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A LANGUAGE FOCUSED NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR EFL SPEAKING IN PREPARATORY PROGRAMS: A CASE IN TURKEY

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the speaking needs of the Turkish EFL learners of pre-intermediate level enrolled in a language preparatory program at a foundation (non-profit, private) university in Istanbul, Turkey. Specifically, the study attempts to identify the speaking needs of the students, find out whether the obtained needs are met in the existing program and lastly, examine their perceptions about the importance of speaking and their performance in this particular skill. 80 students, 17 instructors and the level and the program coordinator participated in this study. The data were collected both quantitatively and qualitatively from needs analysis questionnaires, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. The findings revealed that all groups of participants attached great importance to almost all speaking sub-skills. However, there were remarkable differences and similarities between their perceptions in terms of speaking performance. Based on the obtained findings, recommendations and implications to improve the existing speaking syllabus in the preparatory program are provided.

Keywords: Needs Analysis, Speaking Skill, Speaking Performance, English Preparatory Program, EFL.

YABANCI DİL OLARAK İNGİLİZCE ÖĞRETEN HAZIRLIK PROGRAMLARINDA DİL ODAKLI KONUŞMA İHTİYAÇ ANALİZİ: TÜRKİYE’ DE BİR DURUM

Özet

Bu çalışmanın amacı, İstanbul, Türkiye’deki bir vakıf (kar amacı gütmeyen, özel) üniversitesinin dil hazırlık programında yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenen orta alt seviyedeki Türk öğrencilerin konuşma ihtiyaçlarını araştırmaktır. Bu çalışmada öğrencilerin konuşma ihtiyaçlarını belirlemeyi, ihtiyaçların mevcut programda karşılanıp karşılanmadığını ortaya çıkarmayı ve konuşmanın önemine ve öğrencilerin konuşma performansına dair algılarını belirtmeyi hedeflemektedir. Katılımcıları, orta alt seviyedeki 80 öğrenci, 17 öğretim üyesi ve bu seviyedeki koordinatöründen ve direktöründen oluşturmaktadır. Nicel ve nitel araştırma modeli içeren bu çalışmada veriler; ihtiyaç analizi anketleri, sınıf gözlemleri ve yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerle toplanmıştır. Bulgular, katılımcıların neredeyse tüm konuşma ve alt becerilerine büyük önem verdiğini ortaya koymaktadır; ancak öğrenciler ile akademik personelin algıları arasında öğrencilerin konuşma performansı bakımından belirgin farklılıklar ve benzerlikler belirlenmiştir. Sonuçlara göre, mevcut programının geliştirilmesine yönelik öneriler sunulmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İhtiyaç Analizi, Konuşma Becerisi, Konuşma Performansı, İngilizce Hazırlık Programı, Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Eğitimi.

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INTRODUCTION

In the last few decades, learning a second/foreign language has become self-evident. Learning different languages helps to communicate in different contexts and with different cultures. That said, the need for knowing a language different from the speaker's mother tongue is vital to communicate across cultures and understand others' point of view. To meet these needs, English, which is considered as the lingua franca has become a vital for communication in various contexts. According to Crystal (2000), there are 1.5 billion speakers of English around the world. Namely, one-fourth of the world's population interact with one another through English, which is viewed as a worldwide language and has increased its importance in all social areas of the world. Regarding the increasing needs to learn this global language, English has become paramount in education.

Nevertheless, not all learners find an opportunity to be exposed to this language though. That's why, they are generally involved in one-year language preparatory programs that aim to have them with an adequate proficiency level at the end of the program in order to be able to help the learners follow their undergraduate studies effectively. In these preparatory programs, learners are placed at different levels ranging from beginner to upper-intermediate. The levels of learners are determined by assessing them in terms of four skills of reading, listening, speaking, and writing, which ends up with significant results for both learners and the success of the program. As stated by Turk (2009), the four skills of reading, listening, writing and speaking exist in language learning, as supported by development of four language skills in crucial for effective communication. These skills are divided into two groups as the productive and receptive skills. The productive skills are writing and speaking, and the receptive skills are reading and listening. Obviously, the development of these language skills plays a crucial role both in the learning and teaching process in language classrooms.

Furthermore, the performance in the four language skills has been a major focus with the goal of effective communication. However, apart from listening, speaking, writing, and reading, speaking has always been viewed by the learners and teachers as the most difficult skill to develop (Oradee, 2012). There are numerous reasons for learners to fall behind the level desired by teachers and the curriculum. According to Oradee (2012), one of the major reasons is mainly connected to learners being deprived of enough exposure to the target language and its culture. Turk (2009) stated that many learners believe that speaking a language is equal to knowing a language. This is supported by Nunan (1991) who contended that success is measured in terms of carrying out a conversation in the target language. It is also claimed by Lawtie (2004) that if students are not taught how to speak or do not obtain a chance to speak in the language classroom, they might lose their motivation and interest in learning. To raise interest and to encourage communication, activities appropriate to students' levels may be chosen to make learning more fun, to create curiosity and to provide a better dynamic atmosphere in the classroom.

Similarly, according to Turk (2009), the majority of class time is spent on reading and writing practice whereas speaking and listening skills are generally ignored. If the aim of a language course is to guide students to communicate in English, then they should practice speaking in the classroom. Although there have been certain teaching methods which aim to build all four skills together, the result is still not sufficient to develop the ability to speak. One of the reasons behind this might be the lack of course materials and books, or the philosophy

behind these methods not being grasped well by language teachers. In addition, in the traditional methods of teaching language, whereas writing and reading skills are heavily focused on, speaking and listening skills are neglected considerably. An old method called The Grammar-Translation method might be a good example of this.

Furthermore, as Richard & Rodgers (2001) claimed, other skills of language were given much more attention despite the fact that speaking skill is highly significant for language learners in terms of communication. To put it differently, although many people take foreign language courses in all stages of their education lives today, a common problem shared by many people is the inability to speak the foreign language being learnt. This is supported by Vijaya and Swamy (2016) who, say that despite the fact that speaking English is regarded as one of the most important skills, a lot of students face difficulty in speaking this language. This can hinder their performance in fulfilling the basic requirements of successful communication during interviews.

Regarding these viewpoints, both students' communication in a foreign language and teachers' evaluation might be viewed as challenging, but crucial in language learning. From these perspectives, it can be implied that there might be different purposes and reasons for learners to learn the target language. As a result, learners have different kinds of needs based on their purpose for learning a language as well as the process of learning itself.

Rahman (2012) indicated that English language needs analysis can determine the language needs of students in a specific field. Therefore, a needs analysis is utilized to reveal the needs of learners. Ekici (2003) also indicated that in order to fulfil the aim of needs assessment, two steps need to be followed. Applied to a language-learning context, they may be defined as the process of determining the needs for which a learner requires a language and arranging the needs according to learners' priorities. When the needs of learners are considered, Long (2005) contended that each language teaching course should be designed thorough needs analysis and every language course should be considered a course with specific purposes. Thanks to needs analysis, ultimate goals for language courses and programs can be achieved. With the help of needs analysis, the needs of students as to the four fundamental skills can be determined.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As previously mentioned, there are four essential skills including receptive and productive skills in language learning. Receptive skills are reading and listening while productive skills are speaking and writing. Among these four skills, speaking is vital for effective communication. To put it differently, oral communication is an undeniably important factor in foreign language education even though many students experience difficulty while developing their oral communication. Likewise, considering the perceptions of learners in terms of their own needs for communication, oral communication is regarded as essential (Chen, Chang and Chang, 2016).

According to MacIntyre (2007) and Trent (2009), one of the four key and pivotal skills of language that should be developed is speaking as a productive skill since the ability to communicate effectively benefits second language (L2) learners by giving them self-confidence and improving performance in the rest of the language skills. Besides, learners can develop their knowledge of the target language by interacting with others thanks to speaking as being able to

speak is regarded as knowing a language because speech is the most basic means of communication (Turk, 2009).

Furthermore, the importance of mastering speaking skills in the target language arises when the language learners are aware of the impact it can have on the success of their future careers (Saeed et al., 2016). That's why; learners possessing various speaking needs and purposes, such as for their career, for pleasure, for an oral exam etc. need to have their needs recognized and be involved in an interactive process. Otherwise, producing speaking without taking learners' own needs into consideration might not be regarded as beneficial for learners regarding their progress in speaking.

Focusing on the significance and development communication and technology, speaking skill has been recently prioritized among other skills. Therefore, it is required to recognize the speaking needs of learners, and the necessary environmental factors, activities, syllabuses etc. need to be designed in line with the learners' speaking needs and learning processes.

Regarding these assumptions, learners today are encouraged to get involved in various speaking tasks that include activities related to their own lives. According to Riggenbach and Lazaraton (1991), communicative and fluent speaking activities depend on the learners' interpreting real knowledge and communicating it in real life contexts. As speaking cannot be considered as a separate skill from daily life situations, fostering it via communicative activities such as role plays, dialogues, discussions etc. in the classroom might contribute to learners' speaking performance.

Linked with needs of learners in speaking such as asking and answering questions, expressing oneself, describing etc., Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (Richards, 2001) has come into play with a focus on communication in teaching as an organizing principle instead of a focus on mastery of the grammatical system of the languages. Briefly, CLT emphasizes teaching language with the aim of fostering learners' communicative competence via authentic contexts. Taking real life contexts into consideration, learners have different aims and needs in speaking varying from expressing ideas, opinions etc. as mentioned in Demirbas' (2011) study. To acquire the communication skills based on the ultimate goals in speaking, learners need to be motivated both in and out of class. The setting in class is also required to be arranged in a manner similar to real life settings to make learning more meaningful, and learners should be involved in freer meaningful practices rather than controlled ones (Riggenbach & Lazaraton, 1991).

With respect to the aforementioned assumptions above, both learners and teachers need to follow certain paths to enhance students' speaking performance. To do so, first, the needs of the target group of learners need to be identified so that they can be met. Another factor influencing the development of learners' speaking process is the classroom atmosphere in which learners are involved in communicative tasks. In other words, there is a need to provide an atmosphere in which learners feel free to speak and interact with other learners. In addition, meaningful and communicative activities can serve as beneficial motives for reducing anxiety and speaking problems and might contribute to learners' confidence through socializing. Finally, as observed by Talley and Hui-ling's (2014), a curriculum for teaching speaking skill should strive to expose learners to authentic, practical settings for speaking English as well as trigger active learner involvement in the lesson.

Moreover, various factors affecting learners speaking performance should be taken into consideration. To exemplify, Tuan and Mai (2015) determined the factors that have an impact on students' speaking performance including motivation, confidence, anxiety, time, planning, amount of support, standard performance, listening ability and feedback during speaking activities. It is also argued in their study that in order to provide a successful conversation for learners, learners must have good listening skills to understand what is said to them. It is required for learners to actively participate by sharing ideas and speaking freely, thus every speaker has the role of listener and speaker.

In line with the previous views, while enhancing learners' speaking skill, there are many factors affecting this process and learners of different language proficiency levels have different needs. As the pre-intermediate (B1) level is considered as the level where learners first start to be involved in unprepared conversations instead of only responding to questions, they must improve certain abilities in speaking. For example, unprepared dialogues on familiar topics can be performed. What's more, descriptive feelings, experiences and events can be linked via phrases into the speech. The sub-skills of speaking such as reasoning, explaining, narrating a story or a book, and describing someone or something can be managed at this level as well (Demirbas, 2011). Therefore, identifying the speaking needs of learners at this level can help them to improve their performance and set a ground for future purposeful speaking courses for designing and implementing language syllabi.

As previously mentioned in this research, it is required to analyse learners' needs to contribute to their learning process with respect to their aims. The "analysis of needs" first appeared in West Bengal, a province of India when West (1994) introduced the concept of "needs" to cover what learners will be required to do with the foreign language in the target situation and how learners might best master the language during the learning period. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) asserted different definitions and classifications concerning "needs." They used three terms to explain "needs" such as 'necessities', 'wants' and 'lacks.' They define 'necessities' as the type of need determined by the demands of the target situation, that is, what the learner should know in order to work effectively and efficiently in the target situation. Another viewpoint stated by Richards, Platt and Platt (1992) is that needs analysis is the process of identifying the needs for which a learner or group of learners require(s) a language and adjusting the needs as to priorities. When it comes to the aim of needs analysis, Richterich and Chancerel (1978) contended that the purpose is not only to determine the elements lending themselves to training but also to establish relative significance, to explore what is necessary, indispensable or solely desirable.

There have been different purposes and reasons for carrying out needs analysis. According to Richards (2001, p.52), the purposes for needs analysis are listed as follows: to find out what language skills a learner needs in order to perform a particular role, such as sales manager, tour guide or university student; to help determine if an existing course adequately addresses the needs of potential students; to determine which students from a group are most in need of training in particular language skills; to identify a change of direction that people in a reference group feel is important; to identify a gap between what students are able to do and what they need to be able to do; and to collect information about a particular problem learners are experiencing.

Taking these predefined purposes into consideration, the data gathered from the needs analysis are useful while planning a program as well as designing a course. Actually, needs analysis can set the ground for teachers and planners in terms of their learners' specific needs so that a flexible curriculum can be prepared rather than a fixed one.

Besides setting the purposes of needs analysis, conducting it is also significant. The steps followed while conducting a needs analysis have been suggested in different ways. According to McKillip (1987), the steps are indicated as follows: 1) Identify users and the uses of the needs analysis, 2) describe the target population and the service environment, 3) identify needs including describing problems and solutions, 4) assess the importance of the needs, and 5) communicate results.

Regarding these steps, setting clear objectives and following the path step by step are crucial in terms of achieving the ultimate goal of addressing learners' needs. Beside, describing the problems clearly at the very beginning can contribute to their solutions, which can help teachers or assessors to carry out a needs analysis that has certain goals to be achieved. Finally, focusing on a particular skill while revealing learners' needs can assist their development.

METHODOLOGY

The Purpose of the Study

The present study aims to investigate the speaking needs of the Turkish EFL learners of pre-intermediate level enrolled in a language preparatory program at a foundation (non-profit, private) university in Istanbul, Turkey. Specifically, the study attempts to identify the speaking needs of the participating students, find out whether the obtained needs are met in the existing program and lastly, examine the perceptions of the participants about the importance of speaking and students' speaking performance. Accordingly, this study seeks for an answer to the following questions and sub-questions:

1. How do the pre-intermediate, B1 level Turkish EFL learners perceive the importance of the speaking sub-skills and their performance in speaking in the preparatory classes?

1.1 Are there any differences between the perceptions of B1 level Turkish EFL learners, instructors, level and academic coordinators regarding the importance of the speaking sub-skills?

2. How do the instructors teaching B1 level learners, level and academic coordinators perceive the importance of the speaking sub-skills and students' performance in speaking in the preparatory classes?

2.1 Are there any differences between the perceptions of B1 level Turkish EFL learners, instructors, level and academic coordinators regarding the student performance of the speaking sub-skills?

3. What recommendations can be made for the improvement of the existing speaking syllabus in the preparatory program?

The Participants and Methods of the Study

The present study was conducted in three major stages at a B1 (pre-intermediate) level English program offered at a foundation (non-profit, private) university preparatory program in Istanbul, Turkey.

The participants of this study consisted of 80 B1 level students, 17 instructors teaching this particular level class, the level coordinator and academic coordinator of the existing program. This particular group of students receive 25 hours of English instruction per week ranging from course book courses focusing on grammatical structures and vocabulary to language skills courses focusing on the development of reading, writing, listening and speaking abilities.

As for the demographic information of the participants, 13 instructors were females, 4 of them were males. Their age ranged from 26 to 55 years old. All of them have teaching experience at a private university at least for 5 years and have been teaching main course components including speaking lessons at different proficiency levels. As for the students, 45 were males while 35 of the students were females. They were all of Turkish nationality and their age ranged from 18 to 25 years old.

Furthermore, the data collection procedure in this study was divided into three stages. The first stage was divided into two sections including student-questionnaire and academic staff-questionnaire. It consisted of the administration of the needs analysis questionnaires to B1 level students, their instructors, level and academic coordinators with an attempt to find an answer the first and the second research questions. Specifically, all participating groups were asked to respond the questionnaire adapted from Ekici's (2003) study that highlighted the importance of identifying language skills of the undergraduate students.

In addition, the second stage included a classroom observation to support the questionnaires and obtain answers for the second and third research questions. The researcher herself observed 8 classes during the semester in total using a checklist again adapted from Ekici (2003) to gather more information about the speaking needs of the participating students. The observations also helped understand how the participants considered the speaking program and brought insights to the researcher about what kind of speaking syllabus could be suggested to meet the target needs in the existing program.

Finally, the third stage consisted of semi-structured interviews carried out with the B1 students, their instructors, level coordinator as well as the academic coordinator. Each group of the participants was interviewed individually. The interviews took around 35 minutes, were audio recorded and then transcribed by the researcher.

RESULTS

For the purposes of this study, the findings were presented around these sections; the perceptions of the students about the importance and performance related to speaking sub-skills, the perceptions of the instructors, level and academic coordinators about the importance of speaking sub-skills, the students' performance in these sub-skills as well as the differences between the perceptions of the instructors, level coordinator, academic coordinator and students. Finally, based on the gathered data suggestions for the improvement of the existing speaking syllabus are reported.

To begin with, the perceptions of the B1 level students based on the importance given to the speaking sub-skills and the self-ratings of their own performance in speaking are presented in Table 1. As can be seen in Table 1 below, almost all of the participating students perceived all speaking sub-skills as quite important as all the sub-skills were valued more than 3 (average) out of 5. Firstly, *answering questions* (4.46) was perceived as the most important sub-skill in

speaking classes. In other words, almost all the students among 80 students found *answering questions* (4.46) the most important sub-skill of speaking in this level. *Expressing oneself* (4.44) and *reacting to speech and lecture* (4.39) were respectively regarded as significant sub-skills of speaking. Likewise, the majority of the students viewed *asking questions* (4.31), *producing correct pronunciation* (4.18) and *reasoning* (4.17) as crucial speaking sub-skills. Finally, in contrast to these significant speaking sub-skills, the participating students found *making presentations* (3.45) as the least significant speaking sub-skill, followed by *wording quickly* (3.46) that refers to deciding the ideas, words etc. in mind and delivering them quickly.

When it comes to the students' self rating of their own performance in speaking, *reacting to speech and lecture* (3.96) was revealed as the strongest skill evaluated by the students. Almost all the students thought that they could react well to conversations in lessons and real-life tasks implemented in the lessons. Then, *producing correct pronunciation* (3.93) and *expressing oneself* (3.83) successively followed *reacting to speech and lecture*. The students thought that they were the best in *reacting to speech and lecture* and they found themselves better in *expressing themselves* and *producing correct pronunciation* when compared to the other sub-skills. While the students regarded themselves as the most effective performers in the sub-skills mentioned above, it was clear that most of them perceived themselves as lower performers in *making presentations* (3.00), *describing* (3.22), *summarizing* (3.24) and *wording quickly* (3.26) regarding their performance in speaking.

Table 1. The Perceptions of the Students about the Importance of Speaking Sub-skills and Their Performance in Speaking

Speaking Sub-skills	The Importance of Speaking Sub-skills		The Self Ratings of Speaking Sub-skills		
	1. Unimportant 2. Of little importance 3. Moderately important 4. Important 5. Very important		1. Extremely poor 2. Below average 3. Average 4. Above average 5. Excellent		
	M	SD	M	SD	
Asking questions	4.31	.80	3.67	1.09	t(74)=5.05 , p< .05
Answering questions	4.46	.86	3.77	1.07	t(72)=4.60 , p< .05
Expressing oneself	4.44	.85	3.83	1.08	t(75)=4.26 , p< .05
Summarizing	3.65	1.13	3.24	1.04	t(70)=2.61 , p< .05
Describing	3.60	1.21	3.22	1.21	t(75)=2.85 , p< .05
Comparing-contrasting	3.72	1.06	3.36	1.07	t(73)=2.78 , p< .05
Solving problems	4.09	1.08	3.45	1.08	t(72)=4.48 , p< .05
Reasoning	4.17	1.12	3.69	1.23	t(72)=3.97 , p< .05
Making presentations	3.45	1.30	3.00	1.35	t(74)=2.87 , p< .05

Criticizing	3.67	1.21	3.27	1.14	$t(73)=2.84, p < .05$
Reacting to speech and lecture	4.39	.90	3.96	1.10	$t(73)=3.61, p < .05$
Producing correct pronunciation	4.18	.98	3.93	1.01	$t(72)=2.55, p < .05$
Wording quickly	3.46	1.30	3.26	1.27	$t(75)=1.27, p > .05$
Using appropriate intonation and stress patterns	3.91	1.10	3.76	1.17	$t(72)=1.23, p > .05$

$p < .05$

Furthermore, these findings were supported by classroom observations where the students were involved in class speaking activities. Using an observation table, the researcher reported the most frequently used speaking sub-skills by the students while being engaged in pair/group work tasks and activities. As viewed in the following table, the percentages showed that the researcher obtained mostly similar answers to the questionnaire:

Table 2. The Most Frequent Speaking Sub-skills in B1 Level Classes

Speaking Sub-skills	The Percentages of Speaking Sub-skills
1. asking questions	100
2. answering questions	100
3. expressing yourself	100
4. summarizing	25
5. describing	25
6. comparing-contrasting	25
7. solving problems	25
8. reasoning	50
9. making presentations	-
10. criticizing	-
11. reacting to speech and lecture	75
12. producing correct pronunciation	75
13. wording quickly	-
14. using appropriate intonation and stress	-

According to the results presented in the Table 2, the observations revealed similarities to the questionnaires. For example, *asking questions* (100 %), *answering questions* (100 %) and *expressing oneself* (100 %) were the most frequent sub-skills emphasized by the students while they were getting involved in pair/group speaking activities. These two sub-skills were followed by *reacting to speech and lecture* (75%) and *producing correct pronunciation* (75 %).

In contrast to the most frequent sub-skills used in speaking lessons, *summarizing* (25 %), *describing* (25 %), *comparing-contrasting* (25 %) and *solving problems* (25 %) were marked as the sub-skills that were used less in the speaking lesson. Likewise, there were some sub-skills that were not focused at all such as, *making presentations*, *criticizing*, *wording quickly* and *using appropriate intonation and stress*. According to this table, it is obvious that the students who tried to focus on some certain speaking sub-skills (the ones marked as 100% or 75 % in the table) regarded those sub-skills as important.

To summarize, it is obvious that almost all the students in B1 level gave importance to pointing out their ideas in detail in conversations by asking and answering questions, discussing such as agreeing/disagreeing, reasoning and producing correct pronunciation. They also found themselves successful in reacting to conversations as well as expressing their ideas with correct pronunciation while they thought that they were not good performers in describing something, summarizing an event, making presentations and stating their ideas in a row. This showed that although the students valued many sub-skills mentioned above, they did not view themselves as good performers in all sub-skills.

On the other hand, there were some differences between the sub-skills that were seen as important and the students' performance on these sub-skills. These differences revealed a gap which can be referred as the students' needs in these sub-skills. First of all, the differences between the two variables were identified through paired-samples t-test. Based on the analysed data, there were significant differences ($p < .05$) among the 12 main sub-skills (see Table 2 above) focused on B1 level, except for the 2 sub-skills of *wording quickly* and *using appropriate intonation and stress patterns* which did not reveal any significant difference ($p > .05$) between the importance and performance of the speaking sub-skills. All of these assumptions revealed that although the students attached much importance to the speaking sub-skills, they do not rate themselves as good performers in speaking. These findings showed that there is a gap between their perceptions about the importance given to the speaking sub-skills and their existing speaking performance. Table 3 below presents the obtained findings together with the differences related to the importance of the speaking sub-skills as well as the rate on the students' performance in speaking.

Table 3. The Perceptions of the Instructors, Level and Academic Coordinators about the Importance of Speaking Sub-skills and Students' Performance in Speaking

	The Importance of Speaking Sub-skills	The Perceptions of Students' Speaking Performance
Speaking Sub-skills	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unimportant 2. Of little importance 3. Moderately important 4. Important 5. Very important 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Extremely poor 2. Below average 3. Average 4. Above average 5. Excellent

	M	SD	M	SD	
Asking questions	4.47	.70	3.47	.84	t(18)=4.62, p< .05
Answering questions	4.68	.58	3.42	.77	t(18)=7.50, p< .05
Expressing oneself	4.89	.31	3.00	1.11	t(18)=7.88, p< .05
Summarizing	3.63	.89	2.37	.89	t(18)=4.80, p< .05
Describing	4.37	.50	3.32	.75	t(18)=5.88, p< .05
Comparing-contrasting	4.11	.57	3.21	1.13	t(18)=3.54, p< .05
Solving problems	4.37	.60	2.74	1.10	t(18)=7.03, p< .05
Reasoning	4.53	.84	2.79	1.32	t(18)=5.70, p< .05
Making presentations	3.58	1.22	2.21	.92	t(18)=4.08, p< .05
Criticising	3.63	.83	2.37	.95	t(18)=4.44, p< .05
Reacting to speech and lecture	4.00	.94	2.68	1.10	t(18)=4.43, p< .05
Producing correct pronunciation	4.32	.82	3.00	.88	t(18)=5.43, p< .05
Wording quickly	3.68	1.06	2.32	.95	t(18)=4.59, p< .05
Using appropriate intonation and stress patterns	3.26	1.10	2.11	.87	t(18)=5.62, p< .05

p< .05

In Table 3 shows, it is obvious that almost all of the B1 instructors, level and academic coordinators perceived speaking sub-skills as very important because all them were rated more than 3 (average) out of 5. More specifically, *expressing oneself* (4.89) was perceived as the most important sub-skill in speaking and followed by *answering questions* (4.68), *reasoning* (4.53) and *asking questions* (4.47). Besides, *solving problems* and *describing* (4.37), *producing correct pronunciation* (4.32), *comparing and contrasting* (4.11) and *reacting to speech and lecture* (4.00) were perceived as important sub-skills in speaking classes by the three participating groups. Contrary to these findings, *using appropriate intonation and stress patterns* (3.26) was perceived as the least significant speaking sub-skill which was followed by *making presentations* (3.58). Furthermore, when the participants' ratings for their students' performance in speaking are considered, *asking questions* (3.47) was perceived as the most successful sub-skill. *Answering questions* (3.42), *describing* (3.32) and *comparing and contrasting* (3.21) followed *asking questions* (3.47). As seen in the table below, almost all the students' performance was not found equal to the expectations regarding the importance of these specified sub-skills. Specifically, the students' performances were rated lower than the rate of importance attached to the speaking sub-skills.

On the contrary, there were significant differences between the perceptions of the instructors, level and academic coordinators in terms of the perceived importance of the speaking sub-skills as well as the students' speaking performance. The participants attached more importance to all the sub-skills when compared to the rate of the students' speaking

performance. This resulted from the fact that most of the speaking sub-skills based on the students' speaking performance were rated below 3 (the average) out of 5. The gap between the expectations, importance attached to these sub-skills and the students' speaking performance can be perceived as the students' speaking needs that should be fulfilled in the speaking syllabus the next academic year.

Moreover, when the perceptions of the instructors, level coordinator, academic coordinator and students regarding the importance of speaking sub-skills are considered, it can be indicated that great importance was attached to almost all the sub-skills by the academic staff when compared to the perceptions of students. The mean scores can be viewed in the tables above. Firstly, the sub-skills that had the most important difference were as follows: *Describing, expressing oneself* and *comparing-contrasting*. The average (mean) score of *describing* was rated 3.60 by the students while it was rated as 4.37 by the academic staff. The difference of the mean scores was 0.77. The mean score of *expressing oneself* was 4.44 rated by the students whereas it was rated as 4.89 by the academic staff. The difference of the mean scores was 0.45. Lastly, the mean score of *comparing-contrasting* was 3.72 rated by the students while it was rated as 4.11 by the academic staff. The difference of the mean scores was 0.39.

Apart from these findings, while almost all the sub-skills were valued more by the academic staff compared to the students, there were four sub-skills which were attached more importance by the students themselves. These sub-skills were successively indicated as follows from the most different mean scores to the least ones: *Using appropriate intonation and stress patterns* (the importance by the students: 3.91 and the importance rated by the academic staff: 3.26) , *reacting to speech and lecture* (the importance rated by the students: 4.39 and the importance rated by the academic staff: 4.00), *criticizing* (the importance rated by the students: 3.67 and the importance rated by the academic staff: 3.63) and *summarizing* (the importance by the students: 3.65 and the importance by the academic staff: 3.63).

Furthermore, as illustrated in the table above, the perceptions of the instructors, level coordinator, academic coordinator and students about the students' performance in speaking were also compared reporting their mean scores. As a result, the students' speaking performance in all the sub-skills except *describing* (the students' perceptions: 3.22 and the academic staff's perceptions: 3.32) was rated less by the academic staff when compared to the students' perceptions about their own performance. That's to say, the academic staff found the students' speaking performance lower than the students themselves. Regarding the obtained findings, the biggest difference in mean scores between both groups of the participants belong to *using appropriate intonation and stress patterns* rated by the students as 3.76 whereas rated by the academic staff as 2.11. The mean score difference was 1.65. This could be attributed to the amount of the importance attached to this sub-skill. This sub-skill was followed by *reacting to speech and lecture* which ranked from 3.96 (by the students) to 2.68 (by the academic staff) by having 1.28 mean score difference and *wording quickly* which ranked from 3.26 (by the students) to 2.32 (by the academic staff) by having 0.94 mean score difference. To clarify the findings, it can be indicated that the academic staff considered that the speaking performance of B1 students was lower and they had difficulty while performing such tasks. The reason behind this finding might be related to the academic staff's expectations from the students and the high importance given to these sub-skills by the academic staff in this particular level.

Finally, the suggestions for the improvement of the existing speaking syllabus were also indicated by the instructors, level and academic coordinators and all the data were supported by semi-structured interviews. The qualitative findings revealed that the existing syllabus should include more meaningful tasks, the number of activities out of the class should be increased, pair/group work should be promoted and lastly, more authentic materials should be developed. The following excerpts show their recommendations regarding the existing speaking syllabus:

[...] I believe students should be engaged in more meaningful speaking tasks and the number of out-side class activities could be increased to improve the existing syllabus and help students to develop their speaking skills. (Academic coordinator, Semi-structured interview data, 9th March, 2017).

[...] I think that the students should be engaged more in interactive tasks such as pair/group work that they can practice speaking in different contexts (Level Coordinator, Semi-structured interview data, 9th March, 2017).

[...] In my opinion, there should be more authentic materials in the syllabus to cater for the needs and interests of the students (Instructor, Semi-structured interview data, 9th March, 2017).

[...] We need more speaking activities. I believe that there should be more activities to help us to improve our speaking performance in our class (Student Semi-structured interview data, 9th March, 2017).

Based on these assumptions, it is clear that both the academic staff and the students attach great importance to the speaking sub-skills and performance in language use in B1 classrooms. Their comments clearly show that students should be involved in more speaking practice through meaningful and authentic tasks which shed a light for the redesign of the and the existing B1 syllabus.

DISCUSSION

The main purpose of this study was to identify the speaking needs of B1 level students and find out whether those needs are met in the existing program or not. Furthermore, this study also aimed to figure out the perceptions of B1 level students, instructors, level and academic coordinators about the importance of speaking sub-skills along with the students' speaking performance.

To begin with, the first research question in this study attempted to find out the perceptions of B1 level students, instructors, level and academic coordinators about the importance of speaking sub-skills utilized in classrooms through questionnaires and an observation table which were supported by semi-structured interviews. Based on the ratings and perceptions of the four different participants, the analysis indicated that all the speaking sub-skills were rated above 3 (average) out of 5 (mean scores), which showed that they attached great importance to the sub-skills in speaking lessons in their classroom practices. Specifically, the sub-skills that were attached the greatest importance by the students were successively as follows: *answering questions*, *expressing oneself* and *reacting to speech and lecture* and by the instructors, level and academic coordinators were respectively as follows: *expressing oneself*, *answering questions* and *reasoning*. These revealed similarities in terms of the findings of the

observations. The reason behind these findings might be the requirements of the students' existing level, B1 since the students are supposed to give reactions in conversations with correct pronunciation, answer detailed questions and express themselves elaborately so that they can go beyond the elementary level and transfer from basic users to independent learners according to CEFR. Besides, the students get involved in longer and meaningful dialogues that require agreeing/disagreeing, reasoning, summarizing, comparing/contrasting and solving problems in B1.

In contrast to the most important sub-skills rated by the participants, there were some sub-skills that were attached the least importance when compared to the other sub-skills. The sub-skills that were found as the least important by the students are respectively as follows: *making presentations* and *wording quickly* and by the instructors, level and academic coordinator are successively as follows: *using appropriate intonation and stress patterns* and *making presentations*. This may be due to the focus on these sub-skills in higher levels as students of intermediate and upper-intermediate level can be expected to explain their ideas quickly by focusing on intonation and make presentations related to more academic topics. As B1 is the level in which the students first get involved in longer and detailed conversations, more focus on the delivery of ideas elaborately and appropriately are prioritized rather than centring upon intonation and making presentations.

In line with these assumptions, the findings of the study carried out by Ekici (2003) revealed that expressing oneself, asking and answering questions, solving problems are the common prioritized speaking sub-skills that were attached much importance by the students, instructors and curriculum coordinators. Despite the similarities, solving problems is not the greatest sub-skill rated by the participants of this study when compared to the other sub-skills that were given the greatest importance. Focus on solving problems in Ekici's study might be due to the fact that the students were majoring in Applied Sciences Faculty in Tour Guidance Department and they were initially supposed to solve the problems based on the specific purposes of their departments to be able to communicate with people in their field better and quickly.

In this study, there were also other sub-skills that all groups of participants found as crucial in speaking such as asking questions, producing correct pronunciation and solving problems whereas summarizing and criticizing are the ones that were quite close to the least important sub-skills rated by all the participants. These findings may be because of the expectations from the students of B1 level because it is supposed that the students of this level can express ideas to communicate well in pairs/groups, respond appropriately, differentiate between accents in conversations, give suggestions, offer solutions, show interest during the conversation with correct pronunciation, maintain a dialogue and agree/disagree on topics by solving problems. Summarising and criticising may be linked to the improvement of these stated learning needs. Due to the link, there might be a need to meet these needs first and then improve summarising and criticising. That's why summarising and criticising might not have been prioritized sub-skills according to the participants.

By looking at these findings, it can be concluded that both the students of B1 and academic staff including the instructors, level and academic coordinators agreed on the significance of many common sub-skills of speaking which are directly related to communication skills. Apart from these, some sub-skills mentioned above were undervalued by

the participants when compared to the other sub-skills and also were rated in a different way regarding the importance by the students and academic staff. However, the focus on all the speaking sub-skills rated by the whole participants in terms of their significance cannot be denied.

Furthermore, the sub question of the first research question supporting the first research question aimed to figure out whether there are any differences between the perceptions of B1 level Turkish EFL learners, instructors, level and academic coordinators regarding the importance of the speaking sub-skills through the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Considering the responses from the participants, it is obvious that both the students and academic staff including the instructors, level and academic coordinators attached importance to the speaking sub-skills as all the sub-skills were rated above 3 out of 5 (mean scores). However, according to the mean scores of the questionnaires the academic staff attached great importance to almost all the speaking sub-skills when compared to the students. Thus, there were some differences found between the students and the academic staff's perceptions. Whereas the academic staff attached great importance to various sub-skills when compared to the students, there were some sub-skills that students gave more importance than the academic staff.

Firstly, the sub-skills that were attached more importance by the academic staff are as follows: describing, expressing oneself and comparing-contrasting. While there are some other sub-skills such as asking and answering questions, reasoning, solving problems, producing correct pronunciation etc. that were given more importance by the academic staff, describing, expressing oneself and comparing-contrasting were revealed as the first three sub-skills that showed the most difference between the students and academic staff's perceptions. The motive behind this finding might be the academic staff's greater focus on interaction in pair and group work that require the students to express themselves clearly, compare some events, texts, topics etc. in group activities as well as describe some people in their families, some places etc. When the sub-skills that were given more importance by the students are considered, these are successively as follows: using appropriate intonation and stress patterns, reacting to speech and lecture, criticizing and summarizing. The underlying cause behind this finding can be due to the students' regarding themselves as inadequate to perform these sub-skills. Therefore, the students might have thought that these sub-skills should be emphasized so that they can be more competent while using these sub-skills. To exemplify, the students usually get involved in pair/group works in B1 and they generally feel the need to react others with correct intonation and they might need to criticize something or someone and summarize an event to their partners during conversations in pair/group works. This finding can be supported by Demirbas (2011) stating that some important sub-skills of speaking including explaining, narrating a story or a speech etc. can be handled at this level.

Regarding the assumptions above, a study carried out by Orwenjo (2013) also disclosed similarities in terms of the differences of the perceptions between the students and the instructors. In the study, the students attached more importance to reacting to speech and lecture than the instructors while the students undervalued describing and comparing/contrasting in contrast to the instructors, the same as in the current study. However, Orwenjo (2013) differs from the current study in that the instructors found summarizing as more crucial than the students. This might be because of different types of participants who were diploma students of tour guide in the study whereas the students of the current study were B1 level students studying at a preparatory program. The instructors might have felt the need to focus on summarizing for

their students to guide them to summarize the topics, events etc. well to clarify their ideas while they are dealing with business English. Thus, the instructors might have put more focus on summarizing.

In brief, all of the participants agreed on similar speaking sub-skills as significant in B1 level English classes, except for some differences pointed out above. All the participants put emphasis on the importance of the speaking sub-skills. From these perceptions, it can be concluded that both the students and academic staff care about utilizing the speaking sub-skills to be able to develop their speaking skill. These findings are in accordance with Chan's (2001) study revealing that there was consistency with respect to the responses of teachers and students in terms of both groups' perceptions related to the students' needs and wants, their self-ratings of their competence in academic and professional domain. The consistency indicated that the students were able to express their opinions on various skills and conscious in terms of their competence. However, teachers and students' perceptions do not match all time. In the study conducted by Karatas (2007) based on the evaluation of the syllabus of the English II instruction program applied in the Modern Languages Department, the results revealed some significant differences between the teachers' and students' opinions in terms of context, input, process and product. Briefly, the findings show that the perceptions of the students and academic staff can be both similar and different regarding different variables such as needs, attitudes and proficiency level which should be closely addressed while designing a language program.

Furthermore, the second question aimed to find out the perceptions of the pre-intermediate, B1 level Turkish EFL learners, instructors, level and academic coordinators about the students' performance on the speaking sub-skills in the preparatory classes. With regard to this question, the data were gathered through questionnaires and supported with semi-structured interviews. According to the results, it was found out that the students regarded themselves as the best performers in reacting to speech and lecture which was followed by producing correct pronunciation and expressing themselves while they perceived themselves as lower performers successively in making presentations, describing, summarizing and wording quickly regarding their performance in speaking. The reason behind this finding might be because of the students' own awareness of their proficiency level that mostly focuses on expressing ideas appropriately with correct pronunciation and responding to others. According to the findings, the students believed that these sub-skills should be given importance to be able to communicate effectively and they thought that they are good at these sub-skills in speaking classes. It can be inferred that there is a parallelism between the speaking sub-skills that the students attached importance to and their perceptions about their own speaking performance on these sub-skills. What's more, the sub-skills in which the students found themselves as lower performers were almost the ones that the students attached of little importance, which revealed another parallelism between the importance attached to the sub-skills and the performance of the students on speaking.

The connection between the importance of the speaking sub-skills and the students' speaking performance can be seen from the paired sample t-test scores. As it was clear from the results, there were significant differences between the perceptions of the students of the importance of speaking sub-skills and their performance in speaking in 12 sub-skills except for wording quickly and using appropriate intonation and stress patterns. That's to say, the students attached much importance to the speaking sub-skills, but they did not view themselves as good performers in speaking. As the target proficiency needs to be matched with the existing proficiency of the learners (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987), the students might have felt the need

to be better performers in speaking to be able to fulfil the expectations and requirements of B1 level.

When the perceptions of the academic staff members taken into consideration, the speaking performance of the students was not found equal to the importance given to these sub-skills by the participants. The importance rates outperformed the performance rates. Namely, according to the paired sample t-test scores, significant differences were found among all the sub-skills between the importance attached to the sub-skills and the students' speaking performance, which might represent the students' speaking needs that should be fully met in the upcoming syllabus of the program. Based on the students' speaking performance, asking questions was perceived as the sub-skill that the students were regarded as good performers in. Answering questions, describing and comparing and contrasting followed asking questions. A possible reason of this finding might be related to the amount of exposure of the students to interviewing skills such as asking and answering questions in pair/group work activities in speaking classes and also the academic staff might have observed that the students could perform better in these interviewing skills as well as describing something/someone and compare their ideas etc. thanks to sufficient practice in speaking lessons. However, the academic staff contended that the students were poor performers in using appropriate intonation and stress patterns which was followed by making presentations and wording quickly. Not surprisingly, these findings are most probably owing to the focus on these sub-skills in higher levels when compared to B1 as it would not be possible for the students to utilize the appropriate intonation and stress patterns, express their ideas quickly and make presentations based on various topics without achieving interviewing skills, maintaining a conversation, reacting to speeches, expressing ideas clearly etc. The sub-skills that were seen as the ones in which the students could not perform well may depend on the other stated sub-skills' improvement. That's why, the academic staff might not have found the students' performance good enough in these sub-skills and they did not attach much importance to these sub-skills either.

Furthermore, the results of the semi-structured interviews revealed that students should help them improve their speaking ability. In accordance with these assumptions, it was figured out that supportive statements by teachers encourage students and enhance their performance in Ishiyama & Hartlaub's (2002) study. Another reason behind the students and academic staff's perceptions based on the students' speaking performance can be linked to the students' speaking needs that were met because the academic staff might have thought that the students could feel themselves as good at some speaking sub-skills just because their speaking needs were met in the existing syllabus. Mede's (2012) study showed similarities of this assumption in that the student teachers' perceived language and learning needs were met thanks to the efficiency of the program. It also increased teachers' language proficiency. It can be concluded that the efficiency of the program and syllabus including clear goals might have an impact on the students and instructors as well as coordinators' perceptions about the speaking performance of the students.

Moreover, the second sub question in this study attempted to find out whether there are any differences between the perceptions of B1 level Turkish EFL learners, instructors, level and academic coordinators regarding the students' speaking performance through the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Regarding the academic staff's perceptions, the students' speaking performance in all the sub-skills except describing was rated lower by the academic

staff in contrast to the students' own perceptions. The most likely reason of this finding might be related to the academic staff's expectations from B1 level students and the students' own feelings as to their speaking performance because "learning, particularly the learning of a language, is an emotional experience, and the feelings that the learning process evokes will have a crucial bearing on the success or failure of the learning" (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p.47).

Specifically, the most different mean scores between the students and the academic staff belong to using appropriate intonation and stress patterns which was followed by reacting to speech and lecture and wording quickly. The academic staff rated the students' speaking performance as lower than the students. This might be because the academic staff might have considered that intonation and stress patterns and wording quickly can be developed in time. Also, they may have thought that reacting to speech and lecture with correct pronunciation and intonation requires adequate vocabulary and grammar knowledge as well as communication skills that can be directly utilized during conversations. Therefore, they might not have found the students competent enough to react appropriately to the speech, which indicates that the academic staff might feel the need for their students to be competent enough first in terms of accuracy and fluency so that they can fulfill the requirements of B1 level in the end in speaking lessons.

Another cause behind the findings can be due to the higher importance attached to the speaking sub-skills by the academic staff than the students. That's to say, the academic staff expected more from the students and when their expectations were not met fully by the students, they graded their performance lower than the students themselves. Tsao's (2008) study is in line with the current study in that learners' needs and teachers' expectations do not match all the time. Apart from the expectations of the instructors, as states by Harmer (1991), it can be indicated that teachers are the ones who are aware of their students' needs about the language they are learning.

Finally, the last research question of the study attempted to provide recommendations about the improvement of the existing speaking syllabus in the B1 level preparatory program based on the reflections of Turkish EFL learners, instructors, level and academic coordinators. The findings gathered from the semi-structured interviews revealed that all the participants highly recommended that the components such as purposeful speaking tasks, pair/group work activities as well as more authentic tasks. When these suggestions are taken into consideration, a study carried out by Soruc (2012) differs from the present study in that the program of an English preparatory school was satisfactory for their language skills based on the data gathered through students' needs assessment survey and interviews. The difference of the present study is not the discontent of the participants about the existing speaking syllabus or program, but its need for mediation for B1 students to guide them to be competent in speaking based on the expectations in this particular level. In fact, even though the program was satisfactory in Soruç's study, the importance of needs analysis in making curricular decisions or redesigning language preparatory programs was not ignored. In contrast, needs analysis was highlighted in that study. In this sense, the study also revealed some similarities despite the difference.

First, based on the academic coordinator's reflections, the number of out-side class activities including all learners' interests and needs should be increased. It can be inferred that the out-side class speaking activities and tasks should not be prepared only for one type of learners. They need to address the students with various learning styles; visual, auditory,

kinaesthetic, experiential and analytic learners. Namely, as highlighted by Ellis (1998), the material writers should be aware of this variety and cater for differences in their materials. Thus, the out-side class activities are supposed to be integrated other skills such as listening and reading into speaking tasks so that the students speaking skill can be improved with the help of other crucial skills.

Apart from these, it was obvious that the participants felt the need to have pair/group work activities that include authentic materials embedded in the syllabus. It might be because of the academic staff prioritized student-student interaction rather than teacher-student interaction. Thanks to the student-student interaction that focuses on students' interactive activities in pairs/groups, the academic staff might have thought that the students can have more self-confidence, improve their communication skills while expressing their ideas, reasoning, solving problems etc. and reduce the anxiety of making mistakes due to the teacher existence. In this sense, it is possible to infer that the students might regard speaking lessons as a natural learning process instead of perceiving them as just lessons. That is a crucial point in that the students can be sure that their needs are met and they can achieve the ultimate goal, communication, thanks to their own efforts, the instructors' guidance and the effective syllabus design that centers upon the students' needs and interests for a particular level (Soureshjani 2013).

Another point made clear by the instructors was not enough practice in speaking classes. Although there were also constructive comments about the syllabus, books and materials of B1, the instructors emphasized the lack of practice for their students. The reason behind this finding may be due to the instructors' feeling about inadequacy of speaking time for their students. Most probably, they might have perceived that their students might be rushed sometimes in speaking activities, which might not reflect the natural learning process of speaking. Thus, they might have focused on the out-side class activities as follow-up tasks for speaking and cantered upon authentic materials so that the students can feel closer to the topics discussed. It can be inferred that the students' speaking needs are required to be understood completely in order to arrange everything including the syllabus, instructors' guidance, books and materials accordingly. In line with these assumptions; Chen, Chang and Chang (2016), indicated that reaching the goal of successful communication through English can be possible as long as the needs of the students are comprehended and met. Also, the studies carried out by Enginarlar (1982) and Örs (2006) revealed some similarities with the current study in terms of the suggestions for the redesign of the existing syllabus that aims to reduce any discrepancy between the students' needs and the existing components of the speaking program and the students' target speaking needs.

In brief, the findings of the last research question demonstrated that mediating the syllabus or redesigning the syllabus of B1 should be taken into consideration not only to meet some speaking needs but also to cater for all the speaking needs of this particular level students so that the students can be ready to take a step for the upcoming level in speaking.

PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study has remarkable implications to be taken for granted about the speaking needs of B1 level Turkish EFL learners in preparatory classes. Based on the gathered findings, although most of the speaking sub-skills were given great importance by the students, there are still some missing ones that should be taken into consideration to meet the students' needs as all the speaking sub-skills are dependent on one another during the language learning process. As

an example, students can be more engaged in pair/group work activities and exposed more to the target language. The students of this level should be also allocated enough time to comprehend all the components of speaking so that they can act in such communicative activities.

In addition, in the speaking syllabus, there should be more clear objectives that provide the instructors to focus on a specific target language such as agreeing and disagreeing, offering, solving issues, reasoning etc. to practice in many ways. Presenting new structures and target focuses might confuse students' minds, which might prevent them learning the target language appropriately. Therefore, specific goals and target language should be reflected or written on the board before getting the students involved in such speaking activities. In such a learning context, the students can get help from the board that covers some prompts by seeing the target focus many times.

In addition, preparing a rubric for the students' needs of the specific level might help the instructors to check the unmet needs of the students. That kind of rubric can be completed by the students as well and then compared to meet the needs in terms of students' speaking performance.

Besides the existing syllabus that include mostly skill-based activities, content and situation based approaches might be used while deciding which content and methodology to include in speaking lessons.

Regarding the aforementioned aspects, the findings of the study are crucial in terms of meeting B1 level students' speaking needs and bringing insights to the effectiveness of speaking syllabuses. Therefore, it can be regarded as a model for upcoming studies that might aim to reveal the needs of learners' speaking needs in different levels and perceptions based on speaking.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study provides some recommendations for further research. To begin with, a further study could be implemented to examine the other essential language skills such as listening, reading and writing in order to see the differences or similarities of needs for each skill.

Secondly, another follow-up study could be conducted for speaking needs of different level learners such as elementary and upper intermediate so that it could be seen whether the speaking needs of different levels are fully met or not, as well as the perceptions of different participants. Then, to reveal any differences and similarities, needs analysis of different levels can be compared to contribute the design or modifications of speaking syllabuses.

Lastly, the present study is suggested to be utilized to support other subsequent needs analysis studies as needs analysis precedes syllabus design, materials development, implementation and assessment of the courses in a program.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study indicated that an in-depth analysis of speaking needs of B1 level students has made useful contributions to see the effectiveness of the existing syllabus as well the perceptions of the students, instructors, level and academic coordinators based on the speaking needs of the prospective learners. The data collected through the questionnaires, classroom observations and semi-structured interviews demonstrated that the instructors

teaching B1 are mostly content with the existing speaking syllabus; however, some modifications with regard to the increase of authentic, realistic and interactive materials and tasks for fostering speaking skills; allocated time for speaking lessons; preparation for out-class activities; providing various activities that cater for all the needs of B1 level students rather than mainly focus on some of them in pair/group works and parallelism between the implemented speaking lessons, the assessment of speaking and creating awareness of the students in terms of their real needs need to be closely addressed.

To conclude, the purpose of the study was to explore the speaking needs of B1 level students; whether their needs are fully met and to investigate the perceptions of the students, instructors, level and academic coordinators based on the students' speaking needs as well as the differences, if any, among the participants' perceptions at a private (non-profit, foundation) university language preparatory program in Turkish EFL context. For this reason, the study specifically focused on the sub-skills of speaking in detail, classroom practices and the differences of the perceptions between the students themselves and the academic staff including the instructors teaching B1, level and academic coordinators of the program. With the obtained findings, the study indicates some aspects of the speaking syllabus and classes that are satisfactory according to the findings or should be improved and sets a basis for designing effective speaking syllabuses that cater for learners' speaking needs for the benefits of both students and instructors.

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GENİŞ ÖZET

Dünyanın giderek küreselleşmesi, insanların ana dili haricinde evrensel bir dil olan İngilizce aracılığıyla dünyadaki diğer insanlarla etkileşime girme ihtiyacına yol açmıştır. Bu nedenle İngilizce sadece iletişim amaçlı değil, aynı zamanda eğitsel hedefler için bir gereklilik haline gelmiştir. İngilizce eğitiminde, öğrencileri evrensel bir dil aracılığıyla iletişim kurabilmesi için interaktif bir öğrenme sürecine dahil etmek, etkili yaklaşımlar ve uygulamalar açısından çeşitli fırsatların sunulduğu kurumlarda dil programlarını gerektirmektedir.

Türkiye'deki üniversitelerin çoğunda, özellikle neredeyse tüm özel (kar amacı gütmeyen) üniversitelerde eğitim dili İngilizcedir. Öğrencilerin üniversiteye başlamadan önce, üniversite giriş sınavına girmeleri gerekmektedir. Giriş sınavı puanlarına göre farklı üniversitelere yerleştirildikten sonra, dil yeterlilik sınavına girmeleri gerekmektedir. Gerekli durumlarda, hedef dildeki yeterliliği artırmak için bir yıllık ek programa katılabilirler. Her akademik yılın

başında hem lisans hem de lisansüstü öğrenciler İngilizce dil yeterlilik sınavını başarı ile geçmeleri koşuluyla kendi bölümlerine kabul edilirler. Sınavda başarısız olan öğrenciler, gerekli yeterlilik seviyesine ulaşıncaya kadar hazırlık okullarında İngilizce eğitimi alırlar. Türkiye’de İngilizce dil programları, hazırlık programından sonra lisans programlarına başlayan öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarını karşılamaya yöneliktir. Öğrencilerin dil yetileri ve stratejileri etkili bir biçimde geliştirmelerine yardımcı olarak, çeşitli disiplinlerde gelecekte bölüm derslerine öğrencileri hazırlayan hazırlık programlarının amaçları göz önünde bulundurulursa, bu tür programlarda dil ihtiyaçlarının belirlenmesine öncelik verilmesi gerekmektedir. Bu hazırlık programlarının esas amacı, öğrencilerin ertesi yıl bölüm derslerini İngilizce olarak belirli bir yeterlilik seviyesinde takip etmelerine yardımcı olmak, bölüm derslerine devam edebilmeleri için İngilizce seviyelerini artırmak ve kendi alanlarında yetkin olabilmek için İngilizce düzeylerini geliştirmektir. Öğretim programı, tüm öğrencilerin dönem sonu yapılan dil sınavlarında yıl sonuna kadar gerekli puanları alabilecekleri şekilde geliştirilir ve uygulanır. Bu sebeple programın başarılı bir şekilde tamamlanması büyük ölçüde bir öğrencinin devamlılığına, ödevin zamanında sunulmasına ve sağlanan kaynakların kullanımına bağlıdır.

Yukarıdaki tüm durumlar göz önünde bulundurulduğunda, bu çalışmanın amacı, orta alt seviyedeki öğrencilerin konuşma ihtiyaçlarını ortaya çıkarmak, bu ihtiyaçların mevcut programda karşılanıp karşılanmadığını belirlemek ve öğrencilerin, öğretim görevlilerinin, seviye koordinatörünün ve akademik koordinatörünün öğrencilerin İngilizce konuşma ihtiyaçlarına dair algılarını; bu algılar arasında fark olup olmadığını araştırmaktır. Bu sebeple, bu araştırma özellikle konuşmanın alt becerileri, sınıf içi uygulamaları ve öğrencilerin kendileri ve programın öğretim üyeleri ile seviye ve akademik koordinatörün de dahil olduğu akademik personel arasındaki algı farklılıklarına odaklanmıştır. Elde edilen bulgularla bu araştırma, mevcut konuşma öğretim programının ve sonuçlara göre tatmin edici olan ya da geliştirilmesi düşünülen sınıfların bazı yönleri belirtmiştir. Sonuçlar, katılımcıların neredeyse tüm konuşma ve alt becerilerine büyük önem verdiğini ortaya koymuştur; ancak öğrenciler ile akademik personelin algıları arasında öğrencilerin konuşma performansı bakımından belirgin farklılıklar ve benzerlikler belirlenmiştir. Bunun yanı sıra, bu çalışma, hem öğrenciler hem de öğretim görevlilerinin yararlanabileceği, öğrencilerin konuşma ihtiyaçlarına hitap eden etkili konuşma programlarının oluşturulmasına temel hazırlamıştır.

Aynı zamanda bu araştırma, gelecekteki araştırmalar için bazı öneriler sunmaktadır. Öncelikle, her bir beceri için ihtiyaçların farklılıklarını ve benzerliklerini görmek amacıyla dinleme, okuma ve yazma gibi diğer temel dil becerilerini incelemek için de başka bir çalışma yapılabilir.

İkinci olarak, bunun akabinde başlangıç seviyesi ve orta üst seviyedeki gibi farklı seviyelerdeki öğrencilerin algılarının yanı sıra konuşma becerilerini geliştirme konusundaki ihtiyaçlarının karşılanıp karşılanmadığını ölçmek için de başka bir çalışma yapılabilir. Ardından farklılıklar ve benzerlikleri ortaya çıkarmak amacıyla farklı seviyelerin ihtiyaç analizleri kıyaslanarak elde edilecek bulgular, konuşma derslerinin öğretim programlarının geliştirilmesine katkıda bulunmak için kullanılabilir. Aynı zamanda, topluluk önünde konuşma kaygısı, öğrencilerin performansına etki edebildiğinden, bu kaygıyı konu alan başka araştırmalar da yapılabilir.

Son olarak; ihtiya analizi; mfredat tasarımı, materyal geliştirme, bir programdaki derslerin uygulanması ve deęerlendirilmesinden nce geldięi iin, bu alıřmanın dięer ihtiya analizi alıřmalarını desteklemek iin kullanılması nerilmektedir.