
Teachers-Learners' Evaluation of Modular EFL Program (A Course in Deeds and Documents Translation)

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Abstract

Modular EFL Program exercised nationwide by the University of Applied Science & Technology is an innovation in Iranian educational system which has managed to offer specialized language education in a specific field entitled as Audio-Visual Translation Course. Contrary to significant academic achievements, the program has been subject to continuous scholarly criticisms. However, no explicit empirical studies can be traced on both internal and external validity measures as well as on the extent of compatibility of the course with the standards and criteria of scientific educational program. In a bid to address these issues, this study was conducted to evaluate the program from the perspectives of both the respective teachers and students. The teachers' perspectives were examined on the basis of five fundamental criteria including 1) Admission Requirements, 2) Program Content, 3) Program Resources, 4) Program Instruction/Evaluation Methods, and 5) Graduation Requirements/Employment Requirements. The students' perspectives addressed their needs and problems in four skills and also their viewpoints toward the program content and its efficiency. Methodologically, the study is based on the requirements of both qualitative and quantitative research paradigms. To this end, a sample of 30 teachers enjoying at least five years of offering the course attempted a 22-item Likert-scaled questionnaire accommodating subcategories of the five macro criteria followed by open-ended written protocol commenting spaces for qualitative data. A sample of 200 students was also given a 125-item-need analysis questionnaire followed by three open-ended course evaluation questions. The findings revealed controversies over all the macro-criteria and compatibility of the program with these well-established standards; suggesting exercise of comprehensive revisits and modifications on all the aspects of the program as a whole.

Key Words: Modular Education-EFL Education- Program Evaluation- Translation Courses

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1. Introduction

Language education program in Iran is run by both public and private sectors. Although the Ministry of Education has a full supervision over the public institutions, private sector is mainly managed on financial basis and is viewed as a business opportunity for its stakeholders. Therefore, it is probable that such organizations lack necessary qualifications for a successful educational program. Modular Language Educational Program, implemented by the University of Applied Science, is claimed to satisfy the need for a better job opportunity through teaching various modular courses, when accompanied by each other, build up the required skills which at last lead to an official certificate. Contrary to the claims made and although a substantial amount of time, money and effort are allocated for teaching and learning process, it seems that neither students nor the instructors are much pleased with the outcomes of the programs presented at this university. This study is confined to two of the programs, which are namely *Audio-Visual Translation and Deeds and Documents Translation*. Given that since the establishment of these two courses there has been no previous research carried out to evaluate their effectiveness, the researcher feels that there is a gap in the relevant literature which needs to be filled. Thus, she aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the two courses as well as the extent of their compatibility with standards of a conventional educational program, from the perspectives of both instructors and students.

1.1. Translation of Deeds and Documents

The Translation of Deeds and Documents undergraduate course of Modular language learning program aims to provide students with set of practical skills in deeds and documents translation. It also enables them to undertake professional deeds and document translation activities in translation agencies and documentation centers. This course is defined in nine distinguished modules which are as follows:

- Module1. Basic
- Module2. Reading comprehension
- Module3. Conversation module
- Module4. Principles and methods of translation

Module5. Translation of legal documents

Module6. Translation of commercial documents

Module7. Translation of political documents

Module8. Internship

Module9. General courses

1.2.Language Education Programs

Generally speaking, program is defined as series of activities performed leading to a pre-determined purpose. More specifically, an educational program is identified as a set of “...courses linked with some common goal or end product. (Lynch, 1997, p.2). There are some dimensions which address the quality management in educational systems in general and language educational systems in particular. Morris (1994) cited by Richards (n.d.)Characterizes eight factors for educational programs:

1. There are clearly stated educational goals
2. There is a well-planned, balanced and organized program which meets the needs of its students
3. Systematic and identifiable processes exist for determining educational needs in the school and placing them in order of priority.
4. There is a commitment to learning, and an expectation that students will do well.
5. There is a high degree of staff involvement in developing goals and making decisions.
6. There is a motivated and cohesive teaching force with good team spirit.
7. Administrators are concerned with the teachers’ professional development and are able to make the best use of their skill and experience
8. The school’s programs are regularly reviewed and progress towards their goals is evaluated.” (p.4)

Simultaneously, Richards (n.d.) refers to some aspects that need to be constantly examined in order to maintain the quality of teaching and learning in language educational programs aligned with standards. They are "... design of the curriculum, the quality of instructional materials, the role of tests, provisions for teacher training, and the kinds of administrative support provided by schools and educational institutions." (Richards, n.d. ,p.1). Referring to the large volume of research done in reaching methods and techniques, he also criticizes this excessive attention paid to detailed aspects of language teaching and suggests a shift towards the context of teaching and more specifically to the quality teaching. Therefore, he identifies four factors including institutional factors, teacher factors, teaching factors and Learning factors, which play an important role in the success of language teaching program. .

- *Institutional factors*: a sense of mission; a strategic plan; quality assurance mechanisms; flexible organizational frame work; good internal communications; professional treatment of teachers; and the teaching context
- *Teacher factors*: skills and qualifications; and support for teachers
- *Teaching factors*: teaching model and principles; and evaluating teaching
- *Learning factors*: understanding of the course; views of learning; learning styles; motivation; and support

1.3.Program Evaluation

There has been a notable attention to evaluation and its uses in recent years. Evaluation research varies depending on who carries out the study, which methods are used and how findings are implemented. Murphy (2000) defines evaluation as a way to determine the degree in which a program is effective in terms of its objectives. At the same time, it gives support to stakeholders in decision making for program improvement through careful analysis of information gathered. Kiely (2009 , p.99) asserts that " evaluation has evolved from focused studies of teaching methods inspired by language learning theories to a curriculum management enterprise with a focus on quality assurance and enhancement".

Lynch (1996) distinguishes the difference between evaluation and assessment in terms of scope and purpose. He argues that evaluation can draw on assessment tools such as tests and many other instruments such as interviews. Noting the purposes for which assessment instruments can be used, he defines the purpose of evaluation as "...the systematic attempt to gather information in order to make judgments or decisions." (p. 2)

Worthen, Sanders & Fitzpatrick (1997) provide a more detailed definition for program evaluation which is as follows:

"...evaluation is the identification, clarification, and application of defensible criteria to determine an evaluation object's value (worth or merit), quality, utility, effectiveness, or significance in relation to those criteria. Evaluation uses inquiry and judgments methods, including (1) determining standards for judging, (2) collecting relevant information, and (3) applying the standards to determine value, quality, utility, effectiveness, or significance. It leads to recommendations intended to optimize the evaluation object interrelation to its intended purpose(s)." (p.5)

Becket & Brookes (2006) use the term "quality measurement" instead of evaluation. They propose a number of key elements which have to be identified in order to assess higher education quality:

- Internal and external stakeholder perspectives
- Education as a system of inputs, processes and outputs
- Quality dimensions
- Qualitative versus quantitative data
- Quality snapshot or longitudinal benchmarking

1.4. Language Program Evaluation and its Benefits

Balint (2009) asserts that there are abundant publications in general educational program evaluations compared with language specific evaluation studies. However, there has recently

been a substantial amount of books and in journal articles on language program evaluation whose dates imply the fact that the *Language Program Evaluation* is a recent issue to a certain extent. He further refers to two outstanding articles which have had a remarkable influence it today's language program evaluation approaches. The first one is carried out by Bachman (1981) cited by Balint(2009), which supports curriculum development through administrating formative evaluation held by curriculum planners. The second study is conducted by Long (1984) cited by Balint(2009), which at that time altered the perspectives from product-oriented language program evaluation approaches to the Process-oriented ones. Cumming (1988) holds an "idealistic stance" about second language program evaluation. He suggests that the value of language program evaluations is higher than merely performing a service for those who are in charge and being paid. In his perspective, evaluation studies are tasks with an instructive nature that can be useful for programs', teachers' and learners' development. Cumming has reviewed numerous evaluation studies and developed seven "educational benefits" which are namely: validating educational innovations, informing program development, illuminating the perspectives of learners, clarifying educationalrationales, bringing to light social inequalities, and appreciating the art of educating. Following is the summary of these benefits:

- Validating Education Innovations
- Informing Program Development
- Illuminating the Perspectives of Learners
- Clarifying an educational rationale
- Bringing to light social inequalities
- Appreciating the art of educating

1.5.Approaches to program Evaluation

Hogan (2007) has presented a historical overview of program evaluation approaches between late 1700's and 21 centuries. Following is the summary of evaluation approaches emerged in 21 century:

1.5.1. Objectives-Oriented Approach

In the objective-oriented approach the program goals and objectives are defined, and then an evaluation study is conducted to find out whether they have been achieved. (Hogan, 2007).

1.5.2. Management-Oriented Approach (CIPP)

The leading management-oriented approach is CIPP (Content, Input, Process and Product) evaluation which was developed by Stufflebeam(1971).Context evaluation is a situational analysis which is concerned with the environmental, Social and cultural needs of the program. Input evaluation deals with curriculum plan, strategies and resources which are supposed to accomplish program objectives. Process evaluation involves implementation of the program and is mainly concerned with giving feedback for revision in case of insufficient execution of the program. After all, product evaluation examines the success of a program and determines the extent by which the primary identified needs have been met as well as the program's unintended effects.(Hogan, 2007)

1.5.3. Consumer-Oriented Approach

The distinguishing feature of a consumer-Oriented approach is that it is used by individuals, Independent agencies or government agencies who aim to gather information about an educational or any other human service products in order to inform its potential consumers. (Hogan, 2007)

1.5.4. Expertise-Oriented Approach

In the expertise-oriented approach a team of expertise, judge the program based on their perceptions and give suggestions for the improvement of a program. One disadvantage to this approach is the experts' perceptions which may be personally biased and conservative.

1.5.5. Adversary-Oriented Approach

“The adversary-oriented evaluation approach utilizes a judicial process in examining a program.” (Hogan, 2007, p.8) The evaluation is conducted through a public discussion of the opposite views towards a program, which finally ends in a mutual agreement upon the program.

1.5.6. Participant-Oriented Approach

Zukoski and Luluquisen (2002) cited by (Hogan,2007)define participant-oriented approach as“...a partnership approach to evaluation in which stakeholders actively engage in developing the evaluation and all phases of its implementation. Those who have the most at stake in the program — partners, program beneficiaries, funders and key decision makers — play active roles. “ (p.1)

1.5.7. CIRO evaluation Approach

This approach refers to the evaluation of four distinct aspects of a program which are: Context, Input, Reaction and Outcome which all are abbreviated as CIRO. Context evaluation deals with the detection of educational needs and program objectives. Input evaluation seeks for the evaluation of educational equipments, the design of the program and the way it is delivered.Reaction evaluation is concerned with quality of learner’s experience. Finally, outcome evaluation observes the learners’ attainment in terms of changes in their knowledge and skills, success in their career and the overall performance of the institution.(Hogan,2007)

1.5.8. Kirkpatrick’s Evaluation Approach

Kirkpatrick’s evaluation approach considers four levels for a program evaluation. According to his model, the evaluation should be started with first level and then moves to the other levels sequentially. Level one focuses on learners’ reactions to the learning and program (Reactions). Level two looks for the skills, knowledge and attitude obtained through attending the program (Learning). Level three concentrates on the transfer of what acquired in the previous stage to their jobs (Transfer). Finally, level four focuses on both individual and organizational reinforcement (Results). (Hogan, 2007)

1.5.9. Phillips’ Evaluation Approach

This approach is the modified version of Kirkpatrick’s four-level evaluation approach which is suggested by Phillips(1996)cited by (Hogan,2007).He has added a fifth-level to the previous four-level approach which aims to calculate the financial contribution of a program or as he calls it : Return on Investment(ROI).

1.5.10. Current and Future Status of Program Evaluation

Worthen, Sanders and Fitzpatrick (2004) has identified 12 factors which will have influence on the statues of program evaluation in future. Some of these factors are: Increased legitimacy of internal evaluation, a shift towards combining qualitative and quantitative methods, preference for multi-method evaluation, development of theory-based evaluation, Advances Intechology, increased use of alternative assessment methods, etc. (pp. 49-50) cited by Hogan(2007).

2. Method

This research study was conducted with a randomly selected participation of 30 teachers and 200 students attending Translation of Deeds and Documents Course in 2011-2012 and 2012-2013 at University of Applied Science. To collect the required data, a teachers' questionnaire as a modified version of a curriculum evaluation questionnaire for the Private Training Institution, Division of Institutional and Industrial Education, Department of Education in Newfoundland, Canada was employed. In order to ease the data analysis procedure, open-ended questions had been accompanied by a Likert Scale (Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree). As for the students' questionnaire, an amalgamate of both "Needs analysis questionnaire for non-English-background students" used at the university of Auckland, New Zealand (from Gravatt, Richards, and Lewis 1997, cited by J.C. Richards, 2009) and the "Course" evaluation section of "a student appraisal form" from Department of English, City University of Hong Kong was implemented.(J.C. Richards, 2009) was used. In order to avoid any misunderstanding the questionnaire was translated in to the participants' native language (Farsi).

3. Findings

3.1. Teachers' Data

Table 1 displays the answers given by the teachers to the relevant items in order to probe whether Modular English Language Educational Program is aligned with standards of an effective educational program. 41.8 of the respondents (36.1 + 5.7= 41.8) believe that the

Modular English Language Educational Program is aligned with standards of an effective educational program.

Table 1. Frequencies and Percentages Modular English Language Educational Program

| | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| Strongly Disagree | 64 | 10.5 |
| Disagree | 186 | 30.5 |
| Neutral | 104 | 17.1 |
| Agree | 220 | 36.1 |
| Strongly Agree | 35 | 5.7 |
| Total | 609 | 100.0 |

On the other hand, 41 percent (30.5+10.5) believe that the Modular English Language Educational Program is not aligned with standards of an effective educational program. About 17 percent of the respondents have expressed no idea about the issue under study. Figure 1 displays the above mentioned percentages.

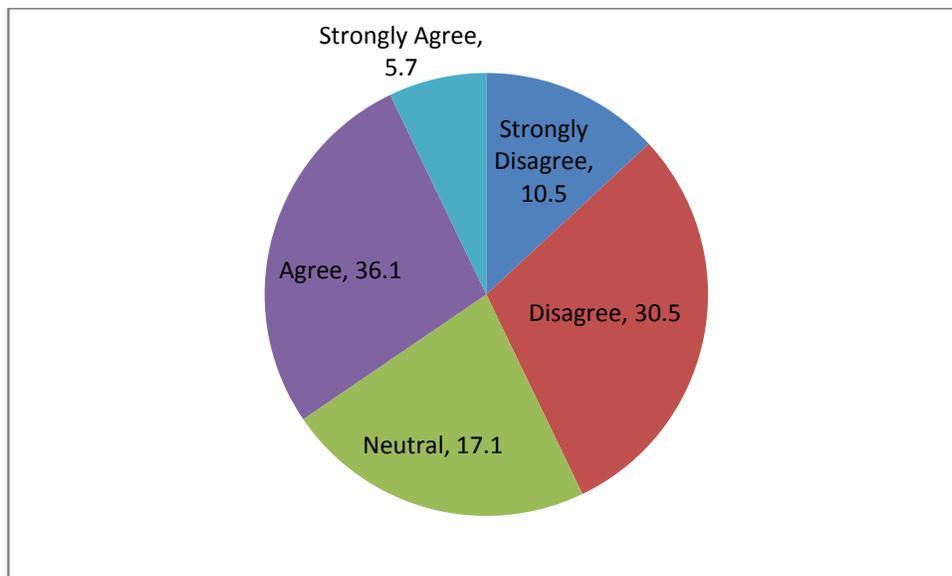


Figure 1. Percentages modular English language educational program

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 1 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square ($\chi^2(4) = 204.90, P = .000 < .05$)

indicates that the differences observed in Table 1 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are not obtained by chance. Based on these results, the first null-hypothesis was **rejected**; indicating that the differences between those who hold positive and negative stances are not statistically significant.

Table 2. Analysis of Chi-Square

| | CHOICES |
|---|----------------------------|
| Chi-Square | 204.900^a |
| df | 4 |
| Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 121.8. | |

Given the nature of the dimensions of the first research question, six sub-questions addressing the respective dimensions of the program were statistically tested in the form of respective null hypotheses.

3.1.1. Minor research question 1

Are the teachers consistent in their description of Modular English Language Educational Program?

As displayed in Table 3 majority of the respondents, i.e. 41.67 percent of the teachers disagree with the descriptions provided on Modular English Language Educational. On the other hand 36.66 percent agree with the provided descriptions. 21.67 percent are neutral.

Table 3. Frequencies and Percentages Modular English Language Educational Description

| Program Description | Frequency | Percent |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 6 | 10.00 |
| Disagree | 19 | 31.67 |
| Neutral | 13 | 21.67 |
| Agree | 20 | 33.33 |
| Strongly Agree | 2 | 3.33 |
| Total | 60 | 100.00 |

Figure 2 displays the above mentioned percentages.

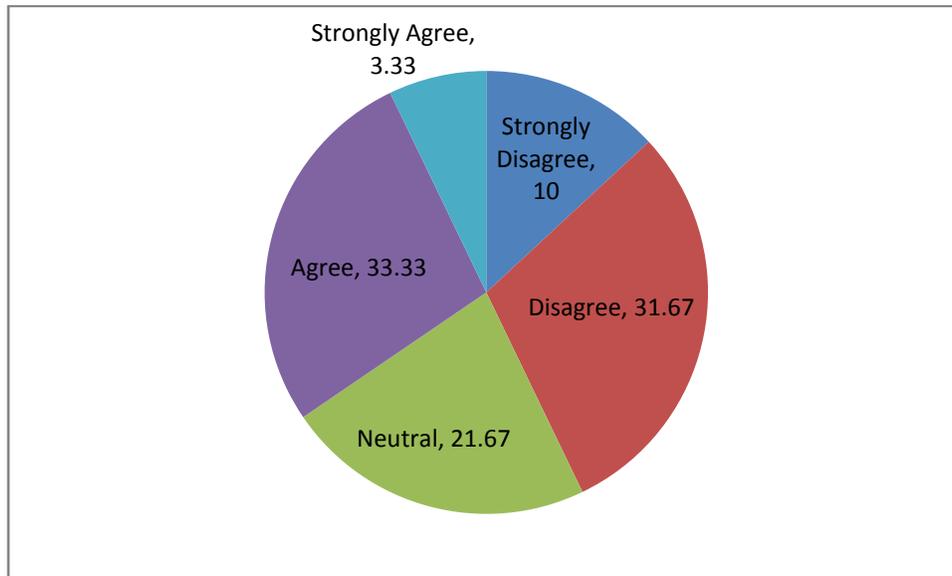


Figure 2. Percentages modular English language educational program description

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 3 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square ($\chi^2(4) = 20.83, P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the differences observed in Table 3 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are not obtained by chance. Based on these results it can be concluded that the first minor null-hypothesis addressing the extent of consistency of the course description is also **rejected**. Majority of the teachers believe that the provided descriptions do not hold true for Modular English Language Educational Program. It means that what is described as an area of a course is different from what actually exists.

Table 4. Analysis of Chi-Square Description of Modular English Language Educational Program

| | CHOICES |
|--|---------------------------|
| Chi-Square | 20.833^a |
| Df | 4 |
| Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 12. | |

3.1.2. Minor research question 2

Do Modular English Language Educational Program admission requirements meet standards of an effective educational program?

Based on the information displayed in Table 5 it can be concluded that majority of the respondents, i.e. 22.88 percent, believe that the Modular English Language Educational Program admission requirements do not meet standards of an effective educational program. On the other hand 34.52 percent of the respondents hold the opposite view. 22.62 percent are neutral.

Table 5. Frequencies and Percentages Modular English Language Admission Requirements

| Admission Requirements | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree | 11 | 13.10 |
| Disagree | 25 | 29.76 |
| Neutral | 19 | 22.62 |
| Agree | 23 | 27.38 |
| Strongly Agree | 6 | 7.14 |
| Total | 84 | 100 |

Figure 3 displays the percentages as appeared in Table 5.

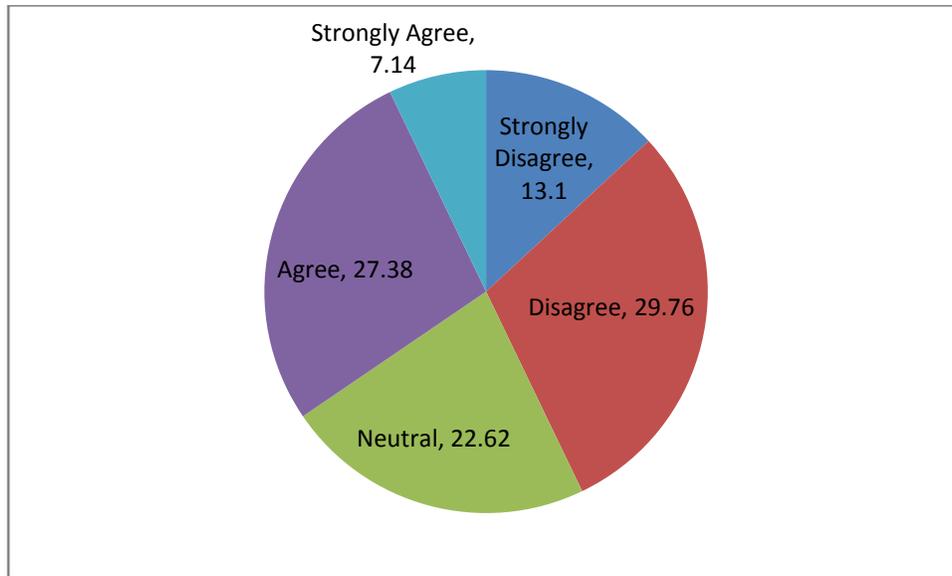


Figure 3. Percentages modular English language admission requirements

An analysis of chi-square was run to probe the second Minor research questions as the alignment of Modular English Language Admission Requirements with the standards of an effective educational program. The chi-square observed value of 15.52 ($P = .004 < .05$) indicates that the frequencies and percentages observed in Table 5 show significant differences between the respondents' views. Thus, it can be concluded that the data fail to reject the second minor null-hypothesis addressing the Program admission requirements; the admission requirements not aligned with the present standards of an effective educational program.

Table 6. Analysis of Chi-Square Description of Modular English Language Admission Requirements

| | CHOICES |
|---|---------------------|
| Chi-Square | 15.524 ^b |
| Df | 4 |
| Sig. | .004 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 16.8. | |

3.1.3. Minor research question 3

Does Modular English Language Educational Program Content meet standards of an effective educational program?

The frequencies and percentages of the respondents' views on the quality of the education content of Modular English Language Education Program are displayed in Table 8. Based on the information displayed in Table 7 it can be concluded that majority of the respondents, i.e. 46.60 percent, believe that the Modular English Language Educational Program content meets the standards of an effective educational program. On the other hand 39.81 percent of the respondents hold the opposite view. They believe that the education content of Modular English Language Education does not meet the standards of an effective educational program. 13.59 percent are neutral.

Table 7. Frequencies and Percentages Modular English Language Education Content

| Program Content | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| Strongly Disagree | 27 | 13.11 |
| Disagree | 55 | 26.70 |
| Neutral | 28 | 13.59 |
| Agree | 77 | 37.38 |
| Strongly Agree | 19 | 9.22 |
| Total | 206 | 100 |

Pie chart 4 displays the percentages as appeared in Table 7.

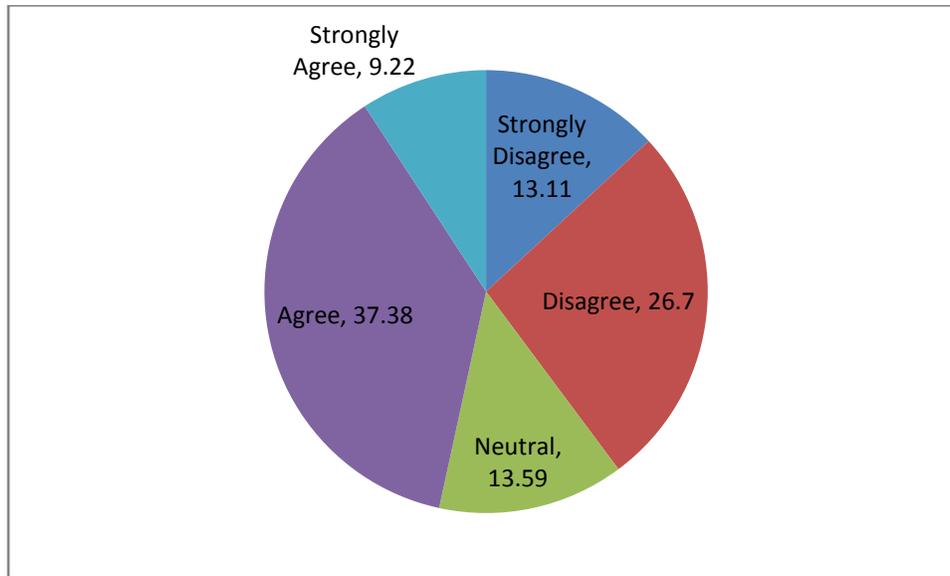


Figure 4. Percentages modular English language education content

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe the third Minor research questions as the alignment of Modular English Language education content with the standards of an effective educational program. The chi-square observed value of 56.81 ($P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the frequencies and percentages observed in Table 7 show significant differences between the respondents' views. Thus it can be concluded that the third minor null-hypothesis as Modular English Language Educational content does not meet standards of an effective educational program **is rejected**. Majority of the respondents believe that the educational content of the Modular English Language are aligned with the present standards of an effective educational program.

Table 8. Analysis of Chi-Square Description of Modular English Language Education Content

| | CHOICES |
|---|---------------------|
| Chi-Square | 56.816 ^c |
| Df | 4 |
| Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 41.2. | |

3.1.4. Minor research question 4

Do Modular English Language Educational Program Resources meet standards of an effective educational program?

Based on the information displayed in Table 9 it can be concluded that majority of the respondents, i.e. 51.39 percent, believe that the Modular English Language Educational resources do not meet standards of an effective educational program. On the other hand 33.33 percent of the respondents hold the opposite view. 15.28 percent are neutral.

Table 9. Frequencies and Percentages Modular English Language Program Resources

| Program Resources | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| Strongly Disagree | 15 | 10.42 |
| Disagree | 59 | 40.97 |
| Neutral | 22 | 15.28 |
| Agree | 45 | 31.25 |
| Strongly Agree | 3 | 2.08 |
| Total | 144 | 100 |

Figure 5 displays the percentages as appeared in Table 9.

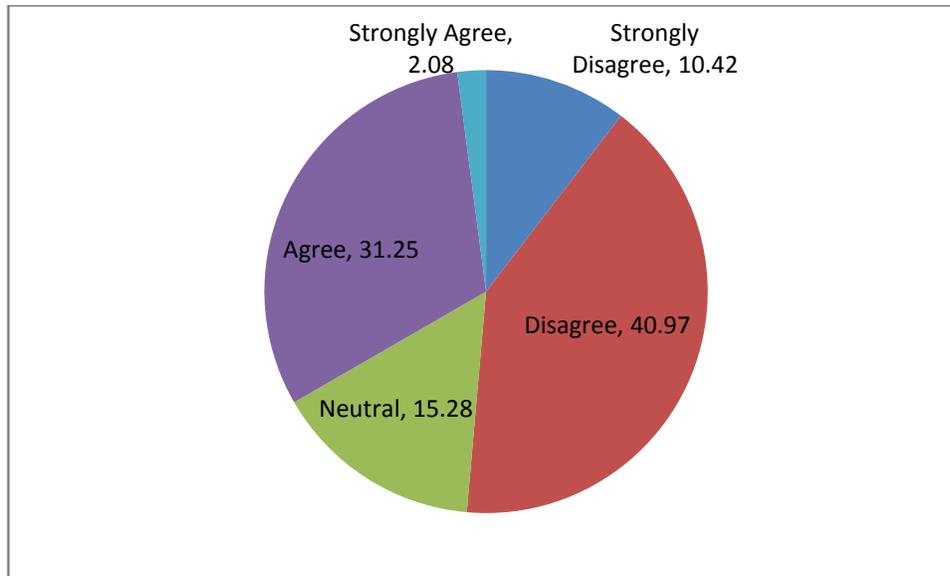


Figure 5. Percentages Modular English Language Educational Resources

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe the fourth Minor research questions as the alignment of Modular English Language education resources with the standards of an effective educational program. The chi-square observed value of 72.11 ($P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the frequencies and percentages observed in Table 9 show significant differences between the respondents' views. Thus, the data fail to reject the fourth minor null-hypothesis.

Table 10. Analysis of Chi-Square Description of Modular English Language Educational Resources

| | CHOICES |
|---|---------------------|
| Chi-Square | 72.111 ^a |
| Df | 4 |
| Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 28.8. | |

3.1.5. Minor research question 5

Does Modular English Language Educational Program Instruction and Evaluation Method require some revisions to meet standards of an effective educational program?

The frequencies and percentages of the respondents' views on the Program Instruction and Evaluation Method of Modular English Language Education Program are displayed in Table 11. Based on the information displayed in Table 11 it can be concluded that majority of the respondents, i.e. 59.30 percent, believe that the Modular English Language Educational Program requires some revisions suggested by teachers to meet Instruction and Evaluation Method meets the standards of an effective educational program. On the other hand 19.77 percent of the respondents hold the opposite view. They believe that the Program Instruction and Evaluation Method of Modular English Language Education do not require some revisions to meet the standards of an effective educational program. 20.93 percent are neutral.

Table 11. Frequencies and Percentages Modular English Language Program Instruction and Evaluation Method

| Program Instruction and Evaluation Method | Frequency | Percent |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Disagree | 17 | 19.77 |
| Neutral | 18 | 20.93 |
| Agree | 46 | 53.49 |
| Strongly Agree | 5 | 5.81 |
| Total | 86 | 100 |

Figure 6 displays the percentages as appeared in Table 7.

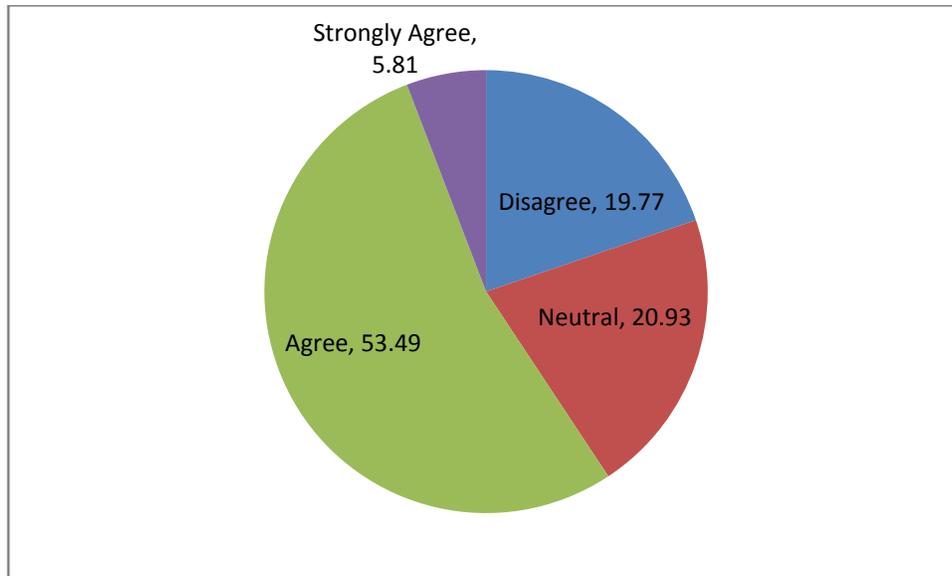


Figure 6. Percentages Modular English Language Program Instruction and Evaluation Method

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe the fifth Minor research questions as the alignment of Modular English Language Program Instruction and Evaluation Method with the standards of an effective educational program. The chi-square observed value of 42.09 ($P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the frequencies and percentages observed in Table 12 show significant differences between the respondents' views. Thus, it can be concluded that the fifth minor null-hypothesis is **rejected**.

Table 12. Analysis of Chi-Square Description of Modular English Language Program Instruction and Evaluation Method

| | CHOICES |
|---|---------------------|
| Chi-Square | 42.093 ^a |
| Df | 3 |
| Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 21.5. | |

3.1.6. Minor research question 6

Do Modular English Language Educational Program Graduation Requirements meet standards of an effective educational program?

Based on the information displayed in Table 13 it can be concluded that majority of the respondents, i.e. 55.17 percent, believe that the Modular English Language Graduation Requirements do not meet standards of an effective educational program. On the other hand 31.03 percent of the respondents hold the opposite view. 13.79 percent are neutral.

Table 13. Frequencies and Percentages Modular English Language Graduation Requirements

| Graduation Requirements | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Strongly Disagree | 5 | 17.24 |
| Disagree | 11 | 37.93 |
| Neutral | 4 | 13.79 |
| Agree | 9 | 31.03 |
| Total | 29 | 100 |

Figure 7 displays the percentages as appeared in Table 13.

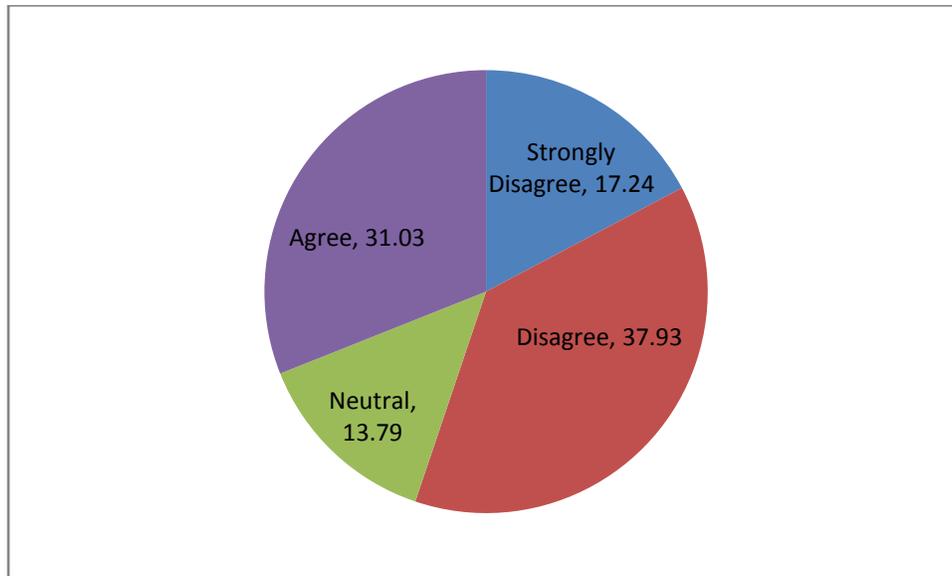


Figure 7. Percentages Modular English Language Graduation Requirements

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe the sixth Minor research questions as the alignment of Modular English Language Graduation Requirements with the standards of an effective educational program. The chi-square observed value of 4.51 ($P = .211 > .05$) indicates that the frequencies and percentages observed in Table 13 do not show significant differences between the respondents' views. Thus, the data fail to reject the sixth minor null-hypothesis. Majority of the respondents believe that the Program Graduation Requirements of the Modular English Language are not aligned with the present standards of an effective educational program.

Table 14. Analysis of Chi-Square Description of Modular English Language Graduation Requirements

| | CHOICES |
|---|--------------------------|
| Chi-Square | 4.517^a |
| Df | 3 |
| Sig. | .211 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 7.3. | |

3.2. Students 'Data : Deeds and Documents Translation Course

Does Translation of Deeds and Documents Course meet the Learners' expectations?

Unlike the teachers' questionnaire which follows a uniform pattern of items with five choices, the students' questionnaire consists of different types of items with different patterns of choices (two choices to five choices). That is why an overall analysis is not produced for the Audio-Visual and Deeds and Documents groups.

3.2.1. Minor research question 1

Are the Deeds and Document students consistent in their views towards the speaking problems they face?

As displayed in Table 15 majority of the respondents, i.e. 51.11 percent believe that they always or usually face the mentioned problems when speaking English.

Table 15. Frequencies and Percentages Speaking Problems Deeds and Docs Students

| | Observed N | Percent |
|-----------|------------|---------|
| Always | 220 | 24.72 |
| Usually | 226 | 25.39 |
| Sometimes | 304 | 34.16 |
| Seldom | 116 | 13.03 |
| Never | 24 | 2.70 |
| Total | 890 | 100 |

Figure 8 displays the above mentioned percentages.

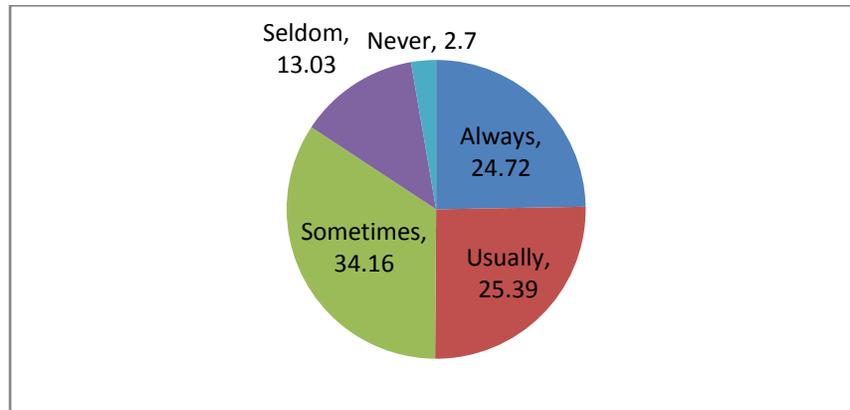


Figure 8. Percentages speaking problems Deeds and Docs students

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 15 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square ($\chi^2(4) = 266.87, P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the differences observed in Table 15 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are not obtained by chance. Based on these results it can be concluded that the first minor null-hypothesis **is rejected**. Majority of the Deeds and Document students believe that they always or usually face the mentioned problems when speaking English.

Table 16. Analysis of Chi-Square Speaking Problems (Deeds and Document Students)

| | CHOICES |
|--|----------------------|
| Chi-Square | 266.876 ^a |
| Df | 4 |
| Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 178. | |

3.2.2. Minor research question 2

Are the Deeds and Document students consistent in their views towards the listening problems they face?

As displayed in Table 17 majority of the respondents, i.e. 45.82 percent believe that they sometimes face the mentioned listening problems.

Table 17. Frequencies and Percentages Listening Problems Deeds and Docs Students

| | Observed N | Percent |
|-----------|------------|---------|
| Always | 71 | 7.80 |
| Usually | 213 | 23.41 |
| Sometimes | 417 | 45.82 |
| Seldom | 204 | 22.42 |
| Never | 5 | 0.55 |
| Total | 910 | 100 |

Figure 9 displays the above mentioned percentages.

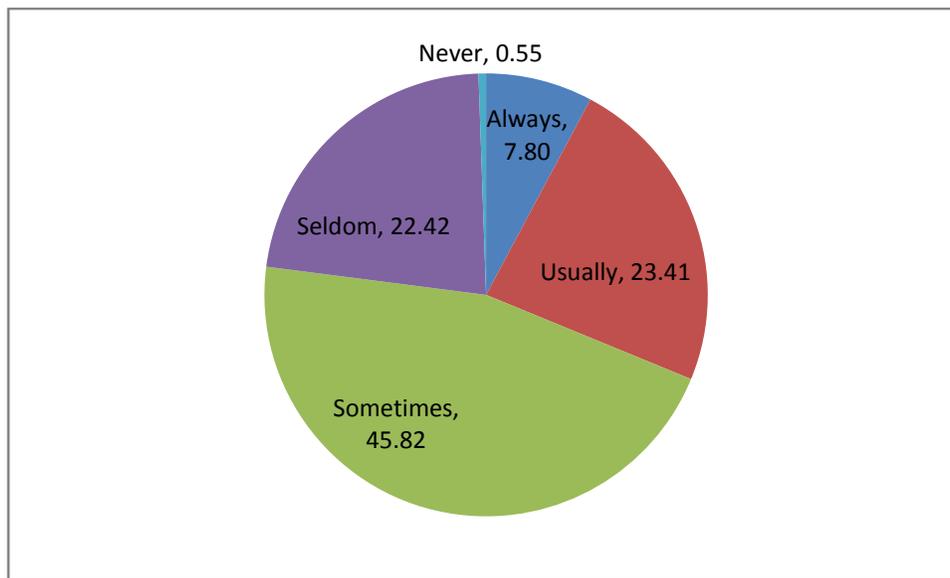


Figure 9. Percentages listening problems Deeds and Document students

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 17 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square ($\chi^2(4) = 551.20, P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the differences observed in Table 17 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are not obtained by chance. Based on these results it can be concluded that the second minor null-

hypothesis is **rejected**. Majority of the Deeds and Document students believe that they sometimes face the mentioned listening problems.

Table 18. Analysis of Chi-Square Listening Problems (Deeds and Document Students)

| | CHOICES |
|---|----------------------------|
| Chi-Square | 551.209^a |
| Df | 4 |
| Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 182. | |

3.2.3. Minor research question 3

Are the Dees and Document students consistent in their views towards the writing problems they face?

As displayed in Table 19 majority of the respondents, i.e. 56.84 percent believe that they sometimes face the mentioned writing problems.

Table 19. Frequencies and Percentages Writing Problems Deeds and Docs Students

| | Observed N | Percent |
|-----------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| Usually | 375 | 25.41 |
| Sometimes | 839 | 56.84 |
| Never | 224 | 15.18 |
| Not applicable | 38 | 2.57 |
| Total | 1476 | 100 |

Figure 10 displays the above mentioned percentages.

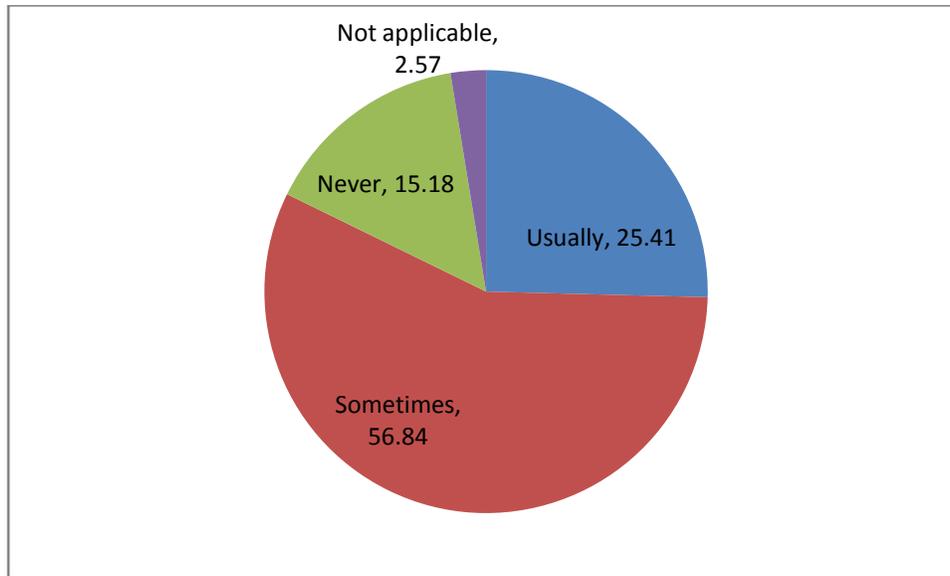


Figure 10. Percentages Writing Problems Deeds and Docs Students

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 19 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square ($\chi^2 (3) = 952.63, P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the differences observed in Table 19 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are not obtained by chance. Based on these results it can be concluded that the third minor null-hypothesis **is rejected**. Majority of the Deeds and Docs students believe that they sometimes face the mentioned writing problems

Table 20. Analysis of Chi-Square Writing Problems (Deeds and Docs Students)

| | CHOICES |
|--|----------------------|
| Chi-Square | 952.634 ^a |
| Df | 3 |
| Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 396. | |

3.2.4. Minor research question 4

Are the Deeds and Document students consistent in their views towards the reading comprehension problems they face?

As displayed in Table 21 majority of the respondents, i.e. 51.11 percent believe that they sometimes face the mentioned reading comprehension problems.

Table 21. Frequencies and Percentages Reading Comprehension Problems Deeds and Docs Students

| | Observed N | Percent |
|-----------|------------|---------|
| Usually | 268 | 31.35 |
| Sometimes | 437 | 51.11 |
| Never | 150 | 17.54 |
| Total | 855 | 100 |

Figure 11 displays the above mentioned percentages.

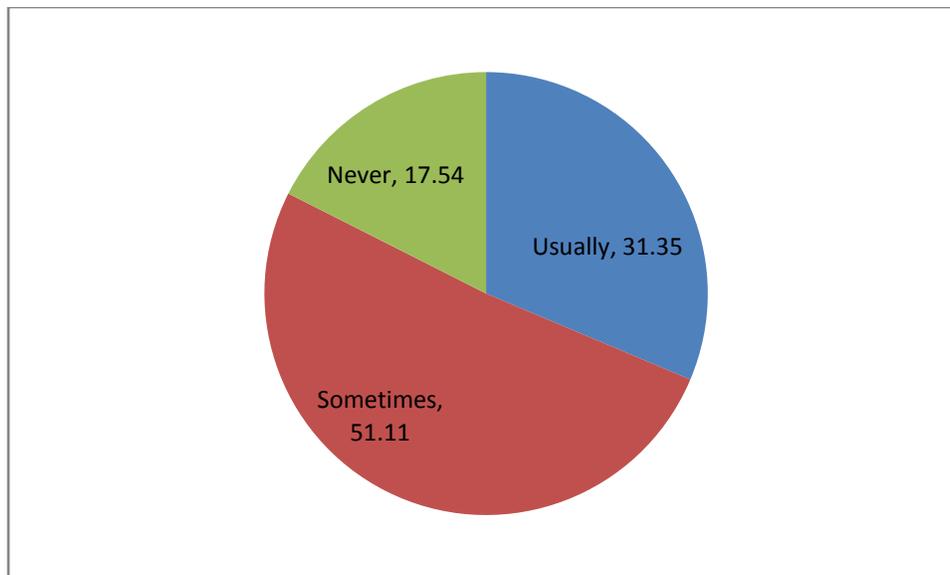


Figure 11. Percentages reading comprehension problems Deeds and Docs students

An analysis of chi-square is run to probe whether the differences observed in Table 21 are systematic or random. The results of the analysis of chi-square ($\chi^2 (2) = 146.02, P = .000 < .05$) indicates that the differences observed in Table 21 are meaningful, i.e. the differences are

not obtained by chance. Based on these results it can be concluded that the fifth minor null-hypothesis **is rejected**. Majority of the Deeds and Docs students believe that they sometimes face the mentioned reading comprehension problems.

Table 22. Analysis of Chi-Square Reading Comprehension Problems (Deeds and Docs Students)

| | CHOICES |
|---|----------------------------|
| Chi-Square | 146.028^a |
| Df | 2 |
| Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 285. | |

3.2.5. Minor research question 5

How do you rate the content (both content and skills taught) of your course?

As displayed in Table 23 and using the cut-point of 4 as the middle value, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents 38.46 percent believe that the content of the course and the skills taught are not useful or are of low use.

Table 23. Usefulness of Content and Skills

| | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Not Useful | 12 | 4.86 |
| 2 | 27 | 10.93 |
| 3 | 56 | 22.67 |
| 4 | 74 | 29.96 |
| 5 | 48 | 19.43 |
| 6 | 16 | 6.48 |
| Useful | 14 | 5.67 |
| Total | 247 | 100 |

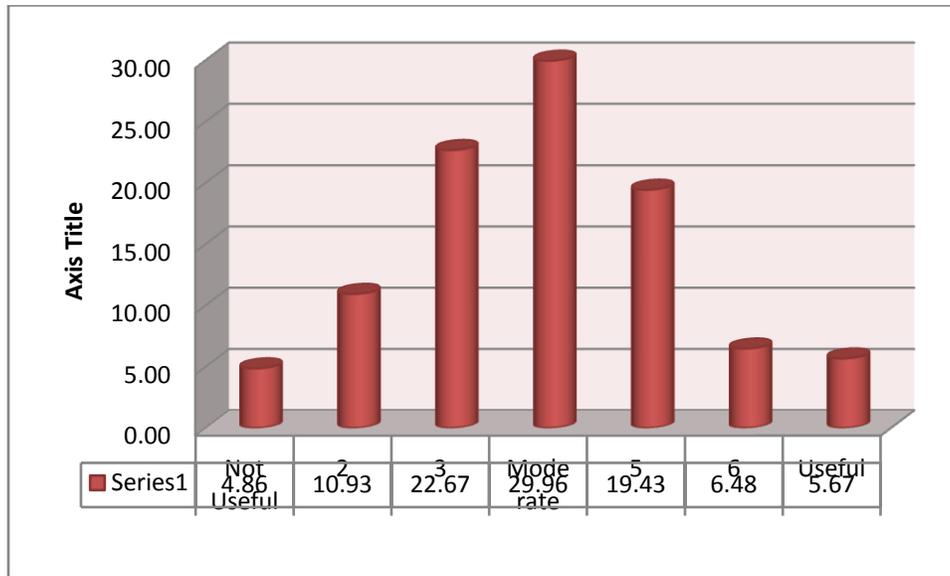


Figure 12. Usefulness of Content and Skills

3.2.6. Minor research question 6

How do you rate the educational materials (textbooks, pamphlets, etc.)?

As displayed in Table 24 and using the cut-point of 4 as the middle value, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents 54.10 percent believe that the educational materials are not useful or are of low use.

Table 24. Usefulness of Educational Materials

| | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|
| Not Useful | 20 | 16.39 |
| 2 | 21 | 17.21 |
| 3 | 25 | 20.49 |
| Moderate | 23 | 18.85 |
| 5 | 19 | 15.57 |
| 6 | 6 | 4.92 |
| Useful | 8 | 6.56 |
| Total | 122 | 100 |

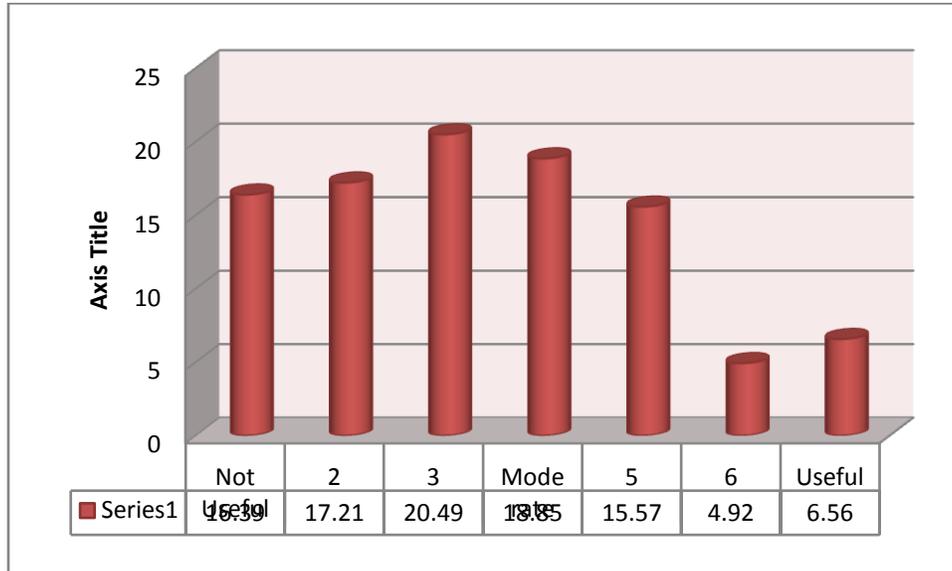


Figure 13. Usefulness of educational materials

3.2.7. Minor research question 7

Which aspects of the educational course are useful?

As displayed in Figure 14 the three most useful aspects of the educational course are;

- 1: Specialized translation Course (18.6 %).
- 2: Grammar Courses (10.8 %)
- 3: Laboratory Courses (9.8 %).

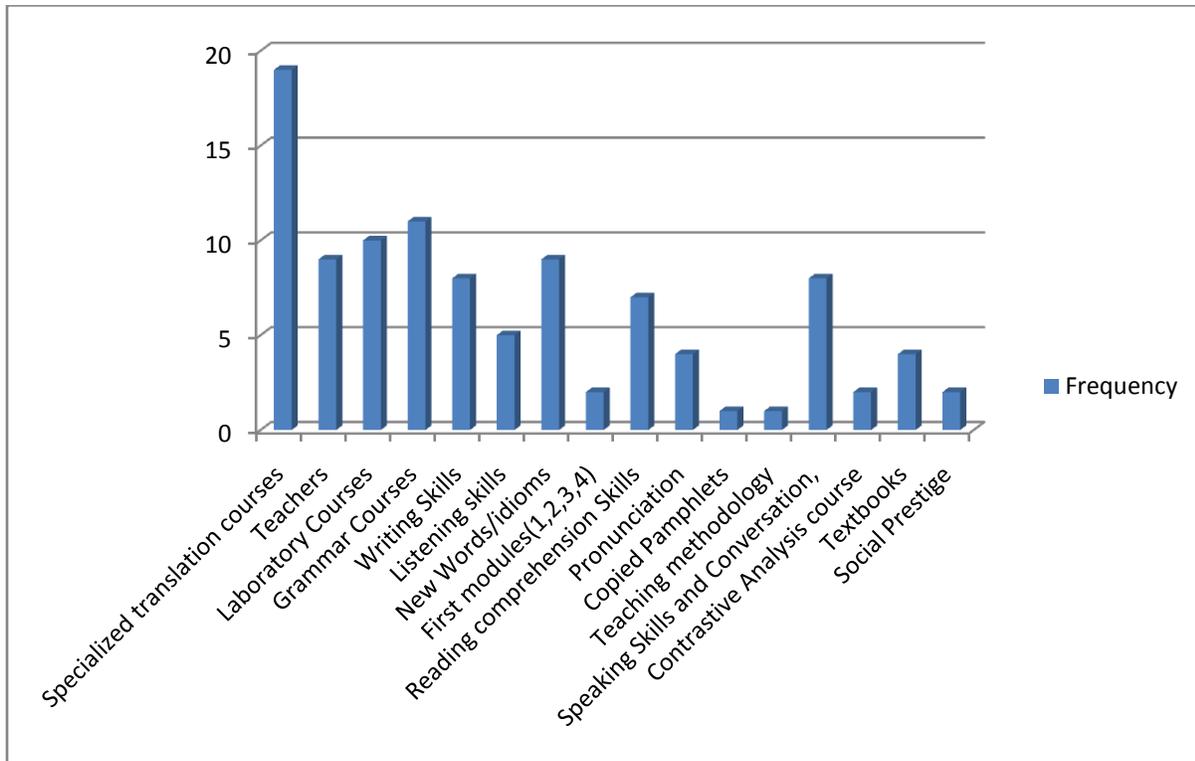


Figure 14. Useful aspects of educational course

3.2.8. Minor research question 8

Which aspects of the educational course are less useful?

As displayed in Figure 15 the three most less useful aspects of the educational course are;

- 1: Conversation and Speaking Skills (14.9 %)
- 2: Listening Skills (8.3 %)
- 3: Writing Skills (6.6 %)

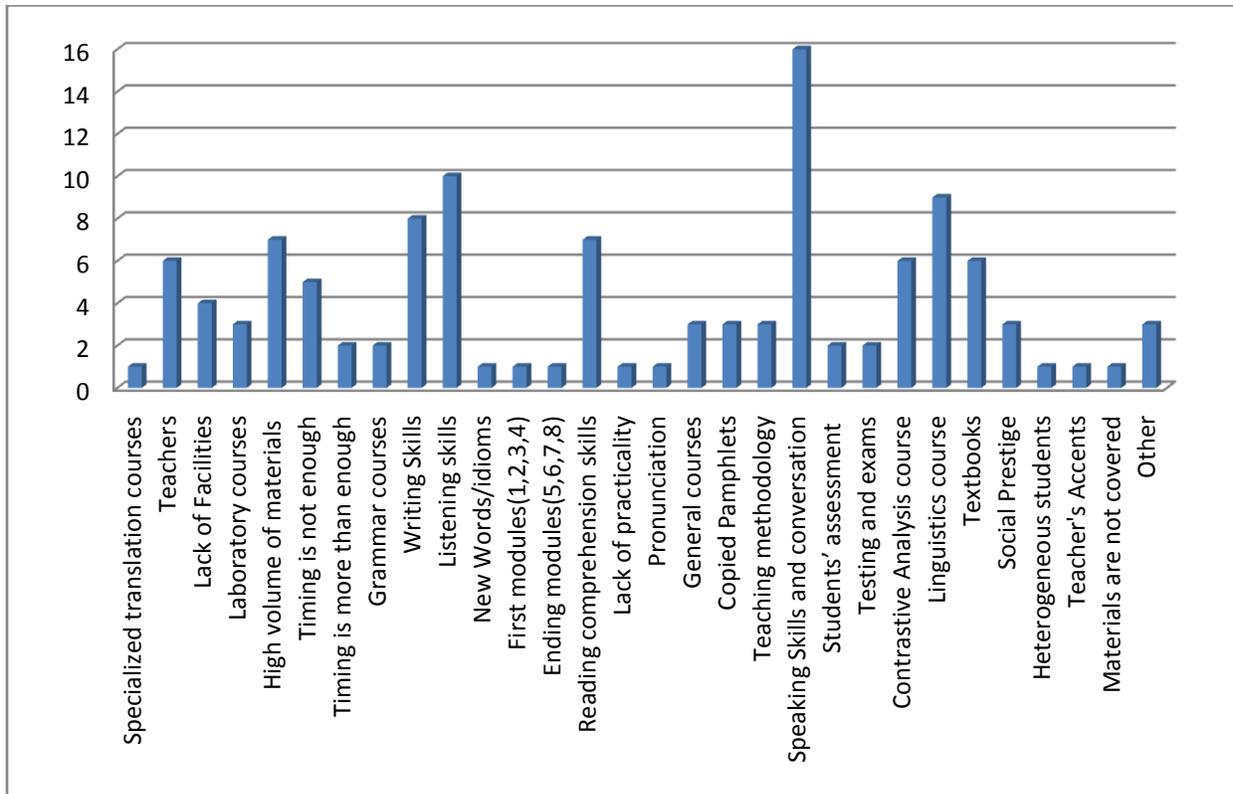


Figure 15. Less useful aspects of educational course

3.2.9. Research Question 9

What are your suggestions to improve the course?

As displayed in graph 5, the students have made the following suggestion to improve the course;

- 1: Other suggestions (13.6 %) are the highest number of suggestions made to improve the course.
- 2: Better Facilities (11.4 %)
- 3: Reading Class Hours (8.3 %).

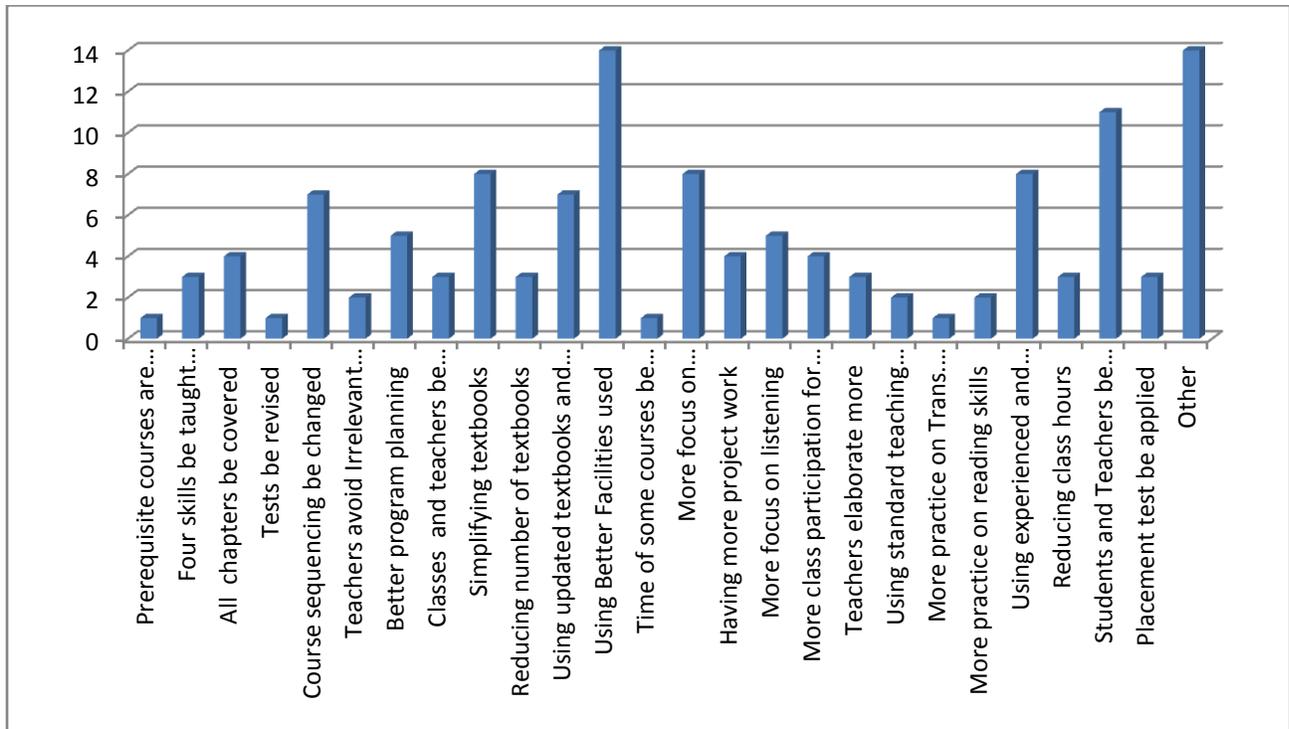


Figure 16. Suggestions to Improve the Course

*Other: Having fewer classes in a week, Taking harder exams, Teachers pronunciation be standardized, Changing content of textbooks, evaluate students based on their true abilities and fail unsuccessful and demotivated ones, Provide additional tutoring for less competent students, Having fewer number of students in classrooms, conducting need analysis and consider students individual differences in program planning, define course objectives for students.

4.1. Discussion and Conclusions

4.2. Teachers Perspectives

4.2.1. Program description

The program description seems to be sound theoretically; however, as it doesn't consider students' background knowledge and the time allocated is not sufficient, in practice, the outputs are not satisfactory.

4.2.2. Admission requirements

The majority of teachers claimed that no entrance exam is held and students are selected on the basis of their high school Grade Point Average (GPA) which is normally below the average. Moreover, it should be noted that most of the students attending Modular English Language Education Program, are those who haven't been able to enter a state-run or Islamic Azad university. Therefore the University of Applied Science has been their final opportunity.

4.2.3. Program Content

They mostly found the sequencing of training, the pre-requisite courses, the time or number of credits, the objectives of every individual course, and the balance between theory and practice to be properly addressed. However, it should be noticed that there exist a slight difference between those who agree and those who do not. This is to say that the points mentioned by those who have expressed dissatisfaction about the program content shouldn't be overlooked. First of all, they indicated that the sequencing of courses is not orderly designed and there is lack of cohesion. Also, some difficult and specialized courses are offered in the first modules. Second, some other teachers pointed out that according to the university's curriculum each module focuses on a specific theme; therefore, including a massive amount of specialized courses in one module will bombard students with so many field-specific terminologies which will be soon forgotten in the next module.

4.2.4. Program resources

Although, the educational branches vary in their educational facilities and equipments, the teachers mostly argued that most centers suffer from necessary requirements. Moreover, majority of the teachers agreed that the textbooks listed are not adequate for program delivery. They also noted that textbook selection is done subjectively by each department or based on the teacher's preference and in some cases the students are provided with ready-made pamphlets. Some other

claimed that textbook selection should be done by resourceful teachers who are aware of learners' and situation needs. Many teachers stated that textbooks are rich in variety but poor in quality.

4.2.5. Program instruction/evaluation methods

The teachers suggested regular and strong supervision on the classroom content should be exercised, teachers should to involve students in teaching process and classes should be student-centered. The teachers also observed so many shortcomings in students' evaluation methods. They pointed out that there are rarely sound criteria for the students' acceptance and the students are judged by some non-academic criteria concerning their personal lives such as: marital status, working conditions and having children. They further, recommended a constant realistic assessment of the student's performance and project-oriented measurement alongside testing and suggested that teachers need to be stricter in applying the acceptance requirements.

4.2.6. . Graduation/employment requirements

According to the results, majority of the teachers believed that the prerequisites for successful completion of the program are not sufficient and the graduation requirements do not meet the present standards of an effective educational program. Therefore criteria of graduation should include both quantitative and qualitative measures. Regarding the employment requirements, the teachers listed certain types of prospective occupational positions for the graduates as follows:

1. Working as translators or interpreters
2. Teaching opportunities
3. Job opportunities in film production studios

However, the teachers believed that many of the graduates are not competent enough and minority of them can be proficient translators. Therefore, successful completion of the program doesn't necessarily mean that they are able to do the job.

4.3. Students' Perspectives

Majority of the students believed that the course content and course materials are not much useful and the course does not meet the students' expectation properly. Particularly, they pointed out that there are some aspects of the program more important than others, including: Specialized and translation courses, Grammar Course in the introductory modules and Laboratory courses. Moreover, majority of the students found the introductory modules to be more useful. It should be noted that modules one, two, three and four are mainly concerned with General English (GE) courses and focus on the four main skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) and the two sub skills (grammar, vocabulary). However, modules five, six, seven and eight include more specialized translation courses such as commercial translation, legal translation and political translation. Likewise, the students separately mentioned that those aspects of the program which focus on the writing, speaking, listening skills, reading comprehension and pronunciation are the most useful. It can be concluded that majority of the Deeds and Documents' students expect the Translation of Deeds and Documents Course to fulfill their general English needs. In other words, they view the program as an EFL program, offered by a private institution. However, as the curriculum description states, the program aims to enable the students to obtain practical skills in deeds and documents translation and perform professional deeds and document translation activities in translation agencies and documentation centers. As a result, it can be concluded that the students do not have a true justification of the program and its objectives which cause them to be demotivated and dissatisfied when they are offered with the specialized courses. To support the above mentioned claim, it is worthy to mention what Richards (?) identifies as "understanding of the course" as a determining factor in effectiveness of an EFL/ESL program: "It is important to ensure that learners understand the goals of the course, the reason for the way it is organized and taught, and the approaches to learning they will be encouraged to take..." (p.19).

Class timing is another major problem which has been identified by students. Majority of the students have complained that, considering the massive amount of courses to be covered in each semester, the class hours specified for each course are not enough. They also stated that

classes are held in two consecutive days in a week which makes the students frustrated and reduces learning. Also, the students pointed out that as majority of the students are employees, they do not have enough time to practice, so it will be better if the class hours are increased and lessons be taught in a slower pace. The students further complained that the course sequencing are not well planned. It seems that there is a gap between the introductory modules and the specialized modules. According to the students, in the first four modules, the mere focus is on general English and the four skills, soon after, in specialized modules (5,6,7 and 8)students with no background in translation ,are bombard with lots of specialized translation courses which have to be covered in few limited sessions, with less amount of practice. Moreover, the students stated that the teachers are not experienced enough aware of the current teaching methodologies. Some others have criticized lack of facilities such as a language lab, lack of access to internet, library, heating and cooling systems. Besides, some students stated that there are courses such as CA, Linguistics and general courses which are time-consuming and not useful. The students also indicated that the admission requirements are not reasonable .Therefore, the classes are heterogeneous and there are many students who are not motivated enough. They maintained that the students should be placed based on their language competency and less studious and motivated students should not enter the program or at least pass the courses easily.They further questioned the content validity of the exams. They also point out that the students are not judged fairly and they easily pass the courses. Additionally, other students also noted that some of the textbooks are outdated and others are too hard for them in terms of content parameters.Moreover, majority of the students mentioned that courses are not mostly taught in English; thus, they suggested that speaking in English should be obligatory for both teachers and students in and outside of the classroom. They also mentioned that the internship projects are quite higher than their knowledge and academic level. As a result, students mostly ask the translation houses to do the job for them. They further suggested that it's better that the projects be assigned on the basis of students' individual competencies and in smaller number of pages.

4.4. Compatibilities in teachers' and students' perspectives

Generally speaking, the students' and teachers' perspectives towards the efficiency of the program are compatible in terms of program admission requirements and course sequencing and timing.

Both teachers and students strongly believed that the *admission requirements* were not satisfactory. They neither probe the students' language competency, nor their motivation and professional goals. Moreover, both groups believed that *course sequencing* and *timing* are not sound. The students stated that introductory modules are quite easy and were repetition of what they already knew, however, right after module four, the students are faced with so many specialized courses offered consecutively. The teachers also, claimed that some special courses such as phonology, linguistics and contrastive analysis are offered in the introductory modules; when the students lack sufficient schemata. Therefore, not being justified properly, it is not surprising that students find these courses to be of no use.

4.5. Incompatibilities in teachers' and students' perspectives

Students and teachers are not much compatible in their views regarding their own respective roles. On one hand, the students had quite diverse views towards learning. For instance, they saw their teachers as a determining factor in their success and expected them to teach in English, explain the details briefly, in other words to spoon-feed them. Interestingly, they do not consider themselves as one of the parties involved in the learning-teaching process. On the contrary, the teachers maintained that students are not studious and motivated enough. According to Richards (n.d.), courses may require students to perform variety of roles such as: being "manager of his learning, independent learner, need analyst, collaborator and team member and peer tutor" (p.20); however, the students may not be aware of the roles they are expected to play. Therefore, in order to reduce the controversies, it is recommended that soon after the course begins, both teachers and student consult with each other and speak their needs and expectations.

Overall, majority of the teachers believed that the Modular English Language Education Program is not aligned with standards of a well-organized language education program. According to the teachers, the whole system is planned a bit unsystematically and financial concerns seem to play a much significant role than academic issues in program planning. After all, it can be concluded that drastic measures are needed to re-evaluate, modify and change the curriculum in terms of admission, planning, implementation, sequencing and graduation requirements. On the basis of the findings of the study, some suggestions have been listed below that could assist in eliminating the problems and improve the Modular (poodmani) English Language Education Program:

1. Pre-requisite courses such as Farsi Grammar, Farsi writing and Journalistic reading should be added.
2. The number of credits for some courses such as English Grammar and specialized courses should be increased.
3. Translation courses should be taught in workshops with much amount of emphasis on practice and project work.
4. Teaching four language skills alongside with grammar and vocabulary sub skills should be continued up to the ending modules.
5. In-service training course should be set so that the teachers can keep pace with the current improvements in language teaching and as a result, apply more communicative and learner centered approaches in their teaching.
6. Compiled, institutionally-prepared materials should be assigned regarding the students' academic background.
7. The teachers' recruitment requirements should be modified. There should be both a written exam and an oral interview in order to assess the teachers' competence.
8. All centers should be provided with at least a decent language laboratory with the highest quality audio-visual systems (CD, DVD players, TV), a library which can offer all types of mono-lingual and bilingual general, commercial, political, business and judicial dictionaries, an internet website for students.

9. A testing unit consisting of a panel of expert teachers should be founded so as to have an organized and systematic team for the exams and evaluations.
10. An age limit, proficiency level of English, GPA requirements (at least 14 out of 20) should be included as admission criteria.
11. A comprehensive need analysis should be conducted as soon as students are admitted to the university to identify their pedagogical needs.
12. Extra tutoring sessions should be considered for less competent students.

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