THE ACADEMIC AND VOCATIONAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEEDS OF THE SCHOOL OF HEALTH STUDENTS

Özlem AYAS[*a]; Yasemin KIRKGÖZ[b]

[a]Mersin University, School of Foreign Languages, Mersin/TURKEY
[b]Çukurova University, Faculty of Education, Adana/TURKEY

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the perceptions of the nursing and midwifery students attending the School of Health offering Turkish medium courses at Mersin University in Turkey on their academic and vocational needs of English in order to improve the current curriculum, materials and language instruction. The data were collected through the questionnaires and interviews conducted with five groups consisting of the second year midwifery and nursing, the third year midwifery and nursing and the fourth year midwifery students having vocational English courses carried out by two English instructors. The perceptions of the students were presented in an elaborate and detailed manner in the study through the research tools of questionnaire and interview. The main results of the study indicate that the student groups want to improve their four English language skills, particularly speaking and listening skills compared with reading and writing skills. Besides, most of the students conceive that the materials that were compiled by the English instructors are inadequate in some ways and should be developed in order to enhance their effectiveness in the classes; and the language instruction of the English instructors do not help the students acquire vocational English efficiently, and it should be improved to increase the students' learning capacity in vocational English .

Keywords: *Academic English, vocational English, needs analysis.*

INTRODUCTION

English as a foreign language has been continuing to gain importance in Turkey. Currently, English is deemed necessary in both the academic sphere and in business life. Now universities also offer English courses oriented towards different specific purposes in accordance with students' needs. Within the English teaching practice, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has been a very significant and developing field since the 1960s as it takes into consideration the needs or interests of the learners, and the demand for ESP continues to increase worldwide (Dudley-Evans and St. John, 2001).

Needs analysis, which is also called needs assessment, refers to the activities carried out to gather information which will develop a curriculum for meeting the learning needs of a specific group of students (Brown, 1995). It constitutes the basis for developing curriculum, syllabi, materials, teaching activities etc (Brown, 1995; Dudley-Evans & St. Johns, 2001; Richards, 2001; Hutchinson & Waters, 2004). In devising a language course, it is highly essential to begin with creating a learner profile and searching for the target learner's expectations about the different aspects of the course (Nunan, 1995; Harmer, 1991, in Krajka, 2009).

There are some studies carried out abroad to explore students' English needs in health or medical field. In illustrating these studies, Mazdayasna and Tahririan's (2008) investigation of the foreign language learning needs of undergraduate medical sciences students studying in the faculties of nursing and

---

[*] **Co-Author:** ozlemtalas@yahoo.com

midwifery in Iran could be named. Besides, Lee (1998) sought for what purposes the students used English in nursing and medical fields. Furthermore, Chia et al. (1999) tried to describe the perception of medical college students and faculty about the English language needs of the students. In Turkey, there are English needs analysis studies that were carried out on medical English; for instance, Taşçı (2007) investigated the needs of the medical students' English language needs at Pamukkale University. Akgül (1991, in Taşçı, 2007) carried out needs analysis of medical students at ESP classes at Erciyes University. Besides, there are a few studies which aim to determine the profile of students in the School of Health in general and include very little information about their general and vocational English knowledge (Kostak et al., 2012, Yiğit et al., 2007). However, this study only aimed to find out English language needs of nursing and midwifery departments which serve to educate students entering the health sector in Turkey. As a result, the present study investigated the academic and vocational needs of nursery and midwifery students taking vocational English courses in the School of Health at Mersin University.

In the vocational English classes where this study was conducted, a textbook which consists of texts concerning the health sector compiled by the English instructors and related exercises was used. There is not a standard curriculum or instructional materials determined by higher institutions for these classes. Hence, the instructors set their objectives or determine the content of the courses or materials used in those classes. Topics generally consist of a mixture of reading, translation and vocabulary exercises. However, the students' general requirements or problems related to the courses have not been investigated before. Thus, while determining their needs, the study also tries to find out what kind of problems occur in those classes, and if it is possible to improve them in terms of the materials, course hours, language instruction, etc.

This study aims to find answers to the following questions:
    1. What are the academic and vocational needs of the nursing and midwifery students who have vocational English courses?
    2. Are there any significant differences in the perspectives of the students regarding these needs?

Limitations of the Study

The main limitation of the study is that it was conducted with only 233 students within only one context which is the School of Health at Mersin University. The other Turkish or English-medium universities offering vocational English courses to the midwifery and nursing students could be investigated in terms of determining the English needs of the students attending those universities. The second limitation of the study is that the English needs of the graduate nurses and midwives who now work at hospitals might be investigated as well to have a broader picture of these needs. The final limitation is that only two instruments, questionnaires and focus group interviews, were used in this study. However, some other research instruments such as observation, analysis of authentic texts or journals and etc. could be integrated into the study.

METHOD

Participants

The main participants in this study were 139 midwifery students attending the second, third and fourth year and 99 nursing students attending the second and third year in the School of Health at Mersin University (see Table 1). As the fourth year nursing students did not have a vocational English course due to their intense schedule, they did not participate in the study. Out of 233 students in total, there were 204 females and 29 males. The mean average age was 21.5 years.

Procedure

For this study, the data were collected through the questionnaires and interviews. The distribution of the student questionnaires were carried out by the first author of this study and an English instructor. As each data has its own strengths and weaknesses, it is better to collect information from two or more sources with multiple instruments (Nugraha, 2002). Hence, after the questionnaires, interviews were held with voluntary students. Interviews were also particularly conducted to gather qualitative data and to have a better insight into the students' personal opinions.

Table 1. The number of students who filled out the questionnaire

Groups	Number
Midwifery 2nd year	52
Midwifery 3rd year	41
Midwifery 4th year	46
Nursing 2nd year	50
Nursing 3rd year	44
Total	233

Table 2. The number of students who participated in the interviews

Groups	Number
Midwifery 2	10
Midwifery 3	10
Midwifery 4	10
Nursing 2	10
Nursing 3	10
Total	50

Instruments

The questionnaires of Mazdayasna and Tahririan (2008), Taşçı (2007), Çelik (2003), Kırkgöz (2005), Evans and Green (2007) and Baştürkmen (1998) were analysed to develop the questionnaire appropriate for the study. The language of the questionnaires was Turkish in order to avoid any misunderstandings by the students. Before the questionnaire was prepared, some informal interviews were conducted with some students and the academicians to be able to prepare the items in the questionnaire which would be the most effective in investigating the students' English needs.

The questionnaire itself consisted of three main sections and nine parts in total. The first section gathers demographic information about the students. The second section, consisting of five-level Likert scale "strongly disagree", "disagree", "undecided", "agree" to "strongly agree", tries to elicit the students' general perceptions about their course.. The third section, which comprises a four-level Likert scale ranging from "not important at all", "not important", "important" to "very important", focuses on how important the students consider the four skills and their sub-skills. In the study, the results that were obtained from the different sections of the questionnaire are presented from the most important to the least important and significant differences are indicated. For the focus groups interviews, six questions were prepared by taking the research questions and the questionnaire items into consideration. They mainly focused on the students' reasons for learning English, the materials used and the language difficulties they had in the classes, how important four English language skills were and what could be done relating to these four skills.

After the pilot study was conducted on 66 School of Health students at Çukurova University which confirmed its validity, the final version of the questionnaire was distributed to 233 students. Regarding the focus groups interviews, 10 students from each group, amounting to 50 students in total, voluntarily took part in the interviews. In the analysis of the questionnaires, SPSS was used and one-way-ANOVA (post hoc LSD test) was applied to calculate and analyse mean and standard deviations for the Likert-scale items and to indicate the significant differences. The qualitative data were analysed using the content analysis technique by taking into consideration the steps suggested by Cohen (2003) and Miles and Huberman (1994).

RESULTS

General Views about ESP and ESP Courses

In order to find out the academic and vocational English needs of the students, items 1-23 in the first section of the questionnaire explore the students' general views on ESP and the vocational courses in the School of Health at Mersin University, and they focus on the students' perspectives on the reasons for their learning English (items 1-8), whether they consider their vocational English classes adequate regarding the different issues such as course hours, materials, language instruction, etc. (items 9-14), and what kind of problems they experience in those classes (items 15-23). Some significant differences obtained from the study are also revealed.

To determine the student groups' academic and vocational English needs, Table 3 indicates their reasons for learning English. The student groups seem to be undecided on most of the reasons why they are learning English. However, all the groups have a concensus on learning English in order to be able to communicate with patients in their workplace, and this gets the highest mean average among all the student groups. The second and third-year nursing students' mean values are the same (3.88); and the mean values for the second, third and fourth-year midwifery students are 3.74, 3.65 and 3.79, respectively. There is no significant difference regarding this item (p>.05). The second-year midwifery and nursing students, the third-year nursing students and the fourth-year midwifery students agree about learning English in order to pursue a Master or PhD degree (3.78, 3.64, 3.59 and 4.05, respectively). Apart from that, both the third-year nursing and the fourth-year midwifery students agree upon the fact that they are learning English to follow the developments related to their field from different sources in English (M=3.50, 3.65, respectively). Only the fourth-grade midwifery students seem to agree that they are learning English to work abroad (M=3.43), which was also found important by some first and second year nursery students in the study of Miyake and Tremarco (2005), and to have the English Proficiency Exam for Academicians (ÜDS) which is a national exam taken particularly by academicians and measures their English proficiency level. (M=3.68). In terms of the first and sixth item, all the student groups are not certain about "course requirement" and "learning English to attend conferences, seminars and symposiums in English" as a reason for learning English.

Table 3. ANOVA results for perceptions of the student groups about the reasons for learning English

Items	Groups	N	M	SD	F	P
1. Course requirement	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.23	1.33		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.14	1.54		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.08	1.42	0.126	.973
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.06	1.51		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.06	1.40		
2. To follow the developments related to the field from different sources in English	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.06	1.27		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.98	1.35		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.65	1.19		
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.26	1.46	2.260	.064
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.50	1.04		
3. To increase job opportunities	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.57	1.28		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.21	1.38		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.88	1.30	1.827	.125
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.80	1.27		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.68	1.11		
4. To work abroad	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.19	1.40		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.65	1.33		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.43	1.27	2.845	.025
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.40	1.24		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.93	1.18		
5. To pursue a Master or Ph. D. degree	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.78	1.22		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.11	1.43		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	4.05	1.10	3.250	.013
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.64	1.33		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.59	1.16		
6. To attend conferences / seminars / symposiums in English	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.28	1.20		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.51	1.30		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.17	1.25	2.851	.025
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.18	1.40		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.81	1.16		
7. To be able to communicate with the foreign patients in our work place	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.74	1.08		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.65	1.08		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.79	1.06	0.339	.852
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.88	1.28		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.88	0.99		
8. To have the Proficiency Exam for Academicians	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.23	1.39		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.39	1.35		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.68	1.13	1.112	.352
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.16	1.41		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.31	1.21		

Table 4. ANOVA results for perceptions of the student groups about the adequacy of the vocational English classes

Items	Groups	N	M	SD	F	p
9. Total amount of course hours	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.21	1.45		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.07	1.47		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.54	1.31	1.147	.335
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.96	1.32		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.20	1.42		
10. Language instruction	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.30	1.37		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.31	1.29		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.54	1.32	1.237	.296
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.96	1.29		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.22	1.23		
11. Visual aids	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.28	1.37		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.17	0.97		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	2.34	1.23	0.282	.889
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.12	1.13		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.20	1.13		
12. Audio aids	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.36	1.34		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.26	1.16		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	2.65	1.41	0.653	.626
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.32	1.09		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.36	1.18		
13. The subjects in the course materials	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.75	1.34		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.60	1.18		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.32	1.23	2.934	.022
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.66	1.09		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.61	1.10		
14. The content of the course materials	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.76	1.29		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.65	1.19		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.43	1.18	3.071	.017
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.81	1.06		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.93	1.06		

This part of the questionnaire shows whether the student groups find the vocational English classes adequate or not. In items 9-14, most of the student groups agree on the fact that the audio and visual materials are inadequate in the courses. Their mean values vary from 2.12 to 2.65. They are the most significant inadequacies experienced in the classes according to the questionnaire results. Taşçı (2007) also indicated that there was a need to provide technological equipment in the study conducted on medical students to explore their English needs. Besides, there is no siginificant difference for these two items (p>.05) in the present study. Most of the groups seem undecided about the other inadequacies listed in Table 4 in general.

Table 5. ANOVA results for perceptions of the student groups about the reasons for difficulties in understanding vocational English

Items	Groups	N	M	SD	F	p
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.86	1.38		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.52	1.43		
15. Poor general English grammar	Midwifery 4th year	46	4.14	0.99	3.369	.011
	Nursing 2nd year	50	347	1.23		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.25	1.43		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	4.17	1.29		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.95	1.28		
16. Poor general English vocabulary	Midwifery 4th year	46	4.32	0.87	2.794	.027
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.98	1.05		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.54	1.35		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	4.19	1.28		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	4.04	1.20		
17. Poor vocational English vocabulary	Midwifery 4th year	46	4.04	0.81	1.154	.332
	Nursing 2nd year	50	4.02	1.03		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.70	1.26		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.37	1.55		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.54	1.20		
18. Poor English reading skill	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.94	1.03	2.860	.024
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.36	1.11		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.06	1.37		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.15	1.55		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.42	1.26		
19. Poor English writing skill	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.63	1.17	1.902	.111
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.18	1.04		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.93	1.45		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.15	1.39		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.27	1.09		
20. Poor English listening comprehension	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.50	1.12	1.523	.196
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.28	1.16		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.88	1.29		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.58	1.47		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.77	1.06		
21. Poor English speaking skill	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.86	1.08	2.224	.067
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.71	1.06		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.15	1.36		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.35	1.43		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.47	1.24		
22. Poor English pronunciation	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.84	1.13	2.975	.020
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.38	1.13		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.93	1.35		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.93	1.30		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.57	1.22		
23. The course materials that are not tailored to our level	Midwifery 4th year	46	2.69	1.26	0.715	.582
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.91	1.29		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.68	1.19		

In order to investigate the students' academic and vocational English needs in the School of Health, the reasons for why they have difficulties in understanding vocational English are elicited. According to the results, poor general English grammar is one of the most problematic areas for the students. Apart from the third-year nursing students, the second-year nursing and midwifery students, the third-year and the fourth-year midwifery students agree they have problems with their general English grammar (M=3.47, 3.86, 3.52 and 4.14, respectively). Additionally, the results indicate that there is a significant difference between the fourth-year midwifery students and the third-year midwifery, the second-year and the third-year nursing students (p<.05).

As can be seen in Table 5, the student groups seem to have poor general English vocabulary. The fourth-year midwifery students strongly agree upon this item (M=4.32). The other groups also agree to have this problem. Their mean values are as follows: 4.17 (Midwifery 2), 3.95 (Midwifery 3), 3.98 (Nursing 2) and 3.54 (Nursing 3). One way ANOVA results also reveal a significant difference between the third-year nursing students and the second and fourth-year midwifery students (p<.05) regarding this item. The results obtained from the item "poor professional English vocabulary" indicate that all the student groups agree that it causes them to have difficulties in their classes. Their mean values vary from 3.70 to 4.19. In the study of Chia et al. (1999), it was also revealed that limited vocabulary was one of the most problematic areas for the medical students.

As for reading, the third and fourth-grade midwifery students agree that poor reading skills create difficulties in class (M=3.54, 3.94, respectively) whereas the remaining groups, including the second-year midwifery and nursing students (M= 3.37 and 3.36, respectively) and the third-year nursing students (M= 3.06), are not certain about it. Poor speaking skill is also perceived as a problematic area among the groups except for third-year nursing students who are uncertain about it. Regarding poor pronunciation, the third and fourth-year midwifery students agree to have this problem with the average means of 3.47 and 3.84, respectively.

It is indicated in Table 5 that only the fourth-grade midwifery students agree that poor listening comprehension is a problem for them (M=3.50). Regarding poor writing skills, it is seen that the third and fourth-grade midwifery students agree to have poor writing skills (M=3.42 and 3.63, respectively). However, the rest of the student groups seem to be uncertain about this. Their results vary from 2.93 to 3.18.

The Importance of Language Skills

The second section consisting of items 24-53 mainly indicates how much importance the student groups attach to the four language skills, i.e. reading, writing, listening and speaking, and their sub-skills. The students' academic and vocational English needs are elicited in terms of the four English skills.

The results indicate in Table 6 that speaking skills are regarded as the most important skill among the groups with the mean averages varying from 3.28 to 3.47. However, in the studies carried out by Chia et al. (1999) and Taşçı (2007) on medical students, the students perceived reading as the most important skill, and reading was followed by speaking or listening skills. In the present study, listening is perceived by the fourth-year midwifery students as a very important skill (M=3.30). The other skills are found important by the groups. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of the students (p>.05)

Table 6. ANOVA results for perceptions of the student groups about the importance of English language skills

Items	Groups	N	M	SD	F	p
24. READING	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.11	0.75		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.92	0.90		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.26	0.57	1.476	.210
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.96	0.96		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.18	0.65		
25. WRITING	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.88	0.83		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.75	0.82		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.08	0.78	1.104	.355
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.90	0.88		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.02	0.69		
26. LISTENING	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.25	0.78		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.15	0.72		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.30	0.55	0.430	.787
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.14	0.85		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.22	0.67		
27. SPEAKING	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.30	0.78		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.25	0.79		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.48	0.61	0.906	.461
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.28	1.01		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.47	0.66		

The results for the student groups' academic and vocational English reading skills are presented in Table 7. First of all, there is not a significant difference regarding all the items (p>.05) in the perceptions of the students. However, Table 7 suggests that one of the most important sub-reading skills for the student groups is "understanding the vocational terms in articles/texts", and the second-year, the third and fourth-year midwifery students and the third-year nursing students perceive understanding the vocational terms in articles/texts as a very important skill (M=3.28, 3.30, 3.39 and 3.45, respectively). "Translating English texts into Turkish" is regarded as very important by third-year nursing and fourth-year midwifery students, and their mean averages are 3.27 and 3.26, respectively. "Guessing the new words in an article/a text without using a dictionary" is related to the vocabulary in articles or texts as well, and all the student groups find it important. The mean values for this item are as follows: 3.13 (Midwifery 2), 3.02 (Midwifery 3), 3.11 (Midwifery 4), 3.04 (Nursing 2) and 3.20 (Nursing 3). "Answering reading comprehension questions in a classwork, in an exam or for an assignment" and "answering true/false questions related to a text" are also perceived as two most important reading skills. The remaining reading skills are generally considered important by the groups.

Table 7. ANOVA results for perceptions of the student groups about the importance of English reading skills

Items	Groups	N	M	SD	F	P
28. Reading an article/a text for general information	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.86	0.86		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.75	0.88		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.10	0.70	1.829	.124
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.92	0.82		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.13	0.86		
29. Reading an article/a text to find out specific information	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.03	0.88		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.92	0.87	0.884	.474
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.19	0.68		

	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.10	0.86		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.20	0.66		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.88	0.83		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.63	0.82		
30. Reading an article/a text to find out the main idea	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.04	0.78	1.394	.237
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.88	0.87		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.86	0.76		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.90	0.84		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.58	0.86		
31. Reading texts in detail	Midwifery 4th year	46	2.93	0.90	1.175	.323
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.80	1.01		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.90	0.74		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.13	0.86		
32. Guessing the terminology in an article/a text without using a dictionary	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.02	0.82		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.11	0.79	0.372	.828
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.04	0.83		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.20	0.63		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.28	0.77		
33. Understanding the proffessional terms in articles/texts	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.30	0.55		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.39	0.71	1.100	.357
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.18	0.71		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.45	0.66		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.01	0.91		
34. Summarizing a text orally or in a written form	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.82	0.89		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.08	0.89	.538	.708
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.96	0.85		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.97	0.66		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.26	0.84		
35. Answering reading comprehension questions in a classwork, in an exam or for an assigment	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.19	0.67		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.30	0.59	1.517	.198
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.00	0.75		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.02	0.75		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.17	0.75		
36. Answering true/false questions related to a text	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.24	0.62		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.23	0.60	1.276	.280
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.98	0.71		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.06	0.75		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.21	0.84		
37. Translating English texts into Turkish	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.22	0.87		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.26	0.77	0.265	.900
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.12	0.82		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.27	0.72		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.82	0.92		
38. Understanding the grammatical structures in texts	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.82	0.91		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	2.91	0.78	0.546	.702
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.86	0.78		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.04	0.71		

Table 8. ANOVA results for perceptions of the student groups about the importance of English writing skills

Items	Groups	N	M	SD	F	p
39. Answering the questions in a written form, in an exam or in a classwork	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.96	0.90	1.054	.380
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.04	0.73		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.02	0.61		
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.80	0.85		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.11	0.81		
40. Writing medical reports	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.86	0.92	0.880	.477
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.58	0.99		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	2.89	0.84		
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.88	0.93		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.87	0.81		
41. Writing a paragraph on a topic related to our field	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.01	0.72	1.253	.289
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.68	0.98		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.04	0.78		
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.94	0.97		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.99	0.77		
42. Being able to use the appropriate proffessional terms while writing a text	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.15	0.75	0.573	.682
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.09	0.73		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.15	0.66		
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.04	0.75		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.25	0.68		
43. Being able to form grammatically correct sentences while writing	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.00	0.84	0.337	.853
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.92	0.90		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.10	0.84		
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.04	0.83		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.09	0.74		

In terms of the students' academic and vocational English writing skills, the results in Table 8 indicate that all the writing skills presented in the questionnaire are perceived as important among the student groups. Moreover, the results of nearly all the items in this skill are in the same range of importance, and the mean averages of some groups are slightly higher than the others.

According to the results regarding the students' academic and vocational English listening skills, "understanding foreign patients" is deemed very important with the mean values varying from 3.28 to 3.52. "Understanding a short lecture on a topic related to their field and vocational terms in a lecture" are found very important by the groups. The third-year nursing students perceive "understanding daily speeches as very important" (M= 3.41), whereas the remaining groups think it is important. However, in general, listening skills are perceived as highly important among the groups.

Table 9. ANOVA results for perceptions of the student groups about the importance of English listening skills

Items	Groups	N	M	SD	F	p
44. Understanding daily speeches	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.11	0.70		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.04	0.83		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.23	0.73	2.378	.053
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.96	0.87		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.41	0.69		
45. Understanding foreign patients	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.45	0.60		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.29	0.74		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.28	0.71	1.019	.399
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.52	0.70		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.44	0.75		
46. Understanding a short lecture on a topic related to our field	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.37	0.65		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.26	0.74		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.26	0.68	0.920	.453
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.42	0.64		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.48	0.60		
47. Understanding proffessional terms in the lecture	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.39	0.62		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.29	0.71		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.36	0.64	0.370	.830
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.36	0.59		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.46	0.72		

As for the students' academic and vocational English speaking skills, the results show that particularly, "talking to foreign patients" is found to be very important by the second-year midwifery and nursing students and the third-grade nursing students with the average means of 3.42, 3.40 and 3.41, respectively. This skill gets the highest mean averages among the groups compared to the remaining speaking skills. In addition, the second year midwifery students find "being able to form grammatically correct sentences while speaking" a very important skill (M=3.39). The second-year nursing students consider "being able to use the appropriate vocational terms" very important (M=3.32) while the third-year nursing students perceive "being able to carry out daily conversations" as very important (M=3.29).

Table 10. ANOVA results for perceptions of the student groups about the importance of English speaking skills

Items	Groups	N	M	SD	F	p
48. Being able to carry out daily conversations	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.92	0.83		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	2.87	0.84		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	2.93	0.80	2.019	.093
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.96	0.80		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.29	0.63		
49. Asking and answering questions in class	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.09	0.72		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.07	0.72		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.13	0.58	0.477	.752
	Nursing 2nd year	50	2.96	0.80		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.13	0.73		
50. Talking to foreign patients	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.42	0.56		
	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.14	0.61	2.060	.087
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.17	0.73		

	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.40	0.69		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.41	0.65		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.32	0.66		
51. Making a presentation on a topic related to our field	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.13	0.86		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	2.78	0.88	1.162	.328
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.08	0.91		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.94	0.81		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	2.95	0.86		
52. Being able to use the appropriate proffessional terms while speaking	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.25	0.73		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	3.17	0.70	1.402	.234
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.32	0.73		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	3.08	0.69		
	Midwifery 2nd year	52	3.39	0.68		
53. Being able to form grammatically correct sentences while speaking	Midwifery 3rd year	41	3.01	0.77		
	Midwifery 4th year	46	2.95	0.80	1.056	.379
	Nursing 2nd year	50	3.06	0.77		
	Nursing 3rd year	44	2.90	0.76		

Interview Results

General Views about ESP and ESP Courses

In accordance with the questionnaire, the students were first asked about their reasons for learning English. Apart from the fact that it is "course requirement", most of the students pointed out that they wished to "pursue an academic career" and "follow English resources related to their fields". Majority of the students emphasized the fact that English is "a universal language". Particularly, the second-year nursing students wished to "communicate with foreign patients", and the fourth-year midwifery students wanted to "have a chance of working abroad".

In the interview, the students were also asked about their opinions on vocational English in terms of some issues such as course cours, materials, language instruction and etc. Regarding their opinions on courses in general, a few second- year midwifery and third-year nursing students mentioned about some "English level differences among the students". Some of the second year nursing students pointed out to "the neccessity and unnecessity of the classes" claiming that general English would be enough to communicate with patients if one does not plan to follow an academic career. Considering the class hours, particularly, the fourth-year students thought they were adequate as they had two-hour course a week whereas the second-year students had only one-hour course a week.

The students opinions on the materials comply with the results obtained in the questionnaire. Most of the students from different groups expressed the inadequacy of audio-visual materials used in the classes as shown by the following sample quotation:

> *"[...] The material is already inadequate. When there are no visual materials and when the material is only in a written format, what we learn is not permanent. Besides, as the time is limited and we do not hear or see what we learn, we forget it so easily."(Nur. 3 G)*

Integration of listening and speaking skills in the material are also highly accentuated by the third-year nursing students. In regard to the language instruction, the most frequently stated issue that was mentioned by the second and third-year nursing students was the fact that "the classes were mainly based on memorization" and it would be much better if the classes were more meaning oriented as shown by the following:

"The classes are totally based on memorization. We just memorize the words and take the exams. In fact, we do not learn." (Nur. 3 C)

The students were also asked what kind of language difficulties they had in their vocational English courses. In terms of the four skills, the most frequently stated difficulty was "poor speaking skill". It was followed by "poor pronunciation", "listening comprehension" and "reading". Apart from the skills, most of the student groups remarked that they generally had difficulties with English "grammar". It was followed by "poor vocational vocabulary". Some extracts are given from the interviews in the following:

"[...] Speaking is a bigger problem for us; for instance, so many complicated sentences go across our mind, but although we could express them in a more simple way, we cannot do that." (Nur. 2 J)

"As we do not exactly know English grammar, we have great difficulties with vocational English… We cannot even make a sentence. We do not know where a subject or a verb should be." (Mid. 4 I)

"We have great difficulty with words in this English course as we do not know the words, and there are not enough sources for vocational English." (Mid. 4 A)

The Importance of Language Skills

In this section, the student groups were asked how important they found four English language skills and what could be done related to these skills. Detailed and elaborate responses were obtained from the students.

Most of the students claimed that all the skills were equally important and related to each other. Totally 56% of the interviewed students comprised on the equality of four skills. Some of the students supported the fact that speaking was the most important skill. Speaking was followed by listening and reading.

Regarding reading skills, some of the students stated the need of "understanding English articles related to their field for different reasons". They generally wanted to understand them for their future academic career or to be able to use them when they prepared an assignment or a presentation for their main courses. Besides, a few students mentioned about "translating", and two second-year nursing students (4%) pointed out that it might be helpful to "understand English instructions on health equipment and supplies". In terms of writing, the students made very few comments. However, 18% of the students made their remarks on listening skill. They expressed that they could "listen to records and watch videos on illnesses, midwife/nurse-patient dialogues or on different topics in English" to increase their listening comprehension.

The most commented skill was speaking. 40% of the students thought it would be useful to "prepare and carry out sketches/dialogues in English to communicate with foreign patients or use daily language" as can be seen in the following quotation:

"We are just covering some topics, but, for example, we do not know how we could talk to a patient, and we can also learn to use some daily language expressions. [...] Dialogues and sketches would make what we learn more permanent." (Nur. 3 E)

Apart from that, a few midwifery students stated that they could prepare a presentation of a topic they prepared. In relation to four skills, a significant number of students stressed the need to "focus on grammar to be able to acquire four skills" more easily and efficiently as illustrated below:

"I think that before everything, a good knowledge of grammar is required. For someone who does not know grammar or how to form a sentence, reading, writing, etc. do not mean much. (Nur. 3 G)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A needs analysis was conducted with the nursing and midwifery students of the School of Health offering Turkish-medium courses at Mersin University to determine their academic and vocational English needs in order to improve the current curriculum, materials and language instruction.

The results showed that the fourth-year midwifery students seemed to be more certain about their reasons for learning English. It may stem from the fact that they are about to graduate and have some future plans. For instance, the questionnaire results showed that only the fourth year midwifery students wanted to have ÜDS, which is a language proficiency exam based on only reading skill. Furthermore, in terms of following the developments related to the students' field, only the third-year nursing and the fourth-year midwifery students agreed to this item. Most of the student groups believed that knowing English might increase job opportunities for them. According to the study of Chia et al. (1999), it was also found out that English was important for students' future careers. In a needs analysis study carried out by Miyake and Tremarco (2005) to explore the English needs of undergraduate, postgraduate and working nurses, it was also shown that some of the first and second year nursing students expressed that they needed English to increase job opportunities and work abroad. The fourth-year midwifery students also considered knowing English as an opportunity to work abroad in the future in the present study. The same result was obtained in the interviews, as well. Furthermore, all the groups agreed to learn English to be able to talk to foreign patients in case they met some at their work place.

Regarding the students' general opinion on the courses, the student groups were especially negative about both visual and audio aids. In the study of Taşçı (2007) conducted with the medical students, the questionnaire results also indicated that the student groups disagreed about the adequacy of technological equipment and their usage. Apart from that, particularly, the interview results showed that some more listening and speaking skills and grammar activities should be integrated into the classes, and the classes should be more active and learning-oriented rather than focus on memorizing some vocational vocabulary.

According to the results, most of the students are specifically in the opinion of experiencing difficulties with speaking, grammar and general and vocational vocabulary although they had problems with the other skills as well. In the study of Mazdayasna and Tahririan (2008), it was shown that after the students passed their English course, they had problems with using grammatical structures and medical terminology appropriately. Besides, most of the students were of the opinion that all the four skills should be integrated into the course.

The questionnaire results indicate that speaking is found the most important skill by the student groups. Speaking is followed by listening. The fourth-year midwifery students value reading a little more than the other groups. It may be related to the fact that they are about to graduate, and some of them may be planing to have ÜDS exam or to follow an academic career. In the interviews, the students also highly valued speaking even though most of them thought the skills were equally important. In the study of Chia et al. (1999), the medical students consider reading the most important skill followed by listening, writing and speaking. However, the present study shows that in general, although the students value all the skills, it can be also observed that they value speaking and listening more than reading and writing, and writing gets the lowest mean average. Lee's study (1998) conducted with the in-service and full time nursing students supports the present study, and speaking and listening skills were considered the most important skills by both of the groups in that study.

In terms of reading skills, genereally all the skills are perceived as important by the groups. Translation skill is deemed very important by the third-year nursing and the fourth-year midwifery students. In general, the students who are about to graduate find translation more important.

In general, listening skill gets high mean averages according to the questionnaire results of the students. In the study, most of the student groups also found understanding foreign patients very important. Particularly, in the interviews, the students suggested that it be very useful to to the records or watch videos on illnesses/midwife/nurse-patient dialogues or on different topics in English to improve their listening skill. In the study of Hwang and Lin (2010), the majority of the respondents claimed that they liked learning from television/video/DVD/films, CDs/cassettes (40.8%), radio (37.0%) and the internet (33.8%), as well. Thus, the results indicate that the instructors need to integrate some audio-visual materials for both improving the students' listening comprehension and making the classes more enjoyable.

Among speaking skills, "talking to foreign patients" is the item that is found more important than the other items by the students, particularly by the second-year nursing and midwifery and the third-year nursing students. According to the study of Lee (1998), in-service students agreed that they needed English for nursing purposes (ENP) in their daily career tasks. The interviews conducted with the students also reveal that the students wish to carry out dialogues or sketches in the classes to improve their communication skills with foreign patients and daily language. Hwang and Lin (2010) indicated that that a great amount of the students studying in the medical faculty believed carrying on daily conversations was the most important speaking skill. Taşçı (2007) also suggests that role play activities be used in the classes to practice communicating with foreign patients in real life situations in the medical context. Besides, speaking activities could be very helpful in increasing the students' motivation, their speaking abilities and the knowledge of vocational English.

In general, the results of the questionnaire and interviews conducted with the students revealed that the four English skills should be developed, in particular speaking and listening acitvities. The materials need to be improved by integrating some speaking and listening skills. In the classes, an environment could be created in which the students do not have to memorize some words but participate in the classes and develop their communication and comprehension skills through dialogues and sketches and subject-specific texts.

REFERENCES

Baştürkmen, H. (1998). A needs analysis project at Kuwait University. *Forum.* 36 (1), 2-5.

Brown, J. (1995). *The elements of language curriculum. A systematic approach to curriculum development.* Boston: Heinle & Heinle

Çelik, S. (2007). *An investigation into students' academic and occupational English language needs*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Bilkent. Ankara.

Chia, H.-U., Johnson, R., Chia, H. L., & Olive, F. (1999). English for college students in Taiwan: A study of perceptions of English needs in a medical context. *English for Specific Purposes.* 18 (2). 107-119.

Cohen, L. (2003). *Research methods in education.* London: Routledge.

Dudley-Evans, T. & St. John, M. J. (2001). *Developments in English for specific purposes: A multi-disciplinary Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Evans, S. & Green, C. (2007). Why EAP is necessary: A survey of Hong Kong tertiary students. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes.* 6 (1). 3-17.

Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (2004). *English for specific purposes: A learning-centered Approach.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hwang, Y., & Lin, S. (2010). A study of medical students' linguistic needs in Taiwan. *The Asian ESP Journal.* 6 (1). 35-58.

Kırkgöz, Y. (2005). Motivation and student perception of studying in an English-medium university. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies.* 1 (1). 101-123.

Kostak, M.A., Akarsu, Ö., & Ergül, G.D. (2012). Edirne Sağlık Yükseokulu öğrencilerinin profili. *Fırat Sağlık Hizmetleri Dergisi.* 7 (19). 39-59

Krajka, J. (2009). English for specific purposes on the world wide web: A proposal for a web-based coursebook supplement. *ESP World.* 25 (8). Retrieved August 16, 2009, from

http://www.esp-world.info/articles_5/ESP%20ON%20THE%20WWW 2.htm

Lee, C. Y. (1998). English for nursing purposes: A needs assessment for professional-oriented curriculum design. *Academic Journal of Kang-Ning*. 1 (1). 55-72.

Mazdayasna, G., & Tahririan, M.H. (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 (4). 277-289.

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis (*2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks. CA: Sage.

Miyake, M., & Tremarco, J. (2005). Needs analysis for nursing students utilizing questionnaires and interviews. *Kawasaki Journal of Medical Welfare. 11 (1)*. 23-34.

Nugraha, M. (2002). Triangulation of instrumentation and data source: A stronger method in assessing English language needs. *K@ta*. 4 (2). 148-161.

Richards, J. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Taşçı, Ç. (2007). *An analysis of medical students' English language needs*. Unpublished master's thesis. University of Bilkent. Ankara.

Yiğit, R., Esenay, F. I., & Derebent, E. (2007). Türkiye'de hemşirelik son sınıf öğrencilerinin profili. *Cumhuriyet Üniversitesi HYO Dergisi*. 11(3). 1-12.