

A Critical Appraisal of University EAP programs in Iran: Revisiting the Status of EAP Textbooks and Instruction¹

Mahmood Reza Atai²

Esmat Babaii³

Mohsen Nili-Ahmadabadi*⁴

Received: 2018/04/15 | Revised: 2018/09/17 | Accepted: 2018/11/06

Abstract

Critical English for Academic Purposes (CEAP) is an interdisciplinary subfield which combines English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and Critical pedagogy. Through CEAP, the stakeholders and participants can question the status quo and work for for more effective education. Few studies have addressed the critical issues in the context of Iranian EAP education at universities, which may incorporate policy makers, practitioners and students. The present study investigated the perceptions of EAP students, instructors and policy makers with regard to the three prominent modules of critical pedagogy, i.e. power, English hegemony and ideology, in

¹ DOI: [10.22051/lghor.2018.19961.1077](https://doi.org/10.22051/lghor.2018.19961.1077)

² Professor of Applied Linguistics, Kharazmi University, Email: atai@khu.ac.ir

³ Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics, Kharazmi University, Email: babaii@khu.ac.ir

⁴ PhD candidate, Kharazmi University, (Corresponding author),
Email: mohsen.niliahmadabadi@gmail.com

EAP with focus on textbooks and instruction. Data were collected from the corresponding participants from three Iranian universities. A questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data. Chi-squares and ANOVA procedures were employed to analyze the quantitative data. The interviews were analyzed through thematic content analysis. We investigated whether there was any significant discrepancy in perspectives among students, instructors and policy makers regarding decision-making power, English hegemony and ideology in the context of Iranian EAP instruction. Results of the quantitative and the qualitative analyses for the module of power showed that based on the participants' perspectives, neither the students nor the instructors enjoy the power to be active in policy making. Regarding English hegemony, the participants believed that it does not exist in the EAP textbooks. With reference to ideology, they believed in the absence of a dominant ideology in the Iranian EAP textbooks and instruction.

Keywords: power, English hegemony, ideology, EAP textbooks, EAP instruction.

Introduction

According to Hyland and Shaw (2016), the communicative needs as well as the practices of the people functioning in academic contexts have been the main focus of English for Academic Purposes (EAP). They maintain that the groundedness principle within the EAP sheds light onto texts in terms of structural and semantic properties, and the requirements imposed on the individuals' communicative behavior developed by the pedagogic practices within the academic context. Such requirements are passed to learners through the textbooks and the way materials are delivered in the academic context. However, textbooks can be argued to lack appropriateness to the academic context because the theory and practice are not necessarily well-integrated (Bhatia, 2002; Richards, 1993; Thornbury & Meddings, 2001) and the writers may rely on intuitions (Lockett, 1999; Swales et al., 1998), for marketability reasons (Gray, 2002).

Through the perspective of critical pedagogy, we arrive at the notions of English hegemony, ideology¹ and power in the textbooks. Gray (2002) holds that textbooks are "highly wrought cultural constructs and carriers of cultural messages" (p. 152). Phillipson (1992) posits that they are also the sites where issues of critical pedagogy are practiced and propagated.

To study English hegemony, ideology and power in the EAP textbooks, a quick review of the related concepts seems in order. Pinpointing the importance of English hegemony in the academic context, Pennycook (2017) posits that leaning English is not only the prerequisite to gain English competence for pursuing their studies, but it also makes the students dependent "on forms of western knowledge that are of limited value and of extreme inappropriacy to

¹ Any attitude or orientation implanted in the EAP textbooks, intended to serve the interests of a certain political, economic or religious group

the local context” (p. 20). Also, Naysmith (1987) argues that the cultural, political and economic dominance of English on other countries is exercised through English language teaching. Philipson (1992) maintains that the “global structures of dependency” can be achieved with English as “the language of international capitalism” and “the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (1992, p. 47). Dominance so perceived is traced back to the critical theory which finds its way to education through Freire’s (1970, 1998) banking education, Mouzelis’s (2000) subjectivist-objectivist divide, Darder, Baltodano and Torres’ (2003) status-quo-questioning in education, Habermas and McCarthy (1985) theory of communicative action in education, Englund’s (2000) deliberative democracy, Giroux’s (1988) social agency, Giroux’s (2010) pedagogy of criticality and instrumental rationality, and Giroux’s (1994) authority and power.

According to Benesch (2012, p.1), critical EAP can be defined as a sub-branch of critical pedagogy, which retains the “aim of helping students navigate academic discourses and disciplines, [and] challenges the notion of academic conventions as necessarily reasonable and non-negotiable.” Since it regards students as “active agents, rather than novices or subordinates”, it deals with the critical issues in education in the EAP context where students’ voices and engagement in the issues related to academia can be heard.

Benesch (2001) holds that students and instructors alike should have the opportunity to get involved in dialogic pedagogy, to have voices on the content and management of classes in the university context, as they are stakeholders who have the right to question the demands they encounter and academia itself is the site for “contention and struggle.”

According to Atai (2002), EAP instruction in Iran has evolved in terms of three generations. The first generation is characterized by joint efforts of the University of Tehran and some Western universities, and then, the British Council supported the authorship of EAP textbooks in Iran. *The Nucleus* series appeared in the 80’s through such efforts (Mazdayasna & Tahririan, 2008). In the second generation, the government-backed organizations such as SAMT began compiling textbooks for a number of disciplines. Finally, in the last generation greater stress was put on content specificity, which resulted in SAMT being proliferate in authoring EAP books. According to Mazdayasna and Tahririan (2008), the needs, wants and desires of the students are not addressed in the current EAP textbooks and pedagogy in Iran. Their study, however, does not delve further into critical pedagogy issues which are mostly addressed in terms of the ideology, power and English hegemony to probe the perceptions of stakeholders.

In the Iranian university context, we can argue that the voices of the students and instructors are rarely heard on critical matters such as ideology, English hegemony and power in the textbooks and instruction. According to Afshar and Movassagh (2016), more studies are needed to raise the consciousness of EAP stakeholders “to attentively hear the voice of EAP students” (p. 144). Re-

consideration of such critical issues can help raise awareness in the Iranian academic context which would enhance the quality of textbooks and instruction in addition to helping policy-makers to better recognize the way of altering the status quo which would be of benefit to all the stakeholders. In other words, when the critical issues of ideology, English hegemony and decision-making power are resolved in universities, students can openly express their perspectives regarding the EAP textbooks and instruction. This can help the instructors select from a wide variety of sources, including the internationally-published EAP textbooks and teach accordingly.

This study addressed the following questions:

1. How do students and instructors in the basic sciences of Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry, and policymakers perceive the concept of decision-making power in the context of Iranian EAP instruction?
2. Do the students and instructors in the basic sciences of Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry, and policy-makers have common perspectives toward the concept of English hegemony in the Iranian EAP instruction?
3. How is the concept of ideology perceived by students and instructors in the basic sciences of Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry, and policy-makers, in the Iranian EAP textbooks and instruction?

Review of the Literature

Critical English for academic purposes delves into EAP-related issues where the voices of the students and instructors, as stakeholders, can alter the status of education in satisfactory ways. The right to question the status quo in academia in a context of dialogic interaction is an opportunity for all the people involved in the academic context to express their demands (Benesch, 2001). The EAP context is a site where the practices and the communicative needs of the students can be directly addressed (Hyland & Shaw, 2016). The four main principles of EAP summarized by Hyland and Shaw (2016) are ‘authenticity’, that is the texts and tasks in a classroom that are supposed to be close to the real academic world; ‘groundedness’, meaning the commitment to connect research and pedagogy, taking into account the materials as well as the instructional practices; ‘interdisciplinarity’, implying that the theories and methods that are originated from varying disciplines, since EAP is not a theory or methodology by itself; and ‘relevance’, meaning that needs analysis that can ascertain linguistic and contextual relevance. Groundedness highlights what the academic context expects of the pedagogic practices. The assumption is that the knowledge students gain in universities is or should be value-free, asocial and ahistorical (Pennycook, 2017). The “sociopolitical implications of both the dominance of English at the expense of other academic languages; and the additional burden which such demands place on students and scholars alike” (Hyland & Shaw, 2016) have been issues of great concern in the literature.

Critical EAP has been an offshoot of critical pedagogy which aims to equip the students with critical consciousness in order to question the practices along with ideologies that are the founding stones in the construction of an education system, and to reach an “emancipatory ideal of democratic schooling” (Darder, Baltodano, & Torres, 2003). Critical pedagogy, according to Kincheloe (2008), necessitates that the educator reevaluates all the matters radically along with the reasons of the practice, since “every dimension of schooling and every form of educational practice are politically contested spaces” (p. 2). This is to help EAP educators not to follow “a discourse of pragmatism” (Pennycook, 1997, p. 254) and to avoid “vulgar pragmatism” (Cherryholmes, 1988, quoted in Pennycook, 1997, p. 253) where the status quo is not questioned at all. Instead, “critical pragmatism” clarifies to the students the “values, norms and hierarchies that underlie the system” (Fenton-Smith, 2014, p. 23).

According to Nekvapil (2012), language planning is a branch of sociolinguistics which is concerned with influencing “the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes” (Cooper, 1989, p. 45) and planned change in the rules, beliefs, and practices. Kennedy (2012) recommends that language planning and policy-making be approached through a critical perspective taking into account the macro and micro levels. He also recommends that any study related to the discipline should examine the agents that play roles in language planning as well as the political practitioners that are located at different levels of the hierarchy.

In the Iranian education system, in general, there have been critical studies with specific focus on power issues and the reconsideration of English textbooks according to modern political, economic, and social status of the country; these studies highlight alternations in ideologies and values in English textbooks (Azimi, 2007; Piavandi, 2008; Riazi, 2005). These studies highlight that the norms in the textbooks have shifted so radically from western to eastern norms; the reason was the social, economic and political foundations of the country changed throughout the recent history. Iranian EAP education was investigated by Atai and Tahririan (2003) arriving at the conclusion that students do not enjoy optimum reading comprehension levels when they read the EAP texts. Based on their findings, students lack appropriate General English proficiency (GEP) prior to entering EAP courses; classes are demotivating; the dominant instructional technique is translation; and there is no interaction between students and instructors. However, in this study, critical EAP issues were not addressed in relation to the textbooks and real instruction in the Iranian university context. Similarly, Hayati (2008) focused on the textbooks, instructors and time schedule in the Iranian EAP context concluding that instructors have been at the center of instruction, but this study did not take into account the more critical EAP issues of students’ voice as well as the perceptions of instructors and policy-makers. Apart from a few studies of critical EAP in Iran, which have considered the students’ rights in determining the course content and instruction (Khany & Tarlani- Aliabadi, 2016), there are no studies on power, ideology and English hegemony, taking into account the perceptions of students, instructors and policy-makers in the Iranian EAP context.

Method

Participants

Participants in this study were at two main levels: two policy-makers, who were regarded as authorities, and instructors and students, who were regarded as practitioners. The policy-makers were instructors of applied linguistics and members of the Supreme Council of Education who make decisions about language education in the context of Iran. They were also members of SAMT¹ where the English textbooks of the basic sciences, medical sciences, humanities and arts are researched and composed.

Students and instructors for the pilot study were selected from the basic fields of pure and applied mathematics, pure and applied physics, as well as pure and applied chemistry in Semnan University. Semnan University was chosen because of convenience. The students were completing their bachelor's degrees and the instructors were faculty members of the departments of the same university. The instructors and students who participated in the main study were selected from Sharif University of Technology, University of Tehran, and Kharazmi University in the fields of Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry. A total of 775 students and 25 instructors participated in the study based on convenience sampling. It should be noted that initially there were more than 1050 students and 98 instructors as the participants. However, 275 students and 58 instructors did not either complete the questionnaire or participate in the interviews.

Instrumentation

The initial phase of the development of the questionnaire was performed based on the relevant themes extracted from the literature (e.g. Pennycook, 2017; Phillipson, 1992), as well as the discussions with the experts in the relevant fields. The instructors participating in the discussions were two associate professors in the department of psychology, an associate professor in the department of educational psychology, two associate professors in applied linguistics, a professor in mathematics, an associate professor in chemistry, and a professor in physics. The discussions took place in Semnan University and University of Tehran. Each session lasted 40 minutes to one hour. Then, we piloted a 32-item Likert-scale questionnaire with a sample size of 102 which resulted in the Cronbach's value of 0.83, as an indication of its internal consistency. In order to check whether the items were factorable, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was run giving the value of 844.6 which is significant; meaning that the test is factorable. A principal factor analysis revealed three components as the underlying constructs, related to power, ideology and English hegemony. In the second phase, further interviews were conducted with the experts, resulting in the addition or deletion of some items. The modified questionnaire was administered

¹ A transliterated term from the Persian title "the Organization for Researching and Composing University Textbooks in the Humanities"

to a sample size of 808. The individual items related to each construct which had a value higher than 0.40 (Appendix 1) were then selected and analyzed. The descriptive statistics are provided in the Appendix 2.

Interviews

A semi-structured interview was developed and run in order to support the quantitative data, since we adopted a mixed-methods research. The data from the questionnaire were analyzed based on thematic content analysis. Since the participants were all Persian speakers, all the interview sessions were run in Persian. Participants were informed that the anonymity is exercised at all levels of the interview session. Students, instructors and policy-makers were asked on their perspectives regarding ideology, English hegemony and decision-making power in the textbooks and instruction in Iranian EAP context, through interactive sessions. The interviews were audiotaped and transcribed for analysis. Then, the themes related to each module were extracted and tabulated based on the responses of the students, instructors and policy-makers. Thirty-one students, 23 instructors and 2 policy-makers participated in the interviews.

Procedure and Data Analysis

Prior to the administration of the questionnaires to the corresponding groups of the participants, we briefed the questions and the terms very quickly. During the data collection session, one of the authors of this study was present for possible questions and clarifications regarding the items. The quantitative data were then codified for analysis.

As for data analysis, initially, we ran frequency counts for each selected item based on the responses provided by students and instructors in the questionnaire. We, then, compared and contrasted the frequency of responses. It was followed by a chi-square test which demonstrated whether the differences between the perspectives of the students and instructors were statistically significant. Since the data were collected from the three fields in the basic sciences of mathematics, physics and chemistry, ANOVA procedures were run to investigate the convergence/divergence of students and instructors' perspectives across the three fields. Then, we ran semi-structured interviews to obtain the qualitative data from students and instructors. The students and instructors of Sharif University of Technology, Tehran University and Kharazmi University, who expressed readiness for the interviews, joined the interview sessions. Most interviews were performed on the phone. Each session was audio-taped and lasted about 20-35 minutes as some concepts needed to be re-elaborated to the interviewees. The data were then analyzed and the themes related to each module were extracted, based on thematic content analysis.

Results

The first research question sought to explore the perspectives of the learners, instructors and policy-makers regarding the existence of the policy-making power in the Iranian EAP context. We first employed frequency counts for the relevant items. Items 9 and 10 ask whether students can participate directly or indirectly in the EAP policy-making processes. For item 9, 200 students and 13 instructors believed that students do not participate directly in policy-making for EAP textbooks and instruction, whereas 13 students and 1 instructor believed that students do. Item 10 asked whether students participated indirectly in policy-making for EAP textbooks and instruction. The results indicated that whereas 201 students and 9 instructors believed that they did not, 145 students and 2 instructors had the opposite idea. Finally, items 11 and 12 investigated instructors' participation in policy-making either directly or indirectly. Two hundred and fifty one students and 8 instructors believed that instructors did not participate directly in policy-making for the EAP textbooks and instruction, while 43 students and only 1 instructor were of the opinion that they did. When asked whether instructors participated indirectly in policy-making, 196 students and 8 instructors disagreed, while 32 students and no instructor believed in instructors' participation in policy-making in the Iranian EAP context. The results demonstrated the fact that the respondents believed in the lack of students and instructors' power to participate in policy-making for the EAP textbooks and instruction, whether directly or indirectly.

Table1.
Summary of the respondents' perspectives on policy-making power

Item	Item summary	agree- ment	disa- gree- ment	% agree- ment	% disa- greement	Total (including missing responses)
9	Students' direct participa- tion in policy-making	T: 1	T: 13	T: 6	T: 86	T: 15
		S: 50	S: 200	S: 11	S: 47	S: 421
10	Students' indirect partici- pation in policy- making	T: 2	T: 9	T: 10	T: 47	T: 19
		S: 145	S: 201	S: 38	S: 53	S: 378
11	Instructors' direct partici- pation in policy- making	T: 1	T: 8	T: 5	T: 44	T: 18
		S: 43	S: 251	S: 10	S: 61	S: 406
12	Instructors' indirect par- ticipation in policy- mak- ing	T: 0	T: 8	T: 0	T: 53	T: 15
		S: 32	S: 196	S: 9	S: 57	S: 338

Table 2.
Classification of themes of the policy-making power

The themes	Sub-themes	No. of instructors	No. of students	% of instructors	% of students
1. Students' participation in policy-making	1.1. Direct participation in the form of consultation	0/23 ^a	0/31 ^b	0	0
	2.2. Indirect participation in the form of questionnaires and suggestions	0/23	0/31	0	0
	3.3. The need to have students' consultation for EAP content and methodology	15/23	26/31	65	83
2. Instructors' participation in policy-making	1.1. Direct participation at authority levels	1/23	---	4	---
	2.2. Indirect participation through consultations	3/23	---	13	---
	3.3. Power to adjust policies at the departmental level	20/23	---	86	---

a. No person out of 23 people
b. No person out of 31 people

Also, to investigate whether there is discrepancy between the views and perspectives of students and instructors, a chi-square was run the results of which confirmed no significance levels for items 9, 10, 11 and 12: $\chi^2_{p9}(1, 440) = 0.35, p < .05$; $\chi^2_{p10}(1, 396) = 0.90, p < .05$; $\chi^2_{p11}(1, 394) = 0.31, p < .05$; $\chi^2_{p12}(1, 343) = 0.49, p < .05$. Furthermore, to investigate whether the perspectives of the students and instructors differed across the three fields of study in basic sciences, namely mathematics, physics and chemistry, an ANOVA procedure demonstrated the absence of any discrepancy regarding decision-making power, as illustrated in Table 3 below.

As mentioned earlier, in addition to the statistical analysis of the data obtained from the questionnaire, interviews were conducted. The content was analyzed for recurring themes in the respondents' comments and the common perspectives of the majority of respondents were highlighted.

As Table 2 shows, none of the participants, students or instructors, believed that students are generally consulted on policy-making decisions (themes 1.1. and 1.2.). However, 83 percent of the students and 65 percent of instructors believed that for improving the EAP content and enhancement of methodology in classes, students' consultation is definitely paramount. A student mentioned that "I don't remember anyone coming to me and asking for my opinion for the

policy-making in EAP". Asked whether such consultation is necessary, she reiterated that "definitely, if we give consultation to the people at the top, our books and teaching will be better." A chemistry instructor said that "students are not allowed to make grand decisions... even the instructors can't do so." However, when asked if such consultation is indeed needed, he said that "any consultation in the academic context can be of benefit... including the students'... we'll improve the textbooks... and teach better based on their needs."

Table 3.
One-way analysis of variance for decision-making power

Item	Source	df	SS	MS	F	p
9	Between groups	2	1.913	.638	.900	.441
	Within groups	412	291.970	.709		
	Total	414	293.882			
10	Between groups	2	1.324	.441	.617	.604
	Within groups	373	266.512	.715		
	Total	375	267.836			
11	Between groups	2	.886	.295	.466	.706
	Within groups	380	240.861	.634		
	Total	282	241.747			
12	Between groups	2	.406	.203	.333	.717
	Within groups	325	198.274	.610		
	Total	327	198.680			

The views of the policy-makers were in line with those of the students and instructors. One of the policy-makers stated that "neither the students nor the instructors and the policy-makers themselves" have any significant role in EAP policy decision-making. He stated that the "curriculum is too vague, objectives are too general and the sources used for EAP instruction are too old-fashioned." Asked whether there is a system to incorporate all the stakeholders in academia, be it students or instructors or policy-makers in the process of such policies, he reiterated that "our policies are mainly devised and handed down in an island... Instructors say that they don't know the curriculum... There is nothing named coherence and system, not even for non-English fields, but English has always been a no-entry zone and people try not to approach it because ELT is intertwined with the red lines and no one wishes to achieve transparency, because no one is out there to make it transparent and operational, and even if they do, no one is out there to implement it." Another policy-maker stated that "students and instructors are not involved in any way in the act of policy-making, but instructors can exercise great maneuver in instruction, meaning that their participation is proved through practice, where the agency depends on expertise, experience and efficiency. The policies are determined at the top level but within the framework people have great maneuverability."

Regarding instructors' power in policy-making, students had normally no opinion, but only 4 and 13 percents of the instructors believed in it. A mathematics instructor said that "No... We are not asked for any comments... the EAP policies are devised and delivered to us from high authorities." Asked whether the instructors have any power to adjust the policies at the department level, he stressed that "Yes... The instructors in math department in the University of Tehran have panel discussions on the syllabus and we can delete or add courses on our own." The interviews demonstrated that the participants believed in no role for the students to have power of policy-making for EAP. They also showed that the instructors have the power at the department level to adjust policies given to them from higher authorities, but they do not have any role to act in the policy-making themselves.

The second research question asked whether English hegemony exists in the textbooks and instruction in the Iranian university context. Regarding English hegemony, items 1, 4, 5 and 6 asked whether English has superiority over other languages in terms of its power; whether world powers use English for dominating other countries; and whether English has a natural superiority over other languages and whether English has any role in dominating students' lives.

For item 1, whether EAP decisions can dominate students' lives, the majority of the participants, 349 students and 13 instructors, believed that decisions regarding EAP textbooks and instruction do not affect their lives, while 65 students and no instructor had the idea that they do. Item 4 asked whether English has superiority over other languages in the Iranian EAP context, in which 368 students and 13 instructors adopted the view that it does not have any superiority over other languages, while 71 students and 3 instructors believed that it does. Item 5 asked whether world powers use English for dominating the EAP textbooks and instruction of Iranian universities. The majority of the participants disagreed with such domination, 283 students and 14 instructors, while 51 students and 3 instructors believed in English domination. Finally, item 6 asked whether English has a natural superiority over other languages (without the world powers trying to impose the superiority), with which 287 students and 13 instructors disagreed, whereas 62 students and 3 instructors were of the opinion that it does.

To investigate whether the instructors' and students' perspectives differ, chi-square procedures were run for items 1, 4, 5 and 6 yielding the following values: $\chi_1^2(1, 543) = 0.58, p < .05$; $\chi_4^2(1, 633) = 0.81, p < .05$; $\chi_5^2(1, 520) = 0.53, p < .05$; $\chi_6^2(1, 553) = 0.56, p < .05$. Since the values are not statistically significant, we can conclude that the students and instructors shared similar perspectives in this regard. In addition, since the data were gathered from the participants, i.e. students and instructors, in the basic sciences of math, physics and chemistry, ANOVA procedures were run to see the convergence or divergence of their ideas and perspectives on the items related to English hegemony, i.e., 1, 4, 5 and 6, in accordance with the mentioned fields of study:

Table 4.
Summary of the respondents' perspectives towards English hegemony

Item	Item summary	Agree ment	Disa- gree- ment	% ^a Agree ment	% ^b Disagree ment	Total (including missing responses)
1	English exercising superiority over other languages	P: 0 S: 65	P: 13 S: 349	P: 0 S: 12	P: 59 S: 66	P: 22 S: 521
4	World powers using English to dominate	P: 3 S: 71	P: 13 S: 368	P: 13 S: 11	P: 56 S: 60	P: 23 S: 610
5	English having nat- ural superiority over other lan- guages	P: 3 S: 51	P: 14 S: 283	P: 13 S: 10	P: 63 S: 56	P: 22 S: 498
6	English having role to dominate stu- dents' lives	P: 3 S: 62	P: 13 S: 287	P: 15 S: 11	P: 65 S: 53	P: 20 S: 533

a. Percentage of the instructors and students who agreed

b. Percentage of the instructors and students who did not agree

Table 5.
One-way analysis of variance for English Hegemony

Item	Source	df	SS	MS	F	p
1	Between groups	2	1.623	.541	.684	.562
	Within groups	511	403.996	.791		
	Total	513	405.619			
4	Between groups	2	5.027	1.676	1.807	.145
	Within groups	597	553.472	.927		
	Total	599	558.499			
5	Between groups	2	.895	.448	.550	.577
	Within groups	508	413.535	.814		
	Total	510	414.431			
6	Between groups	2	1.881	.627	.716	.543
	Within groups	526	460.543	.876		
	Total	528	462.425			

The findings demonstrated that participants at Sharif University of Technology, University of Tehran and Kharazmi University in the three fields of study in basic sciences believed that English hegemony does not exist in the textbooks and instruction in the context of Iranian universities.

Table 6.
The themes of English hegemony

Themes	No of instructors	No of students	% of instructors	% of students
1. The absence of hegemonic attitudes in EAP textbooks and instruction	22/23 ^a	28/31 ^b	95	90
2. The EAP policies intending to serve world powers through English	1/23	4/31	4	12
3. English is needed for scientific progress	23/23	30/31	100	96
4. English is no different from other languages concerning its influence	22/23	25/31	95	80

a. Twenty-two students out of 23 students
b. Twenty-eight instructors out of 31 instructors

As stated above, interviews accompanied the quantitative data gathered through the questionnaire. The majority of the responses, i.e. 90 percent of the students and 95 percent of the instructors (See Table 6, theme 1), stressed the fact that English hegemony does not exist in the Iranian EAP textbooks and instruction. A student mentioned: "Such matters are only propaganda and the writers of the books are just using their own way of thinking in the books... like any other writer". Another student talked about roughly the same idea: "If we wrote Persian books for their universities, could we say that we were trying to exercise Persian imperialism? Of course we were not. It's just a matter of an international language, be it English, Persian or any other language" (theme 4). Instructors had similar ideas. An instructor stressed that in the past "French used to be the language of international communication. Of course you do not conceive of French hegemony in your mind, do you?" Maintaining that EAP textbooks have been written for the purpose of teaching science, she said that "the authors intend to convey information to the audience all over the world... be it English or any other... science is not the site for exercising hegemony" (themes 1 and 3).

A policy-maker stated that he did not believe in the existence of English hegemony or English imperialism in the EAP textbooks and instruction (instructors' methodology) in the Iranian university context. "I don't think it ever existed. The issue itself is not even discussed. I don't think there might be intentional or unintentional... inclination for English imperialism or hegemony in the Iranian EAP textbooks and instruction." Another policy-maker clarified that "the policy and economy of the superpowers like the USA have surly helped English to expand... It is natural that it has done so." He stressed the fact that international relations have to be made through English, but "as soon as it is expanded, the ownership will change. Many of the nations have used English for their domestic purposes based on their domestic criteria. Alongside globalization, localization has also taken place." He emphasized that attempts to implement globalization in Iran have been made by British Council and Iran-America Society, "but we are following our national interests and our own objectives after all. Of course, the norms are not appropriately shaped in the country, but the direction is [so]." He specifically mentioned that "this is not the case

that the students are serving the aims of imperialism.” Based on the perspectives of students, instructors and policy-makers, EAP textbooks are not sites for practicing hegemony in the Iranian university context. Rather, English is only used for scientific progress.

Concerning the third research question, we intended to see if the participants believe in the existence of ideology in the EAP textbooks and instruction in the context of Iranian universities. To this end, items 19, 22, 24 and 27 were included in the questionnaire: Item 19 investigated the presence of intentional ideology in EAP textbooks; item 22 asked whether EAP textbook publishers convey their ideology in EAP textbooks to gain economic advantages; item 24 asked whether superpowers transfer their culture to students through EAP textbooks; and item 27 asked whether it is necessary to change the implicit ideology in EAP textbooks. With regards to item 19, 209 students and 10 instructors disagreed with the presence of a directed ideology in EAP textbooks, while only 56 students and 3 instructors agreed with it. Item 22 asked whether EAP publishers convey their ideology in EAP textbooks to gain economic advantage, with which 199 students and 7 instructors disagreed, while 49 students and 4 instructors believed that EAP publishers do. For item 24, which addressed the superpowers transferring ideology through EAP textbooks, 226 students and 7 instructors disagreed, while 81 students and 3 instructors agreed. Finally, with respect to item 27, the necessity of changing the implicit ideology in EAP textbooks, 206 students and 11 instructors disagreed, in contrast to 45 students and 1 instructor who agreed.

Table 7.
Summary of the respondents' perspectives towards ideology

Item	Item summary	Agreement	Disagreement	% ^a Agreement	% ^b disagreement	Total (including missing responses)
19	Presence of intentional ideology in EAP textbooks	P: 3	P: 10	P: 17	P: 58	P: 17
		S: 56	S: 209	S: 15	S: 56	S: 370
22	EAP publishers putting EAP ideology in textbooks/ instruction	P: 4	P: 7	P: 22	P: 38	P: 18
		S: 49	S: 199	S: 12	S: 52	S: 381
24	Superpowers transferring culture via EAP textbooks/instruction	P: 3	P: 7	P: 15	P: 35	P: 20
		S: 81	S: 226	S: 17	S: 49	S: 455
27	Necessity of changing implicit ideology in EAP textbooks	P: 1	P: 11	P: 5	P: 64	P: 17
		S: 45	S: 206	S: 13	S: 60	S: 342

a. Percentage of the instructors and students who agreed
b. Percentage of the instructors and students who did not agree

To analyze whether there is a discrepancy between students and instructors regarding ideology, the chi-square procedures were run for each item, rendering the following values: $\chi^2_{19}(1, 387) = 0.97, p < .05$; $\chi^2_{22}(1, 399) = 0.45, p < .05$; $\chi^2_{24}(1, 475) = 0.42, p < .05$; $\chi^2_{27}(1, 359) = 0.82, p < .05$. The values demonstrated that the students and instructors had similar perspectives regarding the above items. Since the participants came from three different majors, ANOVA procedures were run for the four items of ideology to see whether the students' and instructors' perspectives diverge or converge. Results of the ANOVA procedures are reported as follows:

Table 8.
One-way analysis of variance for ideology

Item	Source	df	SS	MS	F	p
19	Between groups	2	3.056	1.019	1.186	.315
	Within groups	382	328.086	.859		
	Total	384	331.142			
22	Between groups	2	1.667	.833	.984	.375
	Within groups	381	322.768	.847		
	Total	383	324.435			
24	Between groups	2	2.372	.791	.842	.471
	Within groups	465	436.430	.939		
	Total	467	438.802			
27	Between groups	2	3.385	1.128	1.305	.273
	Within groups	345	298.386	.865		
	Total	347	301.771			

It is evident that the participants in the universities in the fields of Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry believed in the absence of any intentional ideology in the textbooks and instruction in the context of Iranian universities.

As explicated above in the case of questions 1 and 2, the quantitative data were accompanied by interviews. Common perspectives were pinpointed from the recurring themes, based on Patton's Maximum Variation Sampling. Only a small percentage (19 percent of the students and 4 percent of the instructors) believed in the presence of any ideology whether of intentional or unintentional nature. Upon interviews with the respondents, a student said "I haven't even thought that there might be an ideology in the text... I don't think this is true... How is it possible for a writer teaching an EAP book to insert a kind of ideology in it?" (Table 9, themes 1.1. and 1.2.). Asked whether the international publishers convey their ideologies in the EAP textbooks for economic advantage, another student mentioned that "rarely is it possible... EAP textbooks and the way

they are taught to us follow the science of physics... not anyone's ideology." (Table 9, theme 1.2.) An instructor expressed the fact that students ought to "master reading comprehension skill... in my point of view there is not a slightest intention of incorporating a certain type of ideology in EAP textbooks and the way we teach them" (Table 9, theme 2.2). Still another instructor reiterated that the EAP texts are "compiled after discussion with other members in the department of mathematics and the aim is to familiarize students with the vocabulary or methods of translation... We just teach that... No type of ideology is ever intended" (theme 2.2.).

Table 9.
The themes of the ideology

The themes	Sub-themes	No. of instructors	No. of students	% of instructors	% of students
1. Intentional ideology in EAP textbooks	1.1. Intentional ideology in locally-published EAP textbooks	1/23 ^a	6/31 ^b	4	19
	1.2. Intentional ideology in internationally-published EAP textbooks	9/23	10/31	39	32
2. Publishers putting ideology in EAP textbooks and instruction	2.1. Ideology in instructor guides for basic sciences books	0/23	2/31	0	6
	2.2. Hidden ideology agenda for EAP textbooks and instruction	3/23	7/31	13	22
3. Culture transfer via EAP textbooks and instruction	————	1/23	2/31	4	6
4. The need to change implicit ideology in EAP textbooks	————	3/23	5/31	13	16
a. One instructor out of 23 instructors					
b. Six students out of 31 students					

Policy-makers were interviewed on the same themes, too. Policy-maker A said that in the books published by the Iranian publishers:

"There is no consideration of such delicacies as ideologies. The EAP books are mainly published on the basis of consensus and idiosyncrasy and rudimentary plans. There is no consideration of ideology at all, of any type, imperialistic, anti-imperialistic, critical, non-critical... Because they have usually been skill-based... But in the books published overseas, there is definitely the issue of ide-

ology [implanted] in them and there is no doubt about it. For example, English for Hospitality Management may contain chains of different hotels, which does not seem to be incidental.”

He believes that in the context of Iranian universities there is no plan to include a certain ideology in the EAP textbooks, and such concepts as ideology have never been taken care of in the agenda of the national publishers.

The analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data demonstrated that the students, instructors and policy-makers did not believe in the presence of ideology in the EAP textbooks, whether implicit or explicit. Furthermore, they did not believe in the notion of the superpowers trying to transfer their culture to the students in the Iranian EAP context through the textbook, and therefore, they did not deem it necessary to change the ideology however implicitly expressed in the textbooks.

Discussion

Drawing on the tenets of critical theory (Adorno, 2006; Horkheimer, 1972; Marcuse, 2013) and critical pedagogy (Giroux, 1988, 1994, 2010), Critical English for Academic Purposes (CEAP) strives to invite students to challenge and/or change the education they receive in the context of universities (Benesch, 2001). Taking the basic tenets of CEAP, power relations/policies, English hegemony/dominance and ideology, we tried to answer whether students, instructors and policy-makers in ELT have convergent/divergent perspectives.

The present study was focused on the basic tenets of CEAP to open the possibility of questioning the status quo in the Iranian universities. Scrutinizing the critical issues in universities can help raise awareness and create understanding of the ideology of the oppressors to be able to question the status quo (Darder et al., 2003; Freire, 1990). Questioning the status quo gives the academia an analytic lens to think about the dominance of English on other countries in terms of culture, politics and economy (Naysmith, 1987) because of the “establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages” (Philipson, 1992, p. 47). Critical pedagogy helps conjoin knowledge, authority and power (Giroux, 2013) for the learners to think, reflect and interact with their immediate environments, including academia, to make knowledge appropriate for the local context (Pennycook, 2017).

Results for the first research question showed that students, instructors and policy-makers do not believe in the active participation of students in policy-making, whether directly or indirectly, in the context of EAP textbooks and instruction. This is in line with Benesch’s assertion (2012, p. 1) that student voice is often not heard in academia. She contends that the curriculum at the EAP level is not negotiated with the students. The results are also congruent with Atai and Mazlum’s (2013) study. Based on the study, a gap existed between planning and practice level making policy-making top-down and centralized to

the extent that local policy-makers are not allowed a chance to participate. These studies show that the practitioners (i.e., students and instructors) are not asked for their ideas regarding the EAP policies. If they were included in EAP policy-making, the gap between the planning and practice would be bridged.

As for the second research question, results demonstrated that the students, instructors and the policy-makers believed that English hegemony does not exist in the EAP textbooks and instruction in the Iranian universities. The findings do not agree with Naysmith's argument (1987, p. 3) that ELT "has become part of the process whereby one part of the world has become politically, economically and culturally dominated by another" and with Phillipson's position (1992, p. 47) that the "establishment and continuous reconstitution of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages" maintain English dominance. A reason for this, according to the beliefs of a policy-maker, is that while the countries are moving towards globalization, which is believed to be the root of English hegemony, localization has also occurred. He asserts that "many of the countries are using English for their own local purposes", since local standards have made English be used for national objectives. "After all, we are following our own national interests and aims" he contended. Therefore, in our country, where localization of English has occurred, English hegemony has paled. The perspectives of the participants in this study demonstrated that in the Iranian EAP context, English has been used for the development of science, which is an instance of localization.

Regarding the third research question, as the quantitative and qualitative procedures demonstrated, the participants did not believe in the presence of a certain ideology in the EAP textbooks and instruction, nor did they believe in the notion of superpowers imposing their own culture on the students. It contradicts Pennycook's (2000, p. 107) citing of Crystal (1987), that the global spread of English deals necessarily with the political and ideological notions inherent in it. It also goes against the mainstream stance in the Iranian educational system that the superpowers try to impose their culture and ideology on the minds of students through the English textbooks and that English has always been a "threat to the Persian language and Islamic culture" (Khubchandani, 2008, cited in Farhady, Sajady Hezaveh, & Hedayati 2010). However, as a policy-maker believes, the EAP books published in Iran are written based on the skills-oriented approach and "they take no consideration of any sort of ideology, be it imperialistic or anti-imperialistic, be it ideological or non-ideological, critical or non-critical." He contends that while the books published in foreign countries undoubtedly follow certain ideological positions, as is the case with English for Hospitality Management where some hotels and modes of entertainment might be intentionally mentioned, the books published in Iran are mainly written based on personal rudimentary insights which have given the reading skill a primary importance. Upon the interviews with a number of instructors and students, they also believed that the books are written for the sole purpose of enabling the students to read and that "instructors are given freedom to compile texts or write the passages of their own with no supervision of any sort of authority." That is the reason why students, instructors and

some policy-makers believe in the non-existence of a certain type of ideology in the EAP textbooks and instruction in the Iranian universities.

Furthermore, as Khany and Tarlani-Aliabadi (2016, p. 79) mention, the Iranian EAP context has focused on the academics “teaching a prescribed set of academic goals” where questions are not raised for the status quo. Based on their study, classrooms are not sites for students’ voice and no alternatives are there to be heard. Materials in the Iranian EAP context are passed down to instructors with no reflection thereby violating the notion of Freirian situatedness. If there was students’ involvement in materials development, they could reach higher levels of proficiency (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001). After all, not engaging students in dialogues in academic context leads to producing compliant persons which is “unethical” (Freire, 1970).

Conclusion

The present study delved into the perspectives of participants at both the authority level, policy-makers, and the practice level (i.e. instructors and students). It revealed that the participants did not believe in the active participation of students and instructors in EAP policy-makings, nor did they believe in English hegemony and certain dominant ideologies in EAP textbooks and instruction. The study concentrated on the fields of basic sciences of mathematics, chemistry and physics and the same design can be replicated to include other fields such as the medical sciences, to arrive at a more representative picture nation-wide. Further studies can include biology, which is another field within the basic sciences, humanities as well as engineering fields and compare the results with this study. This study can raise awareness among students, instructors and policy-makers so that they may pay more attention to the critical issues within EAP curriculum. Therefore, students may provide feedback on textbook selection and instruction more critically. Through feedback they receive, instructors may provide the students with varied EAP sources, which are geared more closely to the students’ needs and interests. In other words, instructors may have more freedom in the process of EAP textbook selection, even choosing from the internationally-published EAP textbooks.

References

- Adorno, T. W. (2006). *History and freedom: lectures 1964-1965*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Afshar, H. S., & Movassagh, H. (2016). EAP education in Iran: Where does the problem lie? Where are we heading? *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 22, 132-151.
- Atai, M. R. (2002). EAP curriculum planning in Iran: an incoherent educational experience. *Special Issue of the Journal of Faculty of Letters and Humanities, Teacher Training University*, 9(3), 17-34.
- Atai, M. R., & Fatahi-Majd, M. (2014). Exploring the practices and cognitions of Iranian ELT instructors and subject teachers in teaching EAP reading comprehension. *English for Specific Purposes*, 33, 27-38.

- Atai, M. R., & Mazlum, F. (2013). English language teaching curriculum in Iran: planning and practice. *Curriculum Journal*, 24(3), 389-411.
- Atai, M. R., & Nazari, O. (2011). Exploring reading comprehension needs of Iranian EAP students of health information management (HIM): a triangulated approach. *System*, 39(1), 30-43.
- Atai, M. R., & Tahririan, M. H. (2003). Assessment of the status of ESP in the current Iranian higher educational system. *Proceedings of LSP: Communication, culture and knowledge conference*. Guilford, England: University of Surrey.
- Azimi, A. (2007). Recent initiatives in schools effectiveness and improvement: the case of the Islamic republic of Iran. In T. Townsend (ed.), *International handbook of the school effectiveness and improvement: Review, reflection and reframing* (pp. 379-395). New York: Springer.
- Benesch, S. (2001). *Critical English for academic purposes: theory, politics, and practice*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Bhatia, V. (2002). A generic view of academic discourse. In J. Flowerdew (ed.), *Academic discourse* (pp. 21-39). London: Longman.
- Cherryholmes, C. (1988). *Power and criticism: Poststructural investigations in education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Cooper, R. L. (1989). *Language planning and social change*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Crystal, D. (1987). *The Cambridge encyclopedia of language*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Darder, A., Baltodano, M., & Torres, R. D. (2003). *The critical pedagogy reader*. Hove, UK: Psychology Press.
- Englund, T. (2000). Rethinking democracy and education: towards an education of deliberative citizens. *Journal of Curriculum studies*, 32(2), 305-313.
- Farhady, H., Sajadi Hezaveh, F., & Hedayati, H. (2010). Reflections of foreign language education in Iran. *The Electronic Journal for English as a Second Language*, 13(4), 1-18.
- Fenton-Smith, B. (2014). The place of Benesch's critical English for academic purposes. *Journal of Academic Language & Learning*, 8(3), 23-33.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Seabury Press.
- Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Giroux, H. A. (1988). *Teachers as intellectuals: Toward a critical pedagogy of learning*. California: Greenwood Publishing Group.
- Giroux, H. A. (1994). *Disturbing pleasures: Learning popular culture*. New York: Routledge.
- Giroux, H. A. (2010). Teachers as transformative intellectuals. In K. Ryan, & J. M. Cooper (eds.), *Kaleidoscope: Contemporary and classic readings in education* (pp. 35-40). Boston: Centage Learning.
- Gray, J. (2002). The global coursebook in English language teaching. In D. Block, & D. Cameron (Eds.), *Globalization and language teaching* (pp. 151-167). London: Routledge.
- Habermas, J., & McCarthy, T. (1985). *The theory of communicative action (Vol. 2)*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Hayati, M. (2008). Teaching English for special purposes in Iran: problems and suggestions. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 7(2), 149-164.
- Horkheimer, M. (1972). *Critical theory: Selected essays (Vol. 1)*. Edinburgh, UK: A&C Black.
- Hyland, K., & Shaw, P. (2016). *The Routledge Handbook of English for Academic Purposes*. New York: Routledge.

- Kaplan, R. B., & Baldauf, R. B. (1997). *Language planning from practice to theory (Vol. 108)*. Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Kennedy, C. (2012). Challenges for language policy, language and development. In H. Coleman (ed.), *Dreams and realities: Developing countries and the English language* (pp. 24-38). British Council.
- Khany, R., & Tarlani-Aliabadi, H. (2016). Studying power relations in an academic setting: teachers' and students' perceptions of EAP classes in Iran. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 21*, 72-85.
- Khubchandani, L. (2008). Language policy and education in the Indian subcontinent. In N. Hornberger (ed.), *Encyclopedia of language and education, 2nd edition* (pp. 393-404). New York: Springer Science+Business Media LLC.
- Kincheloe, J. (2008). *Critical pedagogy primer (2nd ed.)*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Laufer, B., & Hulstijn, J. (2001). Incidental vocabulary acquisition in a second language: the construct of task-induced involvement. *Applied Linguistics, 22*(1), 1-26.
- Lockett, A. (1999). From the general to the specific: What the EAP tutor should know about academic discourse. In H. Boo, & P. Luford (Eds.), *Academic standards and expectations: The role of EAP* (pp. 49-58). Nottingham, UK: Nottingham University Press.
- Marcuse, H. (2013). *Towards a critical theory of society: collected papers of Herbert Marcuse (Vol. 2)*. London, UK: Routledge.
- Mazdayasna, G. & Tahririan, M. (2008). Developing a profile of the ESP needs of Iranian students: the case of students of nursing and midwifery. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes, 7*, 277-289.
- Mouzelis, N. (2000). The subjectivist-objectivist divide: against transcendence. *Sociology, 34*(4), 741-762.
- Naysmith, J. (1987). English as imperialism? *Language Issues, 1*(2), 3-5.
- Nekvapil, J. (2012). The history and theory of language planning. In E. Hinkel (ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning* (pp. 871-887). London: Routledge.
- Patton, M. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Pennycook, A. (1997). Vulgar pragmatism, critical pragmatism, and EAP. *English for Specific Purposes, 16*(4), 253-269.
- Pennycook, A. (2000). English, politics, ideology. From Colonial Celebration to postcolonial performativity. In T. Ricento, *Ideology, politics and language policies: Focus on English* (pp. 107-121). Philadelphia, USA: John Benjamins B. V.
- Pennycook, A. (2017). *The cultural politics of English as an international language*. New York: Routledge.
- Phillipson, R. (1992). *Linguistic imperialism*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Riazi, A. (2005). The four language stages in the history of Iran. In A. Lin, & P. W. Martin (eds.), *Decolonization, globalization, language-in-education policy and practice* (pp. 98-114). Bristol, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- Richards, J. C. (1993). Beyond the text book: The role of commercial materials in language teaching. *RELC Journal, 24*(1), 1-14.
- Swales, J. M., Ahmad, U., Chang, Y., Chavez, D., Dressen, D., & Seymour, R. (1998). Consider this: The role of imperatives in scholarly writing. *Applied Linguistics, 19*(1), 97-121.
- Thornbury, S., & Meddings, L. (2001). Coursebooks: the roaring in the chimney. *Modern English Teacher, 10*(3), 11-13.

Appendix 1

Item characteristics			
Items	Power	English hegemony	Ideology
1	.195	.599	.273
2	.064	.329	.367
3	.358	-.290	.314
4	.204	.698	.198
5	.368	.431	.201
6	.326	.467	.225
7	.139	.094	.323
8	-.047	.282	.275
9	.731	-.140	.023
10	.748	.034	.169
11	.608	.219	.259
12	.525	.171	.356
13	.710	.104	.234
14	.611	.280	.118
15	.043	.745	.346
16	.059	.683	.381
17	-.304	-.398	.289
18	.113	-.282	.512
19	.274	.354	.497
20	.601	.072	.452
21	.390	-.223	.321
22	.198	.293	.533
23	.374	.412	.291
24	.033	.132	.731
25	.302	-.127	.391
26	.541	.254	.121
27	.001	.313	.539

Extraction method: Principle component analysis

Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

Appendix 2 Descriptive statistics

Item	Number	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
1	617	1	4	2.31	.944
4	715	1	4	2.33	.997
5	588	1	4	2.39	.910
6	627	1	4	2.43	.940
9	493	1	4	2.55	.841
10	442	1	4	2.51	.839
11	441	1	4	2.45	.828
12	384	1	4	2.47	.810
19	444	1	4	2.45	.928
22	445	1	4	2.47	.921
24	531	1	4	2.55	.973
27	394	1	4	2.36	.945