
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Investigating the EFL and ESP Students and Teachers' Perception to the English Curriculum at Afghanistan Universities

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| ABSTRACT

This article examined the effectiveness of the EFL and ESP curricula in Afghanistan universities. Specifically, it provided an overview of the current state of English programs and learners' and instructors' feedback on their learning and expectations. The data was collected via survey questionnaires and interviews with three groups of people. The first group is 300 Afghan EFL and ESP learners and instructors from seven different state universities of different provinces in Afghanistan who took part in this study. These universities include Nangarhar, Kandahar, Herat, Sayed Jamaluddin Afghan, Shaikh Zayed, Balkh and Kabul Education Universities. The second group is the university authorities and officials of the Ministry of Higher Education who participated in this survey. The third group of the participant is 20 EFL and ESP learners and instructors and 10 EFL and ESP curriculum planners. For the purpose of collecting data, a well-developed questionnaire was created. The collected data were analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 23). The result revealed that the participants had a somehow positive attitude toward teaching and learning English as a foreign language. Also, it suggested that the students, as well as their instructors, have a low degree of a positive attitude toward the teaching system and curriculum.

| KEYWORDS

Curriculum, curriculum evaluation, syllabus, teaching methodology

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

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1. Introduction

The English language is considered a wider means of communication and a widely studied subject throughout the world. Admittedly, English is the international language in terms of vitality. However, teaching English to the outside circle of the English-speaking community has always been a heck-hugging challenge so far, as it has an expanding circle of language trainers-native and non-native. They have found it arduous and difficult; everywhere, especially in a country where English plays the role of a foreign language or a second language, in order to reduce the difficulty of English language instruction programs. The program designers have developed a number of English language teaching programs, such as TEFL, ELT, TESOL, and ESOL, for English professionals at different levels. Since then, English has been spoken as a monolingual language that was limited to Britain and its sphere of influence. However, today it is spoken by more than two billion people around the world, in different dialects and levels of skills.

As English has exceeded its natural boundaries, its non-English speakers are three times more numerous than its native speakers, as Crystal (2012) asserts. Over time, English has emerged as the world language of research and publication. It is used as the language of instruction by a multitude of universities and institutes (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001). Considering the current state of English, the need for English as a foreign language has led to a remarkable change in the requirements of educational systems. Thus, some crucial aspects of teaching English, related to curriculum, methodology, and evaluation, have gained considerable importance around the world.

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In Afghanistan, Pashto and Persian languages are used in the government sector, corporate area, media, training, education, and so for. The country counts these two languages as their national languages, whereas English is introduced as a symbol of high society, modernity, and prestige. However, there are some problems in teaching and learning contexts. "The main dilemma facing the teachers of Afghanistan has little to do with students and supplies or with issues such as salary, work hours, and equipment. It is the fear of being beheaded for teaching children" (Armstrong, 2006, p. 31).

The problem that currently exists in the Ministry of Education is the new curriculum, which is prepared at an international level. Professional English teachers are needed to implement such kind of curriculum because this is the responsibility of teachers to follow that particular curriculum, make a lesson plan and implement it in the classroom. Unfortunately, most high school teachers graduated from high school, and they do not have sufficient knowledge to teach high level English classes. Moreover, experienced teachers are old and use classical methods such as Grammar Translation Method (GTM) and Direct Method (Alamyar, 2017).

At the University level, the Ministry of Higher Education in Afghanistan has prepared a curriculum for each faculty and outlined the points on which area of teaching and learning the English language should there be focused. The problem is the lack of professional English teachers and pedagogical materials which are needed to achieve this particular goal. Ministry of Higher Education has prepared the curriculum for each faculty requirement in ESP course; however, the teachers have studied only general English at universities. Due to these problems, English teachers are not capable of teaching ESP classes.

Alimyar (2015) mentioned the major challenges and problems with English language teachings in Afghanistan. Some of these challenges and problems are lack of expert/ proficient instructors, insufficient campuses and libraries, lack of awareness of new methods and strategies to teach the English language as well as a shortage of language labs, standard curriculum/syllabuses, a large number of students in small classrooms, lack of textbooks, audio-visual, and self-access language learning materials. And finally, there is not enough parental support for the learners to do homework for supplementary practice, which is assigned to them.

The holistic approach of this research is to investigate the EFL and ESP Students' and Teachers' Perceptions towards English Curriculum at Afghanistan Universities. The specific goal is to explore English as a foreign language and English for the Specific Purpose of learning, teaching methodology, and students' and teachers' attitudes toward (EFL) and (ESP) learning and teaching. Especially the study aims to investigate how Afghanistan's University students use the English language. The present research also explores the potential of English in pedagogy and the implications of incorporating it into the program design and teaching.

2. Literature Review

The English language is one of the most spoken languages in the world, and over the years, it has become very important, not only in some developing countries such as India, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Korea and etc., but also in the lower-middle-income countries like Angola, Bangladesh, Bhutan and etc. In recent years, it has multiplied employment opportunities around the world, and economic factors have played a key role in spreading this language around the world. Therefore, it has become the lingua franca among people from different backgrounds (Alimyar, 2015).

It is known that Afghanistan remains one of the least developed countries in the world (Crane & Rerras, 2009). It is a landlocked country located in the heart of south-central Asia. It has a massive history; however, decades of war have affected all aspects, mostly education. Education started in Afghanistan in the early 20th century as modern learning institutions made their first attempts to achieve social integration and national development.

English language teaching in Afghanistan started in the late 1930s, and it was taught from the seventh grade of junior high school at a basic level. Then in the late 1960s, there was more improvement in English language programs because of the implementation of a new project.

There was a five-year project supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to develop English textbooks for Afghan learners. A team of textbook writers from Columbia University designed and published a number of textbooks, e.g., Afghans Learn English Series. These textbooks were used for almost 40 years with little change in content until the year 2002. However, from 2003 onwards, English as a compulsory subject was introduced from grade four of junior school. Therefore, students who have completed the secondary level (high school) are expected to have nine academic years of studying English. (Alimyar 2015, p. 7)

As the English language is a compulsory subject in a school curriculum, and it is taught from grade four to the university level. For the best of teaching English as a foreign language learning and teaching in the country, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education have been working together on a new syllabus (Alamyar, 2017). Apart from the public and private schools,

teaching and learning English also continues at the university level. In Afghan Universities, English is considered a compulsory subject for four semesters. Each semester it is taught as English for Specific Purpose (ESP). English is also studied as a major field of study in the form of English language teaching (ELT) and English literature at B.A and M.A levels at Kabul, Kardan, American and some other private Universities.

In Afghanistan, there are some international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that support the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Higher Education in teaching and learning English. Some of these NGOs and organizations are the British Council, USAID, and the World Bank. The one that mostly supports educational programs in Afghanistan is British Council. The British Council for Afghanistan (2018) reported on its website that the goal of the British Council in Afghanistan is to enable Afghans to achieve more for themselves, their communities and their country through more widespread and better quality teaching and learning of English. To achieve this goal, they provide teachers with some effective and beneficial developmental programs such as Teaching Resources, English for Afghan Teachers (TREAT) program and English Resource Centers (ERC).

The improvement and development of teachers is the main objective of the TREAT program, which is supported by the British Council. They reach out to English language teacher trainers and teachers across Afghanistan through conferences, workshops, training programs, cascades, digital media and other innovative tools to share techniques and the latest developments taking place in English language teaching worldwide. Teaching Resources and English for Afghan Teachers (TREAT) builds on the excellent work the British Council has done over the years, opening English Language Resource Centers in Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) in ten different provinces (British Council, 2018). Therefore, the current study seeks to explore the following questions:

1. What are the Afghan EFL instructors' and university students' attitudes towards teaching and learning English as a foreign language?
2. What are the Afghan ESP university instructors' and university students' attitudes toward teaching and learning English for specific purposes?
3. What are the Afghan educational officials' Ministry of Higher Education staffs' attitudes toward teaching and learning the English language?

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

This study used an explanatory (mixed-method) design and tried to gather information in a large quantitative phase and a smaller qualitative phase. During the quantitative phase, three groups of participants filled out questionnaires. A group of 300 Afghan EFL learners and an equal number of ESP learners from seven different state universities of different provinces in Afghanistan took part in this study. These universities include Nangarhar University, Kabul Education University of Rabbani, Kandahar University, Herat University, Sayed Jamaluddin Afghan University, Shaikh Zayed University, and Balkh University. The developed questionnaires were also designed for EFL and ESP instructors in the aforementioned universities. The third group of participants that filled out their related questionnaires were heads of faculties, university authorities, and those officials at the Ministry of Higher Education who were responsible for designing English programs in Afghanistan. For the qualitative phase of the current study, purposeful sampling was employed, and 10 EFL learners, 10 ESP learners, 10 instructors, and 5 university authorities and curriculum planners (based on their willingness to cooperate) were orally interviewed either in person or through phone calls and other technological facilities, and their interviews were orally-recorded. Generally, the age range of the EFL/ESP learners varied from 20 to 35, and their mother tongues were mostly Persian (Dari dialect) and Pashtun and very rare cases such as Balochi, Uzbek, Turkmen, Pashayi, and Nuristani. They were from different socio-cultural and religious backgrounds in different provinces of Afghanistan. All of them had passed the requirement for a high school diploma, elementary school diploma, and other necessary requirements. They had studied the same courses during high school that is currently practiced in Afghanistan. They had studied the English language from grade four (*Senf four*) in their elementary school for nine subsequent years until the end of their high school years.

3.2 Instruments

Generally, two types of data collection instruments were used in the current study: three types of questionnaires and semi-structured oral interviews.

3.2.1 EFL Evaluation Questionnaires

Three types of questionnaires with three sections were developed based on the currently available questionnaires for evaluating EFL and ESP programs. Unfortunately, no empirical study has ever been done about EFL curriculum evaluation in Afghanistan, and there is no validated questionnaire available to use for the current study. Accordingly, the latest theories and conceptualizations for the development and evaluation of EFL curricula proposed by great researchers of the field, including Tomlinson (2001, 2003, 2010, 2012), Richards (2001, 2010), Nunan (2004) and some other researchers were used to develop new questionnaires for the current state of English language teaching at Afghan Universities. It was a 5-point Likert scale, and it was validated in a pilot study

with smaller groups of participants, similar to the main students and teachers who took part in the main study. All the necessary considerations were considered to produce a reliable and valid questionnaire.

3.2.2 Oral Interview

About 10 EFL learners, 10 ESP learners, 10 Instructors, and 5 universities and Ministry of Higher Education authorities who were responsible for English language curriculum planning in Afghanistan were selected based on purposeful sampling. Some questions regarding the current state of English Language Teaching at Afghan Universities were asked of these participants, and their answers were audio taped for further listening, and the transcriptions using some new technologies that are available for qualitative data transcription and analysis like Hypertext or MAXQDA or some other programs. The context of the research questions has not been decided in advance, and they were determined after the development of the questionnaires and locating of some significant issues of interest during the first phase of the study.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

The current study used both qualitative and quantitative phases. For the quantitative phase, 300 participants of EFL and ESP Afghan learners and instructors from different state Universities were selected to fill out the questionnaires. The next group was selected from heads of faculty, university authorities, and officials of the Ministry of Higher Education to answer the questionnaires.

For the qualitative stage, 10 EFL and ESP learners and 10 EFL curriculum planners were either orally interviewed or through technology such as Email, phone calls, and social media. To evaluate the questionnaires, criteria proposed by Tomlinson (2001, 2003, 2010, 2012), Richard (2001, 2010), and Nunan (2004) were employed, and for oral interview evaluation, MAXQDA software was used for the current state of English language teaching at Afghanistan Universities.

3.4 Research Design

This study used an explanatory-mixed method design. Data were collected in two subsequence phases: a main large quantitative phase using questionnaires that were distributed among the target participants in some of the renowned state universities in the different geographical areas of the country, including cities such as Kabul, Nangarhar, Kunar, Khost, Kandahar, Herat, and Balkh. The second phase was a small qualitative one that tried to gather insight into the current state of English language teaching in Afghanistan.

3.5 Data Analysis

In the present study, a mixed-method designed for using both quantitative and qualitative data was used. The statistical analysis of the survey questionnaires was applied through SPSS 23. Descriptive statistics included mean standard deviation. The reliabilities of the research instruments were estimated through Cronbach's alpha. Finally, the qualitative data obtained from observations and semi-structural interviews were interpreted and organized through MAXQDA software.

4. Results

4.1 Afghan EFL Instructors and Students' Attitudes

The attitudes of the participatory EFL instructors (N=62) were gathered through the developed questionnaire. The reliability of the whole questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha turned out to be .863 (n= 30). The descriptive statistics are presented in the following tables.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics Afghan EFL Instructors' Attitudes

	Mean	SD
1. I think Afghan EFL teachers are familiar with the latest teaching methods.	3.13	1.138
2. Afghan EFL teachers have a good mastery of the English language.	3.08	1.091
3. Afghan EFL classroom meets the technological requirements of the materials.	3.02	1.079
4. I think Afghan EFL teachers are satisfied with the current English curriculum.	2.60	.966
5. Afghanistan's Universities have EFL consistence curriculum.	2.82	1.048
6. Afghan EFL teachers give enough time to the students to practice in English language classes.	2.90	1.051
7. I think Afghanistan's Universities have equipped classes for EFL teaching.	2.56	.985

8.	Afghanistan Universities EFL classes have a standard number of students.	2.77	1.047
9.	I think Afghan teachers have an effective syllabus for their EFL classes.	2.89	1.073
10.	Afghan EFL teachers motivate the students to learn the English language.	3.39	1.046
11.	Afghanistan Universities EFL students have access to authentic English language materials.	2.95	1.015
12.	Afghanistan Universities EFL students use the only target language in the class.	2.82	1.064
13.	The EFL text/task/classroom organization requirements are met by the classroom context.	3.06	.990
14.	I think in EFL in-class time to cover the course book is appropriate.	3.03	1.116
15.	Afghanistan's University teachers provide supplementary materials for learning EFL language.	2.95	1.015
16.	Afghan EFL teachers' approaches are based on an up-to-date language teaching/learning philosophy.	3.11	1.103
17.	I think the EFL teachers' approach is adopted language teaching/learning philosophy is observed systematically in the tasks.	3.00	.958
18.	The contexts of EFL are practical and applicable in the classroom.	1.90	1.973
19.	I think Afghanistan Universities EFL syllabus has enough number of texts to realize program goals.	2.92	1.060
20.	The Afghanistan Universities EFL syllabus is real-life oriented.	3.03	1.024
21.	The Afghanistan Universities EFL syllabus provides active participation for learners.	3.08	1.060
22.	The Afghanistan Universities EFL syllabus emphasizes patterns (daily social language).	3.03	1.071
23.	The Afghanistan Universities EFL syllabus focus on specific language skills and content.	3.23	1.047
24.	The Afghanistan Universities EFL syllabus meets real-life workplace task demands.	2.97	1.055
25.	The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers motivate learners; they meet the needs of learners.	3.11	1.103
26.	At Afghanistan's Universities, EFL learners' cognitive load is manageable.	2.97	1.024
27.	The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers provide choice to learners through a variety of texts/tasks.	3.11	1.103
28.	The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers help learners develop academic study skills.	3.35	1.026
29.	The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers make learners responsible for their own learning.	3.19	1.143
30.	The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers employ a variety of classroom organization activities (individual, pair, group ...).	3.31	1.034

Based on the mean obtained from the EFL instructors questionnaire shows that EFL instructors somehow agreed with the items, which shows that the Afghan EFL instructors motivate the students to learn the English language ($M=3.39$), they help learners to develop academic study skills ($M=3.35$), as well as the EFL instructors employ a variety of classroom organization activities (individual, pair, group ...) with a mean score of ($M=3.31$). Table 1 also reveals the negative attitudes of the Afghan EFL instructors towards the students who have access to authentic English language materials, and English teachers provide supplementary materials for learning the EFL language ($M=2.95$), and the EFL syllabus has enough texts to realize program goals with a mean score of ($M=2.92$). The majority of EFL instructors also disagreed with the questions asked about the EFL instructors giving enough time to the students to practice in English language classes ($M=2.90$). As can be seen in the above table that the minority of the Afghan EFL instructors are agreed that the EFL classes have a standard number of students ($M=2.77$), and the EFL instructors are satisfied with the current English curriculum ($M=2.60$); in addition, the Afghanistan Universities have equipped classes for EFL teaching ($M=2.56$), and finally the EFL contexts are practical and applicable in the classroom with a mean score of ($M=1.90$). The

result of the EFL instructors' questionnaire revealed diversities opinions of the Afghan EFL instructors. The major number of Afghan EFL instructors show completely disagreed views; however, a minority of them demonstrate strongly agreed opinions. This suggests that most Afghan EFL instructors hold negative attitudes about the EFL instructors encouraging the students to learn English, cater the EFL extra materials for EFL learning, the contexts of the syllabus are designed to achieve the goals of the program and the Afghanistan Universities built furnished classes for EFL teaching.

Table 2 illustrates the Afghan students' attitudes (N=107). The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated using Cronbach's alpha was .943.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics Afghan EFL Students' Attitudes

	Mean	SD
1. I think Afghan EFL teachers are familiar with the latest teaching methods.	3.65	.953
2. Afghan EFL teachers give enough time to the students to practice in English language classes.	3.61	1.062
3. I think Afghanistan's Universities have equipped classes for EFL learning.	3.30	1.066
4. Afghanistan's University teachers provide supplementary materials for learning EFL language.	3.36	.985
5. Afghanistan Universities EFL classes have a standard number of students.	3.30	1.109
6. I think Afghanistan's University students approve the current EFL curriculum.	3.44	1.048
7. In Afghanistan, Universities EFL students receive enough motivation.	3.30	1.021
8. I think Afghanistan University EFL students have access to English books/teaching materials, and lectures.	3.44	1.109
9. Afghanistan Universities EFL students use technology to learn the English language.	3.20	1.023
10. I think Afghanistan Universities EFL students have an active role in the class.	3.54	.954
11. Afghanistan Universities EFL students have access to authentic English language materials.	3.32	.987
12. Afghanistan Universities EFL students use the only target language in the class.	3.13	1.047
13. I think the information that is presented by EFL Afghan teachers is enough for EFL learners.	3.16	1.109
14. Afghan EFL teachers' approach is based on an up-to-date language teaching/learning philosophy.	3.26	.904
15. The Afghanistan Universities EFL syllabus provides active participation of learners.	3.38	1.015
16. The Afghanistan Universities EFL syllabus of each unit has objectives to fulfill the ultimate goal.	3.44	.849
17. The Afghanistan Universities EFL syllabus emphasizes patterns (daily social language).	3.49	.925
18. The Afghanistan Universities EFL syllabus focus on specific language skills and content.	3.41	.941
19. The Afghanistan Universities EFL syllabus provides specific texts, tasks, and terminology.	3.38	.968
20. The Afghanistan Universities EFL syllabus meets real-life workplace task demands.	3.27	.927
21. The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers are empowered and guided.	3.52	.945
22. The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers provide extra tasks, materials, and ideas.	3.36	.954
23. The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers meet real-life workplace task demands.	3.35	.891

24. The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers guide learners successfully about what to do and what not to do.	3.53	.883
25. At Afghanistan Universities EFL learners' cognitive load is manageable.	3.51	.817
26. The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers give a choice to learners through a variety of texts/tasks.	3.51	.925
27. The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers provide strategies for learning.	3.51	.915
28. The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers make learners more responsible for their own learning.	3.61	.888
29. The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers foster learners to ask questions and investigate the subject matter.	3.26	1.067
30. The Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers employ a variety of classroom organization activities (individual, pair, group...).	3.52	.955

A large amount of Afghan EFL students show negative attitudes about the EFL teachers' familiarity with the latest teaching methods; with a mean score of ($M=3.65$), the EFL teachers give enough time to the students to practice in English language classes. They make the learners more responsible for their own learning ($M=3.61$). The EFL students have an active role in their class, with a mean score of ($M =3.54$). They also disagreed that the EFL syllabus patterns emphasize daily social language ($M=3.49$), the EFL students accept the current EFL curriculum, and they also have access to English books/teaching materials and lectures, and the EFL syllabus each unit has objectives to fulfill the ultimate goal the mean of ($M=3.44$).

The Afghan EFL students also demonstrate their completely negative view regarding the EFL syllabus focuses on specific language skills and content ($M=3.41$), and the EFL syllabus provides active participation of the learners, along with EFL syllabus provide specific texts, tasks, and terminology with the mean of ($M=3.38$). Finally, the Afghan EFL students express the same negative attitudes toward the items, which shows that the EFL syllabus meets real-life workplace task demands ($M=3.27$), and the EFL teachers' approach is based on a modern language teaching/learning philosophy; furthermore, the EFL teachers foster learners to ask questions and investigate the subject matter the mean score of ($M=3.26$). The information that is presented by EFL Afghan teachers is enough for EFL learners ($M=3.16$), as well as the EFL students use the only target language in the class ($M=3.13$). The EFL students' questionnaire shows that the maximum number of Afghan EFL students completely disagreed, and a minimum of them strongly agreed with the items.

4.2 Afghan ESP Instructors and Students' Attitudes

In Table 3, the attitudes of ESP instructors (N=66) have been tabulated. The reliability of the ESP instructors' questionnaire, which was administered to the ESP instructors, was .949 using Cronbach's alpha.

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics Afghan ESP Instructors' Attitudes

	Mean	SD
1. I think Afghan ESP teachers are familiar with the latest teaching methods.	3.44	1.125
2. Afghanistan's Universities have ESP consistence curricula.	3.36	1.185
3. Afghan ESP teachers give enough time to the students for practicing in the English language classes.	2.92	1.086
4. I think Afghanistan's Universities have equipped classes for ESP learning.	3.02	1.196
5. Afghanistan's University teachers provide supplementary materials for learning ESP language.	3.20	1.099
6. Afghanistan Universities ESP classes have a standard number of students.	3.27	1.117
7. I think Afghanistan's university students approve the current ESP curriculum.	2.94	1.149
8. At Afghanistan Universities, ESP students have received enough motivation.	3.24	1.177
9. I think Afghanistan Universities ESP students have access to English books/teaching materials and lectures.	3.12	1.089

10. Afghanistan Universities ESP students use technology to learn the English language.	3.27	1.103
11. I think Afghanistan Universities ESP students have an active role in the class.	2.74	1.071
12. Afghanistan Universities ESP students have access to authentic English language materials.	3.33	.982
13. Afghanistan Universities ESP students use the only target language in the class.	3.27	1.089
14. I think the information that is presented by ESP Afghan teachers is enough for ESP learners.	3.00	1.109
15. Afghan ESP teachers have a good mastery of the English language.	3.20	1.140
16. Afghan ESP classroom meets the technological requirements of the materials.	3.12	1.117
17. Afghan ESP teachers motivate the students to learn the English language.	2.98	1.045
18. The contexts of ESP are practical and applicable in the classroom.	3.17	1.131
19. The ESP text/task/classroom organization requirements are met by the classroom context.	3.27	1.103
20. The Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus meets real-life workplace task demands.	3.06	1.021
21. I think ESP in-class time to cover the course book is appropriate.	3.18	1.066
22. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers provide feedback to the learners to facilitate the process of learning.	3.33	1.057
23. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers provide tasks to be done after the class.	3.18	1.122
24. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers have authority in the class.	3.18	1.094
25. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers guide learners successfully about what to do and what not to do.	3.08	1.057
26. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers help learners develop academic study skills.	3.21	1.074
27. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers present the content of language in a simple, meaningful manner.	3.24	1.229
28. The Afghanistan Universities ESP content focuses on daily speech patterns (social language).	3.09	1.160
29. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers provide a summary of the module/unit.	3.38	1.187
30. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers employ a variety of classroom organization activities (individual, pair, group ...).	3.21	1.234

The Afghan ESP instructors showed their attitudes regarding the ESP instructors' questionnaire slightly the same as the previous questionnaires. Their highest mean score related to the items which asked about the Afghan ESP teachers' familiarity with the latest teaching methods was the mean score of ($M=3.44$), and the ESP teachers provided a summary of the module/unit. In addition, their points of view also completely disagreed about the ESP teachers providing tasks to be done after the class, and they have authority in the class, and the ESP in-class time to cover the course book is appropriate the means of ($M=3.18$). Another average mean score for the Afghan ESP instructors refers to the question which is referred to the contexts of the ESP that are practical and applicable in the classroom ($M=3.17$), as well as the ESP students have access to the English books/teaching materials and lectures, and ESP classroom meets the technological requirements of the materials with the mean of ($M=3.12$).

In the end, most of the Afghan ESP instructors expressed their strongly negative view about the students accepting the current ESP curriculum ($M=2.94$), the ESP teachers give enough time to the students to practice the English language the means score ($M=2.92$), and the ESP students have an active role in the class ($M=2.74$). The Afghan ESP instructors questionnaire scale selection shows that a great extent of the Afghan ESP instructors totally disagreed; however, the less extent agreed with the items.

Table 4 also illustrates the Afghan ESP students' ($N=124$) ideas towards the ESP curriculum, syllabi and teaching methodology. The reliability of ESP students' attitudes was .965 by using Cronbach's Alpha.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics Afghan ESP Students' Attitudes

	Mean	SD
1. I think Afghan ESP teachers are familiar with the latest teaching methods.	3.55	.966
2. Afghanistan's Universities have ESP consistence curriculum.	3.48	1.040
3. Afghan ESP teachers give enough time to the students to practice in English language classes.	3.48	1.115
4. I think Afghanistan's Universities have equipped classes for ESP learning.	3.31	1.120
5. Afghanistan's university teachers provide supplementary materials for learning the ESP language.	3.31	1.085
6. Afghanistan Universities ESP classes have a standard number of students.	3.30	1.147
7. I think Afghanistan's university students approve the current ESP curriculum.	3.35	1.061
8. At Afghanistan Universities ESP students have received enough motivation.	3.22	1.079
9. I think Afghanistan Universities ESP students have access to English books/teaching materials and lectures.	3.45	.999
10. Afghanistan Universities ESP students use technology to learn the English language.	3.41	1.067
11. I think Afghanistan Universities ESP students have an active role in the class.	3.31	1.045
12. Afghanistan Universities ESP students have access to authentic English language materials.	3.25	1.049
13. Afghanistan Universities ESP students use the only target language in the class.	3.22	1.108
14. I think the information that is presented by ESP Afghan teachers is enough for ESP learners.	3.27	1.069
15. Afghan ESP teachers have a good mastery of the English language.	3.35	1.068
16. Afghan ESP classroom meets the technological requirements of the materials.	3.27	1.114
17. Afghan ESP teachers motivate the students to learn the English language.	3.43	1.142
18. The contexts of ESP are practical and applicable in the classroom.	3.20	1.067
19. The ESP text/task/classroom organization requirements are met by the classroom context.	3.26	1.073
20. The Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus meets real-life workplace task demands.	3.27	1.092
21. I think ESP in-class time to cover the course book is appropriate.	3.29	1.080
22. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers provide feedback to the learners to facilitate the process of learning.	3.26	1.066
23. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers provide tasks to be done after the class.	3.53	1.055
24. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers have authority in the class.	3.34	1.066
25. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers guide learners successfully about what to do and what not to do.	3.41	1.082
26. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers help learners develop academic study skills.	3.47	1.055
27. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers present the content of language in a simple, meaningful manner.	3.42	1.068
28. The Afghanistan Universities ESP content focuses on daily speech patterns (social language).	3.33	1.153

29. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers provide a summary of the module/unit.	3.32	1.048
30. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers employ a variety of classroom organization activities (individual, pair, group ...).	3.24	1.070

According to the table above, most of the Afghan ESP students show strongly negative beliefs about the questions, which refer to the Afghan ESP teachers' familiarity with the latest teaching methods ($M=3.55$); the ESP teachers provide tasks to be done after the class the mean score of ($M=3.53$), the Afghanistan Universities have the ESP consistence curriculum and the Afghan ESP teachers give enough time to the students to practice in the English language classes ($M=3.48$). However, the least of the Afghan ESP students strongly accept that the ESP teachers have good mastery over the English language with a mean of ($M=3.35$); they also agree that the Afghan ESP teachers have authority in the class ($M=3.34$), and the ESP content focus on daily speech patterns (social language) ($M=3.33$). The Afghan ESP students also display their average mean about the ESP instructors provide a summary of the module/unit ($M=3.32$), the Afghanistan Universities have equipped classes for ESP learning, and teachers provide supplementary materials for learning ESP language the mean score of ($M=3.31$).

Eventually, the bellow means ($M=3.26$) refers to the questions which argue that the ESP text/task/classroom organization requirements meet the classroom context, and the ESP teachers provide feedback to the learners to facilitate the process of learning. As well, the ESP students have access to authentic English language materials ($M=3.25$), the ESP students receive enough motivation, and they use only the target language in the class ($M=3.22$). In Table 4.4, most of the Afghan ESP students suggest that the ESP teacher needs the latest teaching methodology training, should provide more tasks and activities for students to do at home, the ESP teachers should prepare technology-equipped classes for ESP learning, and they should provide an opportunity for ESP students to have access to the authentic English materials.

4.3 Afghan Educational Officials' Attitudes

The researcher, in addition to the learners' and instructors' ideas on EFL and ESP, had the university officials' ideas on the topic ($N=24$). Their reliability was calculated in Cronbach's Alpha .933.

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics of Afghan Educational Officials' Attitudes

	Mean	SD
1. I think Afghan EFL teachers are familiar with the latest teaching methods.	3.21	1.062
2. Afghan EFL teachers have good mastery of the English language.	3.21	1.062
3. I think Afghan teachers have an effective syllabus for their EFL classes.	3.25	.989
4. Afghan EFL classroom meets the technological requirements of the materials.	3.33	1.007
5. I think Afghan EFL teachers are satisfied with the current English curriculum.	3.04	1.083
6. Afghanistan's Universities have an EFL consistence curriculum.	3.58	.830
7. Afghan EFL teachers motivate the students to learn the English language.	3.17	1.007
8. Afghan EFL teachers give enough time to the students to practice in English language classes.	3.58	.830
9. I think Afghanistan's Universities have equipped classes for EFL teaching.	3.33	.963
10. Afghanistan's University teachers provide supplementary materials for learning the EFL language.	3.17	1.007
11. Afghanistan Universities EFL classes have a standard number of students.	3.25	.989
12. In Afghanistan, Universities EFL students receive enough motivation.	3.42	.929
13. I think Afghanistan University EFL students have access to English books/ teaching materials, and lectures.	3.04	1.083
14. Afghanistan Universities EFL students use technology to learn the English language.	3.08	1.018

15. I think Afghanistan Universities EFL students have an active role in the class.	3.13	.992
16. Afghanistan Universities ESP students have access to authentic English language materials.	3.25	.989
17. The contexts of ESP are practical and applicable in the classroom.	3.42	.929
18. The ESP text/task/classroom organization requirements are met by the classroom context.	3.08	1.018
19. I think ESP in-class time to cover the course book is appropriate.	3.25	.989
20. Afghan ESP teachers' approaches are based on an up-to-date language teaching/learning philosophy.	3.08	1.018
21. I think the Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus has enough number of texts to fulfill program goals.	3.17	1.007
22. The Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus is real-life oriented.	2.92	1.018
23. The Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus provides active participation of learners.	3.08	1.018
24. The Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus provides an ample amount of input.	3.08	1.018
25. The Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus modules/units are organized around the same goal.	3.08	1.018
26. The Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus emphasizes patterns (daily social language).	3.42	.929
27. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers provide feedback to the learners to facilitate the process of learning.	3.25	.989
28. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers evaluate the learners at the end of the class.	3.17	1.007
29. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers make learners more responsible for their own learning.	3.33	.963
30. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers employ a variety of classroom organizations (individual, pair, group, ...)	3.42	.929

The questionnaire, which is designed for Afghan Universities Officials, revealed that a larger number of the officials show negative perceptions; however, the least of them are positive with items. The highest mean score ($M=3.58$) refers to the question of Afghanistan's Universities that have an EFL consistence curriculum and EFL teachers give enough time to the students to practice in English language classes. Furthermore, the result also seems that they disagreed with items which asked about the Afghan Universities students receive enough motivation. The context of the ESP was practical and applicable in the classroom, and the Afghan Universities ESP syllabus emphasises these patterns (daily social language) with the mean of ($M=3.42$).

According to Table 4.5, the Afghan Universities' Officials were moderate with questions which asked about the EFL teachers. They are familiar with the latest teaching methods. The Afghan EFL teachers have a good mastery of the English language with a mean of ($M=3.21$). In addition, the average mean of the Afghanistan Universities' Officials refers to the questions that the EFL teachers motivate the students to learn the English language and Afghan Universities' teachers give supplementary materials for learning the EFL language ($M=3.17$). The EFL students have an active role in the class with a mean score of ($M=3.13$). Furthermore, the same table shows that the least of the participants agree with questions which are asked about the Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus, which provides active participation of the learners, it also provides ample amount of input, and the EFL students use technology for learning the English language with the low mean of $M=3.08$.

Based on the mean obtained from Afghanistan Universities Officials ($M=3.04$) describe that the least of the participant agreed with questions that asked about whether Afghan EFL teachers are satisfied with the current English curriculum and whether EFL students have access to English books/teaching materials, the ($M=2.92$) mean shows that the Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus is real-life oriented.

The final table has the Ministry's idea on the topic of the study. The reliability of the Afghanistan Ministry of Higher Education staff's attitudes was .933, according to Cronbach's Alpha.

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics Afghan Ministry of Higher Education Staffs' Attitudes

	Mean	SD
1. I think Afghan EFL teachers are familiar with the latest teaching methods.	3.75	.866
2. Afghan EFL teachers have a good mastery of the English language.	3.83	.577
3. I think Afghan teachers have an effective syllabus for their EFL classes.	3.83	.577
4. Afghan EFL classroom meets the technological requirements of the materials.	3.50	.905
5. I think Afghan EFL teachers are satisfied with the current English curriculum.	3.83	.577
6. Afghanistan's Universities have an EFL consistence curriculum.	3.67	.778
7. Afghan EFL teachers motivate the students to learn English language.	3.33	.985
8. Afghan EFL teachers give enough time to the students to practice in English language classes.	3.58	.793
9. I think Afghanistan's Universities have equipped classes for EFL teaching.	3.75	.866
10. Afghanistan's University teachers provide supplementary materials for learning the EFL language.	3.75	.866
11. Afghanistan Universities EFL classes have a standard number of students.	3.58	.793
12. In Afghanistan, Universities EFL students receive enough motivation.	4.00	.000
13. I think Afghanistan University EFL students have access to English books/ teaching materials, and lectures.	3.75	.866
14. Afghanistan Universities EFL students use technology to learn the English language.	3.92	.669
15. I think Afghanistan Universities EFL students have an active role in the class.	3.42	.900
16. Afghanistan Universities ESP students have access to authentic English language materials.	3.83	.577
17. The contexts of ESP are practical and applicable in the classroom.	3.83	.577
18. The EFL text/task/classroom organization requirements are met by the classroom context.	3.92	.669
19. I think ESP in-class time to cover the course book is appropriate.	3.67	.778
20. Afghan EFL teachers' approaches are based on an up-to-date language teaching/learning philosophy.	3.75	.866
21. I think the Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus have enough number of texts to fulfill program goals.	3.67	.778
22. The Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus is real-life oriented.	3.75	.622
23. The Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus provides active participation for learners.	3.58	.996
24. The Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus provides an ample amount of input.	3.58	.996
25. The Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus modules/units are organized around the same goal.	3.75	.866
26. The Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus emphasizes patterns (daily social language).	3.92	.669
27. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers provide feedback to the learners to facilitate the process of learning.	3.92	.669
28. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers evaluate the learners at the end of the class.	3.92	.669
29. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers make learners more responsible for their own learning.	3.58	.996
30. The Afghanistan Universities ESP teachers employ a variety of classroom organization activities (individual, pair, group ...)	3.92	.669

The Afghanistan Ministry of Higher Education Authorities' ideas about the questionnaire, which was designed for them. Most of their staff selected negative responses, but the least of them marked positive. According to Table 4.6, the highest mean ($M=4$) obtained from the question reveals that the Afghanistan Universities EFL students receive enough motivation. The other responses with a mean score of ($M=3.92$) associated with the EFL and ESP students using technology for learning the English language; the ESP teachers provide feedback to the learners to facilitate the process of learning, and the ESP teachers evaluate the learners at the end of the class.

Their medium mean responses received from the following items shows that the Afghanistan Universities EFL teachers are familiar with the latest teaching methods, and teachers provide supplementary materials for the learning of the EFL language. In addition, the EFL teachers' approaches are based on up-to-date language teaching/learning philosophy, the ESP syllabus is real-life oriented, and the ESP syllabus modules/units are organized around the same goal with a mean of ($M=3.75$).

According to Table 6, the Afghanistan Ministry of Higher Education's Staff has given contrary responses to the items. The Afghan EFL teachers give enough time to the students to practice in English language classes, and the Afghanistan Universities ESP syllabus provides an ample amount of input, a mean of ($M=3.58$). They also responded respectively to the items that asked about EFL students having an active role in Afghanistan Universities' classes ($M=3.42$) and the EFL teachers motivating the students to learn the English language ($M=3.33$).

5. Discussion

The present study was an attempt to present a detailed report of the perceptions and attitudes of Afghan EFL and ESP instructors and students. In addition, authorities of the universities and the Ministry of Higher Education attitudes toward learning and teaching the English language at Afghanistan Universities. Therefore, three questions were formulated for the study.

The first question aimed to determine the Afghan instructors' attitudes toward teaching and learning English as a foreign language. Based on the results, the participants agreed on some points; however, they had some comments. The EFL instructors thought that EFL language learners need to be equipped classes with the latest technologies; for instance, projector, laptop, internet, and LCD are the most important equipment, and they also believed that motivation helps learners and stress-free oriented classes are other important factors in learning a language. A study conducted by Alamyar (2017) examined the role of English in Afghanistan. The research paper examined the spread of English in Afghanistan. Specifically, it discussed the users and uses of the English language in different settings, such as educational, social, economic, and political. It explained the prevailing English teaching methods, strategies and the Afghan people's attitudes toward English and English speakers. The result of the present research showed that the roles of English are increasing rapidly in some domains and becoming as important as Pashtu, which is the first official and widely used language in the country. However, the consequences of the spread of English suggest that there is a need for proper language planning and educational policy-making to teach English and to give learners equal access to it in different parts of the country.

The second question consisted of the Afghan EFL university students' attitudes toward teaching and learning English as a foreign language. Most of the university students had chosen the undecided and disagreed to a lesser extent. Based on the items, it is suggested that the students do not have a positive attitude toward the teaching system, the curriculum, and their instructors. According to the interview, the EFL students suffer from the teachers' traditional methods, outdated teaching materials, and a large number of students in small classes. The instructors introduced their own pedagogical materials and text-books which were not checked and suggested by any professional material designer; besides, the number of students in each EFL class are more than 60 according to the students' interview; in such overcrowded classes, there is no chance for the students to participate. However, Noori (2018) investigated the perception of EFL teachers toward CLT. The finding of the study revealed certain challenges towards effective implementation and stated that due to the diversity of ESL and EFL contexts, the CLT method is not very suitable for the EFL context.

The last question was proposed in order to specify the Afghan ESP Instructors' Attitudes toward teaching and learning English as a foreign language. According to the finding, the ESP instructors have a neutral stance towards learning English. The ESP teaching instructors believed that ESP students need more time to learn the English language; in this regard, it was also found useful to watch English movies and debates, read English passages and listen to English news, which is related to their field of study. In addition, the students have access to authentic materials also helps the learners to improve their ESP proficiency level.

6. Conclusion and Implications

The results of the present research yielded a report on the recent attitudes toward English language teaching in the educational system of Afghanistan. First, the universities' officials and the Ministry of Higher Education authorities believed that the recent innovation in ESP and EFL curriculum could change the way of language learning in Afghanistan. Regarding learning, the Ministry

of Higher education introduced the minor and major projects of the Free Online Course by Harvard, MIT, & more (EDX) e-learning system, developing online courses, creating ICT at governmental universities, and using the internet through WiMAX.

Second, the EFL and ESP instructors' and students' perceptions revealed that the English language is mainly taught in a very traditional way in Afghanistan, the situation of the English language has been exotic, and there hasn't been any norm for teaching English in different academic places in the past. In schools, colleges and universities, there has not been a standard format of curriculum, and teachers had to follow a kind of curriculum that is very complicated, ungraded, and not very comprehensible for the students. However, teachers who teach in colleges and universities now use their own way of teaching by referring to the new curriculum made by the Ministry of Higher Education. In Afghan classrooms, what was predominantly found was the use of the grammar-translation method and the structural approach. Whatever a teacher does in the classroom is guided by these two methods that also damage the learning processes.

Concerning the ELT in Afghanistan's education system, we come close to knowing that the true decision to make the English language a medium of instruction in Afghanistan is a critical issue that does not correlate with the overall education system. The teachers in the preliminary and high schools do not have enough language skills to prepare students for universities with English medium instruction. Analyzing this structural impairment, this question arises whether the decision to switch the medium of instruction can develop a more viable educational system in Afghanistan or not. Finally, to implement a policy requiring English as the medium of instruction in higher education and to extend the use of English in different settings, users of English need more security, language training, and equipment, valid and reliable English materials.

This research has some significant implications for both EFL teachers and learners and the educational system in Afghanistan and also for international scholars who seek to carry out further research on the perceptions and attitudes of EFL and ESP learners, instructors and officials on teaching English in Afghanistan. ESP is a mainly important subject for the non-allocated English department. Therefore, the finding of the present study can be useful for Afghan ESP instructors to be aware of their strengths and weakness while they are teaching ESP. They can also help ESP instructors to improve their ESP language teaching programs. With respect to the findings of the study, a statistically negative attitude of EFL students toward EFL pedagogy was observed. Therefore, this study provides the opportunity for EFL teachers to motivate their students and choose the right method for EFL teaching. It also helps EFL instructors think thoroughly before designing classroom activities to see how much they can provide a non-threatening environment to let learners take responsibility for their own learning and become motivated to progress in English. Syllabus designers play an undeniable role in designating effective EFL/ESP language courses to make the learning process easy and enjoyable for the students. So, they need to know what the learners' needs are and how to make effective programs. Therefore, the present study can help syllabus designers to make better decisions while developing EFL/ESP language courses for students. They also need to set the objectives of EFL/ESP courses in a balance between teachers' and students' ideas to motivate the students to learn ESP/EFL. Thus, the syllabus designers should consider the EFL/ESP practical and applicable materials of students' real life.

In the present study, some limitations of the study need to be mentioned. Due to the lack of the internet and less familiarity with online questionnaires, some of the EFL and ESP instructors and students could not fill out the questionnaires online. Therefore, the present study reduced the number of students and instructors. The gender and age of the participants were not controlled in the present study. Some of the delimitations of the present study are as follows. In the present study, only questionnaires and interviews were selected for the collecting data due to some reasons such as the lack of security, time and available sources. Hence, using other instruments, such as classroom observation and tests, would yield even better results. Besides, it was carried out only at five universities, including Nangarhar University, Kabul Education University of Rabbani, Kandahar University, Paktia University, and Herat University.

English language teaching is such a broad and vast area of research that ample issues could be investigated. This study only examined the attitudes of the instructors, students and ministry of higher education and university officials about the current status of EFL/ESP courses at Afghanistan Universities. For the present study, it is suggested to check the syllabi for specific majors and courses, and further research can also investigate the status of ELT at Afghanistan colleges and universities. In addition, this research explores the ideas and comments of EFL and ESP, course designers, instructors and learners who could be instructive in the education systems of Afghanistan, and scholars could improve the current knowledge on this issue and the teaching methodologies by paying attention to such reports.

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