kind of teaching and learning that is going to ensue (Dudley_Evans & St John, 2001; Robinson, 1991; Jordan, 1997; Long, 2005). Amirian and Tavakoli (2009) see Needs Analysis as a prerequisite when course design is concerned because of "the diversity of needs and their unique and situation-based nature". Referring to the essentiality of this process, they contend that it helps in planning more satisfying courses by fulfilling students' needs. Referring to Needs Analysis as a cornerstone on which every ESP course is founded, Basturkmen (2006) mentions that Needs Analysis may also affect learners' motivation since they can clearly see the consequence of what is being taught to them. Basturkmen also mentions that because of the time restrictions and also due to the emphasis on specific purposes, ESP is the place where teachers and designers need to be selective. Needs Analysis in this view is the process through which the skills that students may need in the target situation are specified.

Brown (2005, p.269) defines Needs Analysis as "the processes involved in gathering information about the needs of a particular client group in industry or education". In educational settings, he explains the process by first finding out the learning needs of the students which are later translated to learning objectives that will work as the source of all decisions about the course such as activities, materials, or tests. Needs Analysis will provide two impressions. It either specifies the final behavior (ends of learning) or identifies the things that the learners need to do to learn the language (Ajideh, 2009).

Discussing about needs, Brunton (2009) argues that there are two approaches in seeing the learners' needs: narrow and broad. In the narrow approach the focus is on the immediate needs of the learners with a restrictive syllabus while in the latter the focus is on immediate needs and skills and situations which are not found in the Needs Analysis. He also encourages an eclectic approach for material selection by moving towards a negotiated or process-oriented syllabus. Nonetheless, as Awasthi (2006) points out, it is not possible to include the needs of all individual learners in a single volume of a textbook, but what seems to be important is that "exclusion of the need of the learners of the particular linguistic proficiency will de-motivate them as well". (p.4)

Early works on Needs Analysis included the simple studies to find a rough idea of what the purposes of learners were to learn English; whereas, a more sophisticated approach to EAP Needs Analysis will be to ask about the reasons why learners need to do a course in English, the situations in which they will need to use English, and what they must do in such situations (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001). Different Needs Analysis studies have been mentioned in Basturkmen (2006) which have either aimed at finding students' perceptions about needs such as Ferris' 1998 investigation or which attempted to carry out more in-depth studies by focusing on ethnographic principles such as Ibrahim's 1993 study. Yet, Basturkmen continues to mention the different criticisms made of Needs Analysis including that of Auerbach's 1995 who argued that Needs Analysis serves the interests of the institutions rather than the learners' needs and interests, or Long (1996) who believed that Needs Analysis data cannot be relied on particularly when the learners are not familiar with the concept of needs.

Referring to the types of Needs Analysis mentioned by Brindley, West, and Jordan, some of which may overlap, Brown (2005, p. 272) includes the nine different kinds of Needs Analysis in a list as follows:

1. Target-situation analysis looks for information on the language requirements learners face while learning a specific language.

2. Deficiency analysis accounts for learners' present needs and wants as well as their target situation shortages

3. Present-situation analysis deals with the proficiencies of learners at the commencement of instruction.

4. Learning-oriented analysis regards the needs as to be negotiated between students and other stakeholders.

5. Strategy analysis efforts to find out learners' preferences in terms of learning strategies, error correction, group size, amount of homework.

6. Means analysis focuses on the learning situation, with as few preconceptions as possible in terms of practicality, logistics, cultural appropriateness, etc.

7. Language audit takes a large scale view of NA in terms of strategic language policies for companies, professional sectors, governmental departments, countries, etc.

8. Set menu analysis creates a menu including all the main courses from which the sponsors or learners can select.

9. Computer-based analysis conducted by computer matches the perceived needs to a database of materials "...from which the course content can be negotiated between students and teacher..." (West, 1997, p.74, cited in Brown, 2005)

There are various instruments and data collection techniques which can be used in conducting a Needs Analysis such as questionnaires, structured interviews, language audits, participant observations, or diaries, journals, and logs (Long, 2005). After the information is gathered through Needs Analysis and based on the approaches that the institution, the teachers, and the students have in learning, different syllabuses may be defined such as structural, situational, topical, functional, notional, skills-based, and task-based as well as some recently introduced syllabus types such as lexical and problem-solving. (Brown, 2005)

III. THE CURRENT STATUS OF EAP IN IRAN

English for specific purposes (ESP) in Iran is primarily limited to university level unlike General English which is involved in all primary, secondary, and university levels (Talebinezhad & Aliakbari, 2002). English for Academic Purposes, as a subdivision of ESP, is often associated with the analysis of texts from various academic disciplines in Iran (Hassrati, 2005, p.45). Students at Iranian universities in fields ranging from engineering, medicine, and basic sciences to business and humanities have to successfully complete general and specialized English courses in order to fulfil the requirements of their academic programs (Sadeghi, 2005). Soleimani (2005, p. 216) states that the purpose of all books published for ESP students is "to enable the students to study their specific academic reference materials and textbooks to get familiar with scientific and technological advances in their field of study."

However, reading skill an indispensable part of any language teaching program seems to play a large and significant role in EAP courses in Iran. This, according to Jodairi (2005) is because of the initial Needs Analysis of the Iranian students in the past decade which gave prominence to reading skill with a focus on learning reading comprehension and translation. The objective of these courses is to help the students fill the gap which exists "between their general knowledge of English and the literature they will have to read later on in their studies and academic career." This is accomplished by presenting readings on a content-based basis which work as a means for improving students' ability in reading and comprehending the relevant materials of their fields (Alimohammadi, 2003, p.1236).

However, while there is a consensus among EAP practitioners in Iran that the development of the reading skill is the main purpose of these courses (Alimohammadi, 2003; Jodairi, 2005; Soelimani, 2005; Suzani, 2005; Tayebipour, 2005; Ziahosseiny, 2005; Fathi, 2008; Akbari & Tahririan, 2009; Amirian & Tavakoli, 2009), many of the practitioners criticize these courses. These criticisms include but are not limited to;

- Existing materials are not satisfactory (Fathi, 2008);
- There is a mismatch between the course contents and the required skills and materials of the learners at workplace (Amirian & Tavakoli, 2009);
- The material design and teacher qualifications are problematic (Tayebipour, 2005);
- There is no study skill included and the discourse genre is not appropriate for using language authentically (Hassaskhah, 2005);
- Variety is absent for exercises, tasks, activities, and drills (Soleimani, 2005);
- There is deficiency in the integration of extra-linguistic perspectives like pragmatics (Eslami-Rasekh, 2005).

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Having a cursory review of the EAP literature reveals that several criticisms are made of the current EAP courses in Iran. These criticisms include: following a read-only approach (Tayebipour, 2005), lacking variety in exercises or tasks (Soleimani, 2005), ignoring learners' interests or purposes and the absence of the motivational principles to encourage students (Fathi, 2008), and not following students' needs and interests in designing the current EAP textbooks (Amiryousefi & Ketabi, 2011). Accordingly, the present study seeks to answer the following questions:

- How compatible is the current EAP course with the needs of the learners in the field of computer and information technology?
- What are the skills and sub-skills which are prioritized by the students as their real needs?
- Which language skill is perceived as the most important by this group of EAP students?

V. METHODOLOGY

The present study employed a mixed method of investigation. As a cross-sectional survey it sought to collect data both quantitatively and qualitatively to triangulate data. The following sections describe the participants, instrumentation, data collection procedure as well as the data analysis methods.

A. Participants

The participants in the present survey included 66 students majoring in Information Technology and Computer Engineering in Islamic Azad University of Mashhad in Iran. They were all male sophomores who were taking their EAP courses during the second academic semester of 2013. The students had passed their Basic English course in which they were introduced to basic grammar points, general vocabulary, and reading comprehension strategies. The students were instructed through the textbook "English for the students of engineering".

B. Instrumentation

1. The Quantitative Measure

The quantitative measure for the study included a questionnaire through which the data was collected. It was adapted from Peterson's 2009 Needs Analysis questionnaire which consisted of four sections related to the four language skills with their corresponding sub-skills. For instance, the listening section included listening to lectures, instructions, presentations, reports, as well as explanations given by the teacher. Other language skills were followed by their related sub-skills as well the details of which are available in the following tables.

2. The Qualitative Measure

In order to add more in-depth information, semi-structured interviews were conducted through which the qualitative data was collected. For a semi-structured interview an interview protocol is prepared including the questions to collect data systematically. However, the order of the questions may change or some questions may be added or omitted (Lodico, et al., 2010). Accordingly, questions related to the perceived needs of the students and their priority for ordering of the English language skills were asked during the interview sessions.

C. Data Collection Procedure

The data was collected during the second academic semester of 2013 at the engineering department of Azad University, Mashhad. The participants were selected randomly to fill in the questionnaire items. The purpose of the study and the objectives of the questionnaire were clearly explained to the students by the researchers before administration. The Data was collected through the adaption of the Needs Analysis questionnaire presented by Peterson (2009) in the 43rd Cardiff conference. The questionnaire consisted of four sections relating to the four language skills as well as their sub-skills. The students had to choose between two items of important and unimportant to show their preferences in learning the language skills and the sub-skills related to each of the items. So, they had to specify if they thought the skills or the sub-skills were either important or unimportant to them. After the quantitative phase of the study, a group of eight students were selected randomly from the list of 66 students to be interviewed. A semi-structured focus group interview was conducted and the questions related to their preference of skills, the desired language skills, their needs for the courses and the like were asked. The session was tape-recorded for later analysis.

D. Data Analysis

The quantitative data from the questionnaire and the qualitative data from the interview sessions were analysed separately. Then, the results of the two sets of data were triangulated. Triangulation is used as a method of ensuring the results consistency which increases the internal validity of the studies (Merriam, 2009). Thus, triangulation helps the researcher to find counter patterns or diverse perspectives of the participants to be able to interpret the data and understand the phenomenon under study (Lankshear & Knobel, 2004).

1. Analysis of the Quantitative Data

The quantitative data was analysed by using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). To find out about the students' preferences for each sub-skill, the frequency analysis was run.

2. Analysis of the Qualitative Data

The "emergent" inductive method of coding was used to analyse the interview data. In this approach to analysis, the emergence of the categories and themes is allowed while the researcher conducts the analyses of the data (Bazeley, 2013; Blessing & Chakrabarti, 2009). Coding includes simplifying and reducing the data to link them to extensive concepts or topics (Dornyei, 2007). According to Mackey and Gass (2005), the findings relate to the frequency of ideas expressed by the participants. Thus, the common themes were identified in the transcribed interview data set.

VI. RESULTS

Based on the analysis of the collected data by the questionnaire as the quantitative data and the interview themes as the qualitative data the following results were obtained.

A. Quantitative Results

As is shown in table 1, from among the reading sub-skills, reading the manuals [n= 55 & 78.6%], followed by legal documents [n=50, 71.4%] were preferred by the majority of the students. However, other sub-skills such as reading the contracts [n=27 & 38.6%], and price lists and specialist literature [n=24 & 40.0%] were chosen by students as unimportant.

TABLE 1
PERCENTAGES AND FREQUENCIES FOR THE READING SUB-SKILLS

Language skill	Language Sub-skills	Frequencies	
Reading		Unimportant	Important
	manuals	11 (21.4%)	55 (78.6%)
	instructions	18 (31.4%)	48 (68.6%)
	contracts	27 (38.6%)	39 (55.7%)
	product specifications	18 (31.4%)	48 (68.6%)
	price lists	24 (40.0%)	42 (60.0%)
	specialist literature	24 (40.0%)	42 (60.0%)
	legal documents	16 (28.6%)	50 (71.4%)

With reference to the speaking sub-skills (Table 2), taking part in conferences [n=61 & 87.1%] and giving presentations [n=60 & 85.7%] were highly preferred by the students. However 25.7% of the students believed that giving instructions is not considered as an important sub-skill which they would like to be included in their course.

TABLE 2
PERCENTAGES AND FREQUENCIES FOR THE SPEAKING SUB-SKILLS

Language skill	Language Sub-skills	Frequencies	
Speaking		Unimportant	Important
	foreign visitors	7 (15.7%)	59 (84.3%)
	foreign colleagues	8 (17.1%)	58 (82.9%)
	on the phone	10 (20.0%)	56 (80.0%)
	taking part in meetings	7 (15.7%)	59 (84.3%)
	taking part in conferences	5 (12.9%)	61 (87.1%)
	giving presentations	6 (14.3%)	60 (85.7%)
	giving instructions	14 (25.7%)	52 (74.3%)
	small talk	8 (17.1%)	58 (82.9%)

For the sub-skills specified in the questionnaire which related to the wiring skill (Table 3), writing translations [n=63 & 90.0%] and writing emails [n=58 & 82.9%] were of high preference. On the other hand, writing memorandums was considered as an unimportant sub-skill by 42.9 percent of the students.

TABLE 3
PERCENTAGES AND FREQUENCIES FOR THE WRITING SUB-SKILLS

Language skill Writing	Language Sub-skills	Frequencies	
		Unimportant	Important
	business letters	15 (27.1%)	51 (72.9%)
	E-mails	8 (17.1%)	58 (82.9%)
	memorandums	26 (42.9%)	40 (57.1%)
	reports	16 (28.6%)	50 (71.4%)
	articles	9 (18.6%)	57 (81.4%)
	summaries(of articles)	17 (30.0%)	49 (70.0%)
	notes	11 (21.4%)	55 (78.6%)
	translations	3 (15.7%)	63 (90.0%)
	glossary	7 (15.7%)	59 (84.3%)

As for the sub-skills related to listening (table 4), the frequency analysis showed that listening to lectures [n=53 & 75.7%] and presentations [n=49 & 70.0%] were highly preferred as important sub-skills while 38.6 percent of the students believed that listening to instructions was an unimportant listening sub-skill. It needs to be mentioned here that since many of the EAP teachers still use Persian (the official language in Iran) as the medium of instruction instead of English, many students believed that this sub-skill is of minimum importance to them.

TABLE 4
PERCENTAGES AND FREQUENCIES FOR THE LISTENING SUB-SKILLS

Language skill Listening	Language Sub-skills	Frequencies	
		Unimportant	Important
	lectures	13 (24.3%)	53 (75.7%)
	instructions	23(38.6%)	43 (61.4%)
	presentations	17 (30.0%)	49 (70.0%)
	reports	18 (31.4%)	48 (68.6%)
	Explanations given by the teacher	17 (30.0%)	49 (70.0%)

After all, to decide which language skill has been prioritized the researchers had to look for the related sub-skills. Thus, each language skill (reading, listening, speaking, and writing) mean percentage (Table 5) was obtained as the mean of the corresponding sub-skills. Then, the percentage of each language skill was calculated. The table shows each language skill together with the mean percentages.

TABLE 5
MEANS PERCENTAGES OF THE MAIN SKILLS

Language skills	N	Mean percentage
Speaking	66	87.69
Writing	66	82.54
Reading	66	70.29
Listening	66	74.46
Valid N (listwise)	66	

B. Qualitative Results

As is illustrated in the following table (6), the most recurrent emergent themes were distinguished and categorized. Based on the students' views about the sub-skills that they perceived as needed and important, the most recurrent themes for speaking included: talking to colleagues from other nations, presenting in English for class projects, being able to speak about their field in English to others, presenting in professional conferences, and managing a conversation with foreigners. As for the writing sub-skills the students mentioned the following sub-skills: translating from and to English, writing emails, writing summaries, taking notes from an English speech, writing application letters, handling written communication with pals. Similarly, the students expressed their need in learning the following sub-skills for the listening skill: understanding English speech, understanding conferences, understanding professional speech, understanding lectures in their field, and understanding oral presentations. And finally, the sub-skills mentioned for the reading skill were reading professional articles in the field, reading professional websites on the net and reading field news.

TABLE 6
THE MOST RECURRENT THEMES FOR THE INTERVIEW SESSION ON SUB-SKILLS RELATED TO EACH LANGUAGE SKILL

Skill	The recurrent sub-skills mentioned by the interviewees
Speaking	* Talking to colleagues from other nations * Presenting in English for class projects * Being able to speak about their field in English to others * Presenting in professional conferences * Managing a conversation with foreigners
Writing	* Translating from and to English * Writing emails * Writing summaries * Taking notes from an English speech * Writing application letters * Handling written communication with pals
Listening	* Understanding English speech * Understanding conferences * Understanding professional speech * Understanding lectures in their fields * Understanding oral presentations
Reading	* Reading professional articles in the field * Reading professional websites on the net * Reading field news

Moreover, the interviewees were asked to rate the skills in order of importance. As is shown in table 7, all the students mentioned that the speaking skill is the most important skill to them. The writing skill was rated as second by 7 students out of the 8 interviewees and the listening and reading skills were rated as third, as 6 out of 8 students believed that these skills were less important as compared to other skills.

TABLE 7
MAIN LANGUAGE SKILLS' RATINGS BY THE INTERVIEWEES

Skills in order of importance	Number of interviewees	Rating
Speaking	8	1
Writing	7	2
Listening & Reading	6	3

VII. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The significant role of Needs Analysis is frequently emphasized specially as a first step to be taken in designing ESP/EAP courses. As Robinson (1991) suggests, Needs Analysis has to be conducted continuously even within the scope of one course since the students may develop different needs as they get involved with the course. Needs Analysis will provide insights for policy makers and stakeholders in every field in general and EAP in particular to evaluate the success of a course, find the points of strength and weakness as well as to do the required amendments to improve the courses. However, based on the results of the present survey, there seems to be a mismatch between what is included in EAP textbooks in Iran as the major skill and what their expectations of the courses are. Additionally, as the data suggests, students prefer to learn productive skills of speaking and writing rather than receptive skills of listening and reading. Remarkably, the results also depict that the reading skill which has been given emphasis- not only through the literature but also through the text book - has been the least preferred language skill by this group of students. The qualitative data of the interview with the students also revealed some of the students' preferences of language sub-skills such as writing summaries for the writing skill, talking to colleagues from other nations for the speaking skill, handling written communication with pals for the writing skill, and reading professional articles or news in the field for the reading skill.

REFERENCES

[1] Ajideh, P. (2009). Autonomous learning and metacognitive strategies essentials in ESP class. *English Language Teaching. 2(1),* 162-168.
[2] Akbari, Z. & Tahririan, M. H. (2009). Vocabulary Learning Strategies in an ESP Context: The Case of Para/medical English in Iran. *The Asian EFL Journal Quarterly, 11 (1),* 39-61.
[3] Alimohammadi, M. (2003) .*Quality Assurance in teaching English. Proceedings of the IADIS International Conference.* Portugal: IADIS, 1235-1239.
[4] Amirian, Z. & Tavakoli, M. (2009). Reassessing the ESP courses offered to engineering students in Iran. English for specific purposes world. 8 (23), 1-13.
[5] Amiryousefi, M., & Ketabi, S. (2011). Anti-textbook arguments revisited: A case study from Iran. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 15*, 215-220.
[6] Awasthi, J. R. (2006). Textbook and its Evaluation. *Journal of NELTA, 11(1-2),* 1-10.
[7] Basturkmen, H. (2006). Ideas and options in English for specific purposes. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
[8] Bazeley, P. (2013). Qualitative data analysis: practical strategies. London: SAGE.

[9]   Belcher, D. D. (2004). Trends in teaching English for specific purposes. *Annual review of applied linguistics. 24,* 165-186.
[10]   Bernard, R., & Zemach, D. (2003). Materials for specific purposes. In B. Tomilson (Ed) *Developing materials for language teaching.* London: Gromwell Press.
[11]   Blessing, L. T. M., & Chakrabarti, A. (2009). DRM, a design research methodology. New York: Springer-verlag.
[12]   Brown, J. D. (2005). Foreign and second language Needs analysis. In M. H. Long, & C. J. Doughty, (Eds). *The handbook of language teaching.* Oxford: Blackwell publishing.
[13]   Brunton, M. (2009). An account of ESP with possible future directions. *Online Journal of English for Specific Purposes World,* 3(24), 8.
[14]   Carter, R. & Nunan, D. (2001). The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[15]   Dornyei, Z. (2007). Research methods in applied linguistics. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[16]   Dudley-Evans, T. (2001). English for specific purposes. In R. Carter, & D. Nunan, (Eds). *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 131-136). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[17]   Eslami-Rasekh. Z. (2005). The relevance and sociocultural significance of pragmatics for ESAP. In G. R. Kiany, & M. Khayyamdar, (Eds.). *Proceedings of the First National ESP/EAP Conference,* (1). Paper presented at the First National ESP/EAP Conference, Iran (pp.57-80). Tehran: SAMT.
[18]   Fathi, V. (2008). The importance of materials design in ESP and EST. paper presented in the Conference titling Teaching and Literature in Islamic Azad University, Roudehen, Iran. Retrieved: February, 2014, from http://www. Academia.edu/371710/The_Importance_of_Materials_Design_In_ESP_and_EST.
[19]   Flowerdew, J., & Peacock, M. (2001). The EAP curriculum: Issues, methods and Challenges. In J. Flowerdew, & M. Peacock, (Eds.). *Research perspectives on English for academic purposes* (pp. 8-152). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[20]   Harwood, N., & Petrić, B. (2011). English for academic purposes. In J. Simpson (Ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Applied Linguistics* (pp.243-258). London: Routledge.
[21]   Hassrati, M. (2005). Rethinking the underlying features of EAP: Is it just text, or more? In G.R. Kiany, & M. Khayyamdar, (Eds.). *Proceedings of the First National ESP/EAP Conference,* (1). Paper presented at the First National ESP/EAP Conference, Iran (pp. 45-56). Tehran: SAMT.
[22]   Hassaskhah, J. (2005). From theory to practice: where is the missing link? In G.R. Kiany, & M. Khayyamdar, (Eds.). *Proceedings of the First National ESP/EAP Conference,* (1). Paper presented at the First National ESP/EAP Conference, Iran (pp. 13-34). Tehran: SAMT.
[23]   Jodairi, A. (2005). Teachers as coordinators in developing ESP curriculum. In G.R. Kiany, & M. Khayyamdar, (Eds.). *Proceedings of the First National ESP/EAP Conference,* (2). Paper presented at the First National ESP/EAP Conference, Iran (pp. 99- 126).Tehran: SAMT.
[24]   Jordan, R. (1997). English for academic purposes. Cambridge: CUP.
[25]   Lankshear, C., & Knobel, M. (2004). A handbook for teacher research: from design to implementation. New York: Open University Press.
[26]   Lodico, M. G., Spaulding, D. T., & Voegtle, K. H. (2010). Methods in educational research: From theory to practice. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons.
[27]   Long, M. H. (2005). Methodological issues in learner needs analysis. In M. H. Long, (Ed). *Second language needs analysis* (pp. 19-76). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[28]   Mackey, A., & Gass, S. M. (2005). Second Language Research: Methodology and Design. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
[29]   Merriam, S. B. (2009). Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation. CA: John Wiley & sons.
[30]   Peterson, E. (2009). How to become a (more) language learner. Needs analysis questionnaire hand-out. 43rd annual conference, Cardiff.
[31]   Robinson, P. c. (1991*).* ESP today: A practitioner's guide. New York: Prentice Hall.
[32]   Sadeghi, A. R. (2005). ESP methodology: A transition from the present state. In G. R. Kiany, & M. Khayyamdar, (Eds.). *Proceedings of the First National ESP/EAP Conference,* (2). Paper presented at the First National ESP/EAP Conference, Iran (pp. 21-33). Tehran: SAMT.
[33]   Soleimani, H. (2005). EAP in Iran: drawbacks of SAMT EAP textbooks. In, G. R. Kiany, & M. Khayyamdar, (Eds.). P*roceedings of the First National ESP/EAP Conference,* (3). Paper presented at the First National ESP/EAP Conference, Iran (pp. 216-229). Tehran: SAMT.
[34]   Strevens, P. (1980). Teaching English as an international language: from practice to principle. Oxford: Pergamon.
[35]   Suzani, M. S. (2005). Teaching ESP in the faculties of medicine and related fields: bridging the gap between theory and practice. In G. R. Kiany, & M. Khayyamdar, (Eds.). *Proceedings of the First National ESP/EAP Conference* (3). Paper presented at the First National ESP/EAP Conference, Iran (pp. 147-159). Tehran: SAMT.
[36]   Talebinezhad, M. R. & Aliakbari, M. (2002). Evaluation and justification of a paradigm shift in the current ELT models in Iran. *Journal of social sciences and humanities of Shiraz University*. 18(1), 53-60.
[37]   Tarnopolsky, O. (2009). Content-based internet-assisted ESP teaching to Ukrainian University students majoring in psychology. *The Reading Matrix, 9 (2),* 184-197.
[38]   Tayebipour, F. (2005). The role of TEFL instructors vs. Specific-field instructors in ESP/EAP teaching. In G.R. Kiany, & M. Khayyamdar, (Eds.). *Proceedings of the First National ESP/EAP Conference,* (1). Paper presented at the First National ESP/EAP Conference, Iran (pp. 219-234). Tehran: SAMT.
[39]   Ziahosseiny, S. M. (2005). A psycholinguistic approach to ESP/EAP material design. In G. R. Kiany, & M. Khayyamdar, (Eds.). *Proceedings of the First National ESP/EAP Conference,* (1). Paper presented at the First National ESP/EAP Conference, Iran (pp. 157-168). Tehran: SAMT.

Zahra Zohoorian is currently a PhD candidate in applied linguistics at University Sains Malaysia. She is a full-time faculty member at the department of languages at Islamic Azad University of Mashhad branch, Iran. She has co-authored three EAP textbooks. Her paper publications and conference presentations are mainly about EAP courses. Her areas of interest for research include ESP, EAP, material development, syllabus design, curriculum development, learner motivation, learners' learning styles and strategies, teaching contexts, and reading skill.