

T.C.
Marmara University
Institute of Educational Sciences
Department of Foreign Language Education
English Language Teaching

**PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTORS ON THE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE NEEDS OF PREPARATORY SCHOOL STUDENTS AT A STATE
UNIVERSITY**

Fatma Kbra AKIR
(Master's Thesis)

İSTANBUL, 2020

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Marmara Üniversitesi
Eđitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü
Yabancı Diller Eđitimi Anabilim Dalı
İngilizce Öğretmenliği Bilim Dalı

**HAZIRLIK OKULUNDAKİ ÖĐRENCİLERİN İNGİLİZCE DİL İHTİYAÇLARINA
İLİŐKİN ÖĐRENCİ VE ÖĐRETMEN ALGILARI**

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SUPERVISORS

Assist. Prof. Dilek UYGUN GÖKMEN

Dr. Gökçe KURT TİFTİK

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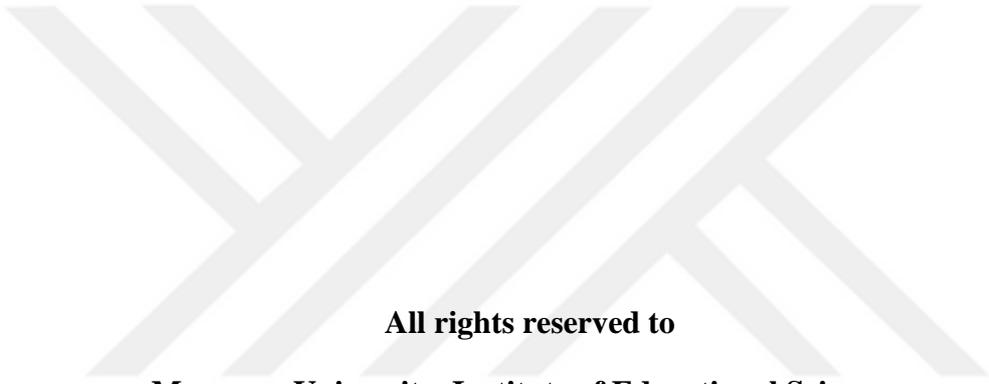
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Fatma Kübra ÇAKIR
(Yüksek Lisans Tezi)

DANIŐMANLAR

Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Dilek UYGUN GÖKMEN
Dr. Öğr. Görevlisi Gökçe KURT TİFTİK

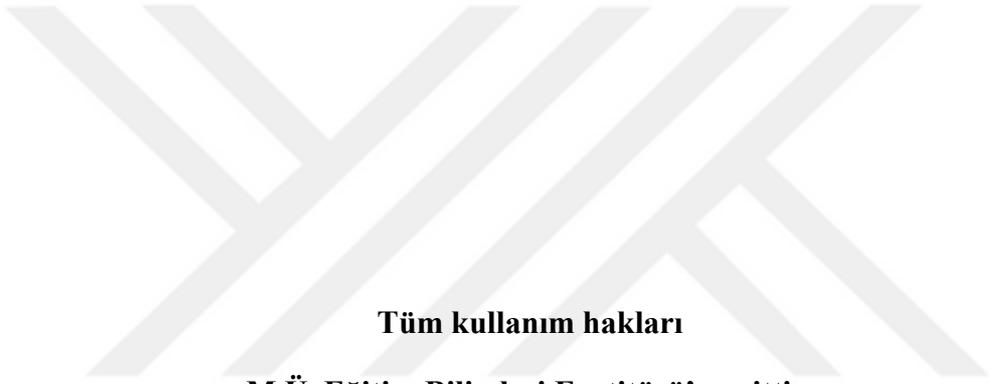
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THESIS APPROVAL

The thesis entitled "Perceptions of Students and Instructors on the English Language Needs of Preparatory School Students at a State University" completed by Fatma Kübra ÇAKIR was defended successfully on 21.01.2020 and certified by examining committee members as thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.

	Name Surname	Signature
THESIS SUPERVISOR	Assist. Prof. Dilek UYGUN GÖKMEN	
JURY MEMBER	Assist. Prof. Zeynep Cumhuri ÇAMLIBEL ACAR	
JURY MEMBER	Assoc. Prof. Enisa MEDE	

ONAY

Fatma Kübra Çakır tarafından hazırlanan “Hazırlık Okulundaki Öğrencilerin İngilizce Dil İhtiyaçlarına ilişkin Öğrenci ve Öğretmen Algıları” konulu bu çalışma, 21.01.2020 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda jüri tarafından başarılı bulunmuş ve yüksek lisans tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

	Adı Soyadı	İmza
TEZ DANIŞMANI	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Dilek UYGUN GÖKMEN	
JÜRİ ÜYESİ	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Zeynep Cumhur ÇAMLİBEL ACAR	
JÜRİ ÜYESİ	Doç. Dr. Enisa MEDE	

CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION

2014 – 2020	M.A., Foreign Language Education Marmara University, İstanbul, Turkey
2004 – 2008	B.A., Foreign Language Education Boğaziçi University, İstanbul, Turkey
2001 – 2004	Çapa Anatolian Teacher Training High School Fatih, İstanbul, Turkey

WORK EXPERIENCE

Nov 2009 – Present	Marmara University, İstanbul, Turkey Lecturer, Testing Office Member
Aug 2009 – Nov 2009	İstanbul Aydın University, İstanbul, Turkey Lecturer
Sept 2008 – June 2009	Dilko Language Schools, İstanbul, Turkey English Teacher

CONTACT INFORMATION

Marmara University School of Foreign Languages

fatma.kosker@marmara.edu.tr

ÖZGEÇMİŞ

EĞİTİM

2014 – 2020	Yüksek Lisans, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Marmara Üniversitesi, İstanbul, Türkiye
2004 – 2008	Lisans, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, İstanbul, Türkiye
2001 – 2004	Çapa Anadolu Öğretmen Lisesi Fatih, İstanbul, Türkiye

İŞ DENEYİMİ

Kasım 2009 – Halen	Marmara Üniversitesi, İstanbul, Türkiye Öğretim Görevlisi, Test Ofis Üyesi
Ağustos 2009 – Kasım 2009	İstanbul Aydın Üniversitesi, İstanbul, Türkiye Öğretim Görevlisi
Eylül 2008 – Haziran 2009	Dilko Dil Dershanesi, İstanbul, Türkiye İngilizce Öğretmeni

İLETİŞİM BİLGİLERİ

Marmara Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksek Okulu

fatma.kosker@marmara.edu.tr

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to investigate the English language needs of preparatory (prep) school students at a state university in Turkey. In order to define prep school students' needs, the following research questions were asked:

1. What are the perceptions of prep school English language learners, instructors and English Medium Instruction (EMI) instructors regarding the importance of the four language skills?
2. What are the perceptions of prep school English language learners, instructors and EMI instructors regarding the importance of different academic tasks related to four language skills?
3. What are the perceptions of prep school English language learners, instructors and EMI instructors regarding the difficulties experienced by students when performing tasks related to four language skills?

The participants of the study were 435 prep school students, 47 prep school language instructors and 11 EMI instructors. The study utilized a descriptive design and aimed to illustrate students' needs via a triangulation of sources and methods. Both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods were used. The quantitative data came from a needs analysis questionnaire given to prep school students and language instructors. The questionnaire data were analysed by descriptive analysis. The qualitative data came from focus group interviews conducted with seven prep school students and six language instructors. Eleven EMI instructors were interviewed individually. The qualitative data were analysed by content analysis.

The results revealed that speaking was perceived as the most important and writing the least important skill by prep school students and EMI instructors, while the language instructors believed in the importance of integrated skills practice. As for the perceived importance of

language tasks, *listening to lectures and taking effective notes, expressing ideas, making presentations, reading course handouts, and writing essays* were found to be important to be practiced by prep school students. The areas students had difficulty in were reported to be *fluent reading, making inferences, following the flow of a conversation while listening, summarizing in writing and asking and answering questions and participating in class discussions in speaking*.

In conclusion, the results of the present study pointed out the fact that all four skills should be given equal importance in the prep programme. Necessary revisions should be made in the prep school programme by taking into account the perceptions of students, language instructors and EMI instructors. Moreover, students should be better supported in the areas they perceived to be having difficulties.

Hence, the results of the present study contribute to the relevant literature in the field of second language program evaluation and needs analysis by illustrating the English language needs of prep school students at a state university from different perspectives; and provide valuable information for the redesign of prep school programme to match the needs of students and instructors.

Key words: needs analysis, preparatory school, language skills, English as a foreign language.

ÖZET

Bu çalışma Türkiye'de bir devlet üniversitesindeki hazırlık okulu öğrencilerinin İngilizce dil ihtiyaçlarını araştırmayı amaçlamıştır. Hazırlık okulu öğrencilerinin ihtiyaçlarını tanımlamak için aşağıdaki araştırma soruları soruldu:

1. İngilizce hazırlık okulu öğrencileri, okutmanları ve İngilizce eğitim veren fakülte hocalarının dört dil becerisinin önemi ile ilgili algıları nelerdir?
2. İngilizce hazırlık okulu öğrencileri, okutmanları ve İngilizce eğitim veren fakülte hocalarının dört dil becerisine ilişkin farklı akademik görevlerin önemi ile ilgili algıları nelerdir?
3. İngilizce hazırlık okulu öğrencileri, okutmanları ve İngilizce eğitim veren fakülte hocalarının, öğrencilerin dört dil becerisiyle ilgili görevleri yerine getirirken yaşadıkları zorluklarla ilgili algıları nelerdir?

Araştırmanın katılımcıları 435 hazırlık okulu öğrencisi, 47 İngilizce okutmanı ve 11 İngilizce ders veren fakülte hocası idi. Çalışma, tanımlayıcı bir tasarım kullanmış ve kaynak ve yöntemlerin çeşitlendirilmesi yoluyla öğrencilerin ihtiyaçlarını ortaya koymayı amaçlamıştır. Hem nicel hem de nitel veri toplama yöntemleri kullanılmıştır. Nicel veriler, hazırlık okulu öğrencilerine ve okutmanlara verilen bir ihtiyaç analizi anketinden elde edilmiştir. Anket verileri betimsel analiz ile analiz edilmiştir. Nitel veriler, yedi hazırlık okulu öğrencisi ve altı okutman ile yapılan odak grup görüşmelerinden alınmıştır. 11 fakülte hocasıyla bireysel görüşme yapılmıştır. Nitel veriler içerik analizi ile analiz edilmiştir.

Sonuçlar, hazırlık öğrencileri ve fakülte hocalarının en önemli beceri olarak konuşmayı ve en az önemli beceri olarak yazmayı algıladığını; okutmanların ise entegre beceri uygulamasının önemine inandığını ortaya koymuştur. Dil görevlerinin algılanan önemine gelince, *dersleri*

dinlemek ve etkili notlar almak, fikirleri ifade etmek, sunum yapmak, ders notlarını okumak ve kompozisyon yazmak, hazırlık okulu öğrencileri için önemli bulunmuştur. Öğrencilerin zorluk çektiği alanların akıcı okuma, çıkarım yapma, dinleme sırasında konuşma akışını takip etme, yazılı olarak özetleme, soru sorma ve cevaplama ve konuşmada sınıf içi tartışmalara katılma olduğu bildirilmiştir.

Sonuç olarak, bu çalışmanın sonuçları hazırlık programında dört beceriye de eşit önem verilmesi gerektiğine dikkat çekmiştir. Hazırlık programında öğrencilerin, okutmanların ve fakülte hocalarının algıları dikkate alınarak gerekli yenilemeler yapılmalıdır. Ayrıca, öğrencilerin zorluk yaşadıklarını düşündükleri alanlarda daha iyi desteklenmeleri gerekmektedir.

Kısacası, bu çalışmanın sonuçları bir devlet üniversitesindeki hazırlık okulu öğrencilerinin İngilizce dil ihtiyaçlarını farklı açılardan göstererek yabancı dil programı değerlendirme ve ihtiyaç analizi alanındaki ilgili literatüre katkıda bulunmaktadır. Ayrıca, hazırlık programının yeniden tasarlanması için öğrencilerin ve öğretmenlerin ihtiyaçlarını karşılayacak değerli bilgiler sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: ihtiyaç analizi, hazırlık okulu, dil becerileri, yabancı dil olarak İngilizce.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I'd like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the people who have helped me accomplish this challenging task of writing my M.A. thesis.

First and foremost, I'd like to thank my supervisor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Dilek UYGUN GÖKMEN for her kindness, ongoing support and invaluable guidance through this process. In addition, I am deeply indebted to my co-supervisor, Dr. Gökçe KURT TİFTİK for her meticulous feedback, helpful guidance in academic writing, and gentle understanding at times when I struggled.

Furthermore, I am grateful to my thesis committee, Assist. Prof. Dr. Zeynep Cumhuri ÇAMLIBEL ACAR and Assoc. Dr. Enisa MEDE for their constructive comments and enlightening questions about my work. Thanks to their contributions, my work has become better.

Moreover, I truly appreciate the contributions of all the scholars whose work I benefited from while writing this thesis. Also, I wish to thank all the participants who volunteered to take part in this study and provided valuable data.

Last but not least, my sincere appreciation goes to my parents who have always supported and believed in me throughout all phases of my life. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to my husband, Fuat ÇAKIR for his contributions in my completing this study; and helping me remain balanced throughout this long journey and for always encouraging me to strive for better. Finally, I would like to thank my dear two-year-old son, Emir ÇAKIR as he transformed me into a more humble and powerful woman.

ÖNSÖZ

Yüksek lisans tezimi yazmamda yardımcı olan insanlara bu vesileyle şükranlarımı sunmak istiyorum.

Her şeyden önce danışmanım Öğr. Üyesi Dr. Dilek UYGUN GÖKMEN'e bu süreçte nezaketi, sürekli desteği ve değerli rehberliği için teşekkür etmek istiyorum. Ayrıca, eş danışmanım Dr. Gökçe KURT TİFTİK'e, detaylı geri dönütleri, akademik yazmada değerli rehberliği ve zorlandığım zamanlardaki nazik anlayışı için derinden minnet duyuyorum.

Ayrıca tez komitem Yrd. Zeynep Cumhuri ÇAMLIBEL ACAR ve Doç. Dr. Dr. Enisa MEDE'ye yapıcı yorumları ve çalışmalarım hakkında aydınlatıcı soruları için teşekkür ediyorum. Katkıları sayesinde çalışmam daha iyi bir hale geldi.

Bu tezi yazarken çalışmalarından yararlandığım tüm akademisyenlere katkılarından dolayı gerçekten minnettarım. Ayrıca bu çalışmaya katılmak için gönüllü olan ve değerli veriler sağlayan tüm katılımcılara teşekkür ediyorum.

Son olarak, en içten teşekkürlerimi, hayatımın her alanında bana her zaman destek olan ve bana inanan anne ve babama gönderiyorum. Eşim Fuat ÇAKIR'a tezimi tamamlamamdaki katkıları için ve bu süreç boyunca huzurlu bir ortam sağladığı ve her zaman daha iyisini yapmaya çalışmam için beni cesaretlendirdiği için çok teşekkür ediyorum. En son olarak, daha hoşgörülü ve güçlü bir kadın olmamı sağlayan sevgili oğlum Emir ÇAKIR'a teşekkür ediyorum.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

EMI: English Medium Instruction

ESL: English as a Second Language

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

ILP: Intensive Language Programs

NAQ: Needs Analysis Questionnaire

SPSS: Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

YÖK: Yüksek Öğretim Kurumu (The Council of Higher Education)



CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to provide a background to the present study. It introduces the problem, defines the research purposes and lists the research questions answered to fulfil the purposes stated. The chapter also highlights the significance of the present study in the relevant literature. Lastly, a list of key terms is defined.

1.1. Background of the Study

In Turkey, higher education institutions that give English medium instruction are among the most prestigious (www.britishcouncil.org.tr). English being the lingua franca of the world, most students regard receiving education in English as an advantage to be better equipped for job opportunities when they graduate (Kırkgöz, 2005); that's why successful students at the university entrance exams tend to choose departments at universities with English medium education (yokatlas.yok.gov.tr). However, the students are not tested on their language proficiency in the university entrance exams; except for the departments that are related to foreign language teaching, translation studies or foreign language literature. This creates a situation in which students with high scores from university entrance exams but very little English proficiency can be admitted to programs in English. In order to compensate for those students' inadequacy in English language competence, the universities offer preparatory (prep from now on) Schools. Prep schools give a proficiency test to the incoming students and the students who can pass the test start their departments, whereas the ones who fail can attend the Prep school or they can choose to prepare for the English exam on their own. Prep schools aim to give intensive English lessons for one academic year or more to get students to a certain English level so that they can pass the proficiency test and follow their courses in English. Students can take the proficiency test up to eight times, which corresponds to a two-year time period. If they cannot manage to pass the proficiency test at the end of two years,

they need to continue their education in a Turkish-medium instruction programme (yok.gov.tr).

Given the nature of prep schools, it is clear that they cannot offer limitless class hours for students to learn English. Even though the number of hours can change from one university to another, students generally receive eight months of language instruction, which makes it fundamental for prep Schools to carefully plan the programme so as to make the best use of the short time period they have.

For successful planning of one academic year, what students exclusively need to learn should be specified. According to Brown (1995), needs analysis is the first step in designing a sound curriculum. Needs analysis in foreign language education is defined by Richards (2001, p.51) as “procedures used to collect information about learners’ needs”. Nation and Macalister (2010, p.24) describe needs analysis as the “examination of what learners know already and what they need to know.”

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Even though its foundation dates back to 1983, there has been no written curriculum of Marmara University (M. U.) Prep school to date. The organization in the M. U. Prep school requires language teachers to develop their own language programme and organize the syllabus and pacing for the year. However, with the changing trends and approaches in the English language teaching field, it is a challenge for language teachers to keep up with the most relevant content, materials and tasks for the students. Even though it should be the first step of writing a curriculum (Long, 2005), determining students’ needs and designing the programme based on those needs have never been attempted at the prep school.

Through informal talks and few meetings with faculty instructors offering English Medium Instruction (EMI), it has been revealed that there is a growing dissatisfaction with the

students' level of English proficiency at Marmara University. Even though the students have passed the proficiency test, faculty instructors state that students lack necessary English language skills and strategies to be successful in their academic studies. Being one of the language instructors at prep school, the researcher is encouraged to investigate the reasons why students lack necessary language skills and conduct a needs analysis to determine which language tasks and strategies should be given more emphasis in the prep school programme.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to do an in-depth needs analysis for prep school students at Marmara University. The researcher aims to gain insight into the perceptions of English language learners, language instructors and faculty instructors offering EMI regarding the English language needs of prep school students. The needs analysis focuses on which language tasks the participants perceive important and which skills the students have difficulty in using so as to determine the tasks that should be given more emphasis in teaching and the areas the students need more support and practice. Another purpose of this needs analysis study is to fulfil the first step of writing a curriculum for the prep school.

1.4. Research Questions

In order to conduct this needs analysis study, the answers to the following research questions have been sought:

1. What are the perceptions of Prep school English language learners, instructors and faculty instructors offering EMI regarding the importance of the four language skills (Reading, Listening, Writing, Speaking)?
2. What are the perceptions of Prep school English language learners, instructors and faculty instructors offering EMI regarding the importance of different academic tasks related to four language skills (Reading, Listening, Writing, Speaking) in the Preparatory programme?

3. What are the perceptions of prep school English language learners, instructors and EMI instructors regarding the difficulties experienced by students when performing tasks related to four language skills (Reading, Listening, Writing, Speaking)?

1.5. Significance of the Study

To the best knowledge of the researcher, this study is the first attempt at Marmara University to analyse the needs of prep school students on four language skills. As the data is gathered from multiple sources (prep school language learners, prep school instructors and faculty instructors offering EMI), the study provides a deeper understanding of the students' needs from different perspectives.

In the literature, there aren't many studies that assess the needs of prep school students at state universities. While some needs analysis studies focus on a particular language skill or proficiency level, the present study investigates all four language skills and the needs of students from all proficiency levels. As conducting a needs analysis is the first step of designing a curriculum, the findings of this study will hopefully pave the way for writing a curriculum based on the identified student needs.

1.6. Definition of Key Terms

Curriculum: Curriculum is defined as a way to describe the beliefs, goals and objectives, educational materials, and evaluation of a specific educational program (McFadden & Roehrig, 2017)

English Medium Instruction (EMI) Faculties/Departments: In some universities, all or selected faculties/departments give education in English. All course requirements (exams, assignments, reports) have to be completed in English.

EMI Instructors: In the present study, EMI instructors are faculty of Marmara University who work at EMI faculties and therefore teach all their classes in English.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP): ESP is an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p.19).

English as a Foreign Language (EFL): It refers to teaching and learning of English by non-native speakers in countries where English is not widely used for communication among the nation.

English as a Second Language (ESL): The teaching of English to speakers of other languages who live in a country where English is an official or important language. (Online Cambridge Dictionary).

Language Programme: A programme is a set of activities geared towards a common purpose or outcome (Lynch, 1996). Hence, a language program is the sequence of activities or courses that serve to fulfil the purposes of the language curriculum of an institution.

Needs Analysis (NA): Needs assessment is a systematic and continuing process of collecting information about students' needs, analysing the information, and then making course decisions based on the results. (Graves, 2000, p. 98)

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses the related literature on needs analysis in foreign language education. To do so, it starts with revising the concepts of syllabus, program and curriculum; continues with several curriculum development models in foreign language teaching, and the place of needs analysis in curriculum development. Then, the chapter continues with needs analysis, including its types, definition and purposes of and steps in conducting needs analysis. After providing a comparison of several steps suggested in the literature, the chapter presents the scope, participants, data collection tools, timing and uses of needs analysis research. The chapter concludes with a summary of needs analysis studies conducted at prep schools in English-speaking and EFL (English as a foreign language) countries.

2.1. An overview of program, curriculum and syllabus in foreign language education

In language education, the terms curriculum, syllabus and program are closely related. The curriculum encompasses both syllabus and program. Program can be seen as the core of a syllabus and syllabus is a sub-part of a curriculum (Erarslan, 2016). As it is suggested in Mede and Akyel (2014), the changes in the curriculum should be reflected in the syllabus and program as well.

Program is usually defined as the set of activities that are carried out to meet a specified purpose or a goal (Lynch, 1996). In that sense, a language program is the execution of a sequence of activities which help learners reach a desired level that is determined by program objectives. As Lynch (1996) further explains, the language program might aim to prepare learners to pass a proficiency test, get a degree or function in a specified context.

The etymological meaning of the word curriculum is a 'race' or 'course' to be followed in Latin. In the context of education, it can be translated as the "course of study to be followed".

This core meaning of following a route for learning can be considered the essential part of many definitions of curriculum (van den Akker, 2004).

Today, curriculum is defined as a way to describe the beliefs, goals and objectives, educational materials, and evaluation of a specific educational program (McFadden & Roehrig, 2017). Moreover, in Taylor & Richards (2018), the term curriculum encompasses content of education, course of study, educational experiences, subjects to be studied, subject matter, and educational activities. However, curriculum has not always been considered as encompassing and layered as it is today.

In foreign language teaching history, syllabus design was the starting point of curriculum development (Richards, 2001). In the first half of the twentieth century, the methods used to teach English were based on linear gradation and presentation of grammatical structures and lexical units; such as the Structural Method or Audiolingual Method, where a typical course syllabus would be based on the listing of structures and vocabulary to be taught in class (Richards & Rodgers, 2001). However, in the second half of the century, with the emergence of humanism and a concern for learners' thoughts, feelings and inner world, understanding learner needs became much more important (Lei, 2007).

In America and Britain, the pressing language problems of the growing numbers of international students for academic studies and immigrants for employment in the 1950s created a situation where foreign language teaching had to be tailored to the needs of specific group of learners, which gave birth to the ESP (English for Specific Purposes) movement (Richards, 2001). With the advent of ESP, planning the language lessons not on what should be taught but rather on what a specific group of learners need to know to function in a specific context was the largely accepted norm (Johns & Dudley-Evans, 1991).

Around the same time, in 1970, communicative approaches to language teaching were overthrowing the long-recognized grammar based methods like the Grammar-Translation Method. In Communicative Language Teaching, as well as in ESP, the necessity to articulate goals and objectives of the language course required the practice of needs analysis. As a result, these practices led to the emergence of language curriculum development approaches (Richards, 2001) because needs analysis and deciding on goals and objectives of a course are the first two steps of curriculum design.

Starting from 1980s, researchers (Candlin, 1984; Nunan, 1988; Rogers, 1989) have focused on the difference between syllabus and curriculum, supporting the belief that language courses should have a sound base on learner needs and clear objectives. For example, Candlin (1984, in Nunan 1998, p. 4) suggested that “curricula are concerned with making general statements about language learning, learning purpose and experience, evaluation, and the role relationships of teachers and learners”. He added that they would also contain groups of learning items and suggestions about how these might be used in class. Syllabuses, on the other hand, are “more localized and are based on accounts and records of what actually happens at the classroom level as teachers and learners apply a given curriculum to their own situation”. These accounts can be used to make modifications to the curriculum, so that the developmental process is ongoing and cyclical.

In Allen (1984), curriculum is defined as a general concept involving the “consideration of philosophical, social and administrative factors” that have an impact on the planning of an educational program (p 61). Whereas, syllabus is a subpart of curriculum and it deals with specifying what units will be presented in the classroom.

Rogers (1989, p. 26) differentiates syllabus from curriculum as follows: syllabi are “prescribing the content and materials to be covered in a course”; whereas curriculum

“involves not only the content students learn but also the environment they learn it in, how they learn it as in the methods and materials used and how learning is assessed”.

Even later in 1990s and early 2000s, scholars were still trying to highlight that designing a language course was more than deciding what to teach in what order. As West (1994) states that in the field of language teaching, curriculum development is not supposed to solely focus on language syllabuses and exclude other aspects such as needs analysis, methodology and evaluation. Richards (2001, p.2) also makes a distinction between syllabus and curriculum as defining syllabus as “a specification of the content of a course of instruction, listing what will be taught and tested” and defining curriculum development as including “processes that are used to determine the needs of a group of learners, developing aims or objectives for a program to address those needs, selecting an appropriate syllabus, course structure, teaching methods, and materials, and carrying out an evaluation of the language program from these processes”.

The definitions listed above shed light onto the comprehensiveness of the curriculum concept of which syllabus is merely a subpart. Going through the steps of curriculum development process should make many of the above definitions more meaningful given that the descriptions of the steps add up to form the concept of curriculum.

2.2. Curriculum Development Models

Curriculum development is a lengthy process comprising of many parts. As in any writing activity, there will be outlines, drafts, and editing in this process. Curriculum theorists try to break down this process in steps so that they could serve as a guideline for curriculum developers should they struggle as to where to start in their attempts.

Different models have been suggested for curriculum development. In Table 1, a comparative analysis of different curriculum development models is presented. Similar steps are arranged

in the same rows to show the parallelism between the selected models. It can clearly be seen that many of the steps overlap and aspire to communicate similar things.

Table 1. A comparison of selected curriculum development models

Steps	Brown (1995)	Graves (2000)	Richards (2001)	Nation & Macalister (2010)
1	-----	Defining the context	Situation analysis	Environment analysis
2	Needs analysis	Assessing needs	Needs analysis	Needs analysis
3	-----	Articulating beliefs	-----	Principles
4	Goals and objectives	Formulating goals and objectives	Planning goals and learning outcomes	Goals
5	-----	Conceptualizing content & Organizing the course	Course planning and syllabus design	Content and sequencing
6	Materials development	Developing materials	Role and design of instructional materials	Format and presentation
7	Language teaching	-----	Providing for effective teaching	-----
8	Language testing	Designing an assessment plan	-----	Monitoring and assessment
9	Program evaluation	-----	Approaches to evaluation	Evaluation

As can be seen in Table 1, the first step in curriculum development is called defining the context (Graves, 2000), situation analysis (Richards, 2001) or environment analysis (Nation & Macalister, 2010). It includes understanding the conditions under which the learning will take place. As Graves (2000, p. 21) puts it: “The more information you have about the context, the easier it will be for you to make decisions about what to teach and how.” In order to define the context, one needs to know what group of people will take the course, the duration of the course and the setting the course will be given in. According to Richards (2001, p. 91) “situation analysis is an analysis of factors in the context of a planned or present curriculum project. These factors may be social, political, economic or institutional.” Class size, motivation, learners of mixed proficiency and special purpose goals are also listed as environment factors (Nation & Macalister, 2010). These factors can stem from students, teachers and the teaching and learning situation (Tessmer, 1990). The second step in curriculum design models is needs analysis. However, in Richards (2001), for example, needs analysis is the first step and the situation analysis is listed as the second. Moreover, in some models of curriculum design, needs analysis includes situation analysis and situation analysis data is complementary to needs analysis (Richards, 2001).

Needs analysis is the subject of the next section of the literature review chapter and thus will be explored in detail. Therefore, the next step to be discussed here is step number three; articulating beliefs (Graves, 2000) or setting principles (Nation & Macalister, 2010). The third step involves deciding exactly which principles or beliefs the curriculum should be built on. They influence -consciously or unconsciously- the decisions taken and the approaches adopted in every stage of course design process (Graves, 2000). If there is a clear statement of educational philosophy at the beginning of a programme, learners and

teachers can easily justify the approaches to teaching, learning and evaluation (O'Neill, 2015).

The fourth step is writing the goals and objectives of the curriculum. Goals are a means of defining the main aims and intended outcomes of a course. Objectives, on the other hand, are “statements about how the goals will be achieved” (Graves, 2000, p.76). Objectives are more specific statements when compared to goals and they are about the learning instances that should be realized in the language classrooms. The objectives of a curriculum state what the learners will be able to do at the completion of a course (Brown, 1995).

The fifth step is content and sequencing. This step is about choosing the content of the course and then deciding in which order it should be presented in the classroom. As the discussion about the difference between the definitions of curriculum and syllabus indicates; this step refers to designing the syllabus for a language course.

Based on goals and objectives, certain decisions regarding the selection of topics, themes, linguistic units, skills, strategies and functions should be made (Nation & Macalister, 2010). How to arrange all these things in a syllabus calls for another decision, one concerning the type of syllabus choice. A syllabus developer can choose from situational, topical, functional or task-based syllabus types (Richards, 2001). As their names suggest, they have different approaches to sequencing and presentation of educational materials.

However, choosing a syllabus type cannot guarantee a wholesome curriculum. In order to achieve a coherent curriculum organisation, Ornstein and Hunkins suggest that attention should be given to the curriculum's scope, sequence, continuity, integration, articulation and balance (Ornstein & Hunkins, 2009).

The sixth step is developing materials. Instructional materials are the fundamental language input the learners receive (Richards, 2001) and they are usually for presentation

of the topic, providing practice opportunities and reference sources for the learners (Cunningsworth, 1995). This step of curriculum design also deals with choosing, evaluating and adapting a textbook through the lenses of stated goals and objectives of the course (Graves, 2000).

The seventh step is language teaching (Brown, 1995). What teachers need to know about the program and their orientation to teach according to a planned curriculum must be provided so that teachers will not struggle to understand how their teaching should fit into the programme (Brown, 1995). Richards (2001) suggests that a context should be created to “achieve quality teaching” and institutional factors as well as teacher and learner factors need to be considered carefully to create the environment for quality teaching to happen.

The last step in curriculum design is evaluation. While some sources make a distinction between assessing the language taught versus assessing the effectiveness of a language program (Brown, 1995; Nation & Macalister, 2010), Graves (2000) prefers to deal with both points within the same step and Richards (2001) only explains evaluation of the curriculum design. Assessing student knowledge can serve as a basis to understanding students’ present knowledge, progress, lacks and needs (Nation & Macalister, 2010). In addition, the language tests should be in line with the principles, goals and objectives of the program (Biggs, 2003).

The fact that evaluation is an ongoing process and is part of every step of curriculum design is underlined by all models (Brown, 1995; Graves, 2000; Richards, 2001; Nation & Macalister, 2010). The purpose, audience, the type and focus of evaluation should be decided so that the outcomes of the evaluation can be interpreted properly (Nation & Macalister, 2010).

Conducting needs analysis at the end of a course is also one of the ways of evaluating the effectiveness of a curriculum. The information gathered in needs analysis can be used to identify the weaknesses of a language curriculum and to improve it (Owen & Rogers, 1999).

2.3. Needs Analysis

The English for Specific Purposes (ESP) movement in English language teaching emerged in the 1960s in response to the language learning issues of international populations in English speaking countries. In order to teach the language to a specific group of learners to achieve a specific goal, specifying the learners' language needs became utterly important. ESP approach argues that a language course should be designed according to learners' needs; thus, needs analysis should be the starting point upon which a program should be built (Richards, 2001). Although needs analysis started with ESP, it is also seen as an essential part of planning general English courses (Richards, 1990).

With myriad definitions for needs analysis in the literature, it would be enlightening to state that the definitions scholars make for needs analysis are rooted in how they classify needs (Brindley, 1989). Therefore, firstly, the types of needs are discussed, followed by the definitions for needs analysis.

2.3.1. Types of Needs

This section aims to discuss several researchers' views on what need is and how types of needs are classified according to different aspects.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) define needs in two different aspects. Firstly, in order to define what "need" constitutes of, they suggested that "need" includes necessities, lacks and wants. Necessities are the things the learners will need to do with the language; lacks are the things they don't know at present; and wants are the things they wish to know. Secondly, they

classified “need” according to the context it should be interpreted in and defined target and learning needs. Target needs are what the learners need to do in the target situation. Target needs are usually realized in the working or academic environment because learners generally need to learn a language to work or study. Learning needs, on the other hand, are what learners need to do to meet the target needs. Learning needs are therefore expected to be realized in the language courses.

Similarly, Brown (1995) differentiates between “situation needs” and “language needs”. The former is defined as the needs that arise from the context within which the learning takes place. The context includes the physical and social situations the learners are in during their education. Financial, cultural and personal factors contribute to situation needs of the learners. “Language needs”, on the other hand, deal with linguistic items that will be necessary in the target situation, learners’ linguistic competence and their reasons for learning the language.

Another distinction is made by Berwick (1989) regarding the agents of needs. The classification of “need” depends on the people defining it. If learners are stating their opinion on what they need, it is classified as "felt needs", whereas what the teachers, the institution and other parties believe the learners need are labelled as “perceived needs” (p. 55).

Nation and Macalister (2010) make a distinction between “objective” and “subjective” needs based on the sources of information to collect data. “Objective needs” can be identified by several sources; such as, grading exam papers, observation and consultations with the teachers. These sources provide factual information about students’ lacks. “Subjective needs” can be obtained by questionnaires and interviews that help the learners self-assess. They usually ask about students’ awareness and perceptions of their needs.

2.3.2. Definitions of Needs Analysis

This section presents selected needs analysis definitions from the literature. Some researchers define needs analysis as being the fundamental step of designing a course. For example, Nunan (1988) defines needs analysis as “a family of procedures for gathering information about learners and about communication tasks for use in syllabus design” (p.75). Likewise, Sysoyev (2000) describes needs analysis as, “having the aim of bringing together the required and desired needs, and of determining goals and objectives to conceptualize the content of the course” (p.13). Moreover, Graves (2000) states that “needs assessment is a systematic and ongoing process of gathering information about students' needs and preferences, interpreting the information, and then making course decisions based on the interpretation in order to meet the needs” (p.98).

Even though a language course should be based on learner needs, deciding which needs are more relevant and important to teach is also defined as part of needs analysis by some researchers. For example, Stufflebeam, McCormick, Binkerhoff, and Nelson (1985) define needs analysis as the process of determining the things that are necessary or useful for the fulfilment of certain evaluative criteria of a language course. This brings about a situation where curriculum designers or need analysts need to make prioritizations for what questions to ask in the needs analysis and what content to teach in limited class hours. Likewise, Witkin and Altschuld (1995, p.20) define needs assessment as “a systematic set of procedures undertaken for the purpose of setting priorities and making decisions about program or organizational improvement and allocation of resources. The priorities are based on identified needs.”

While some researchers (Jordan, 1997) approach needs analysis process with a diagnostic perspective - defining what students lack-, Auerbach (1994) sees it as “a way of focusing and

building on learners' accomplishments and abilities rather than on deficits, allowing learners to articulate and display what they already know and can do.” In a similar fashion, Warrington (2005) states that needs analysis is a way to reach success in L2 learning by finding what the L2 learners individually want and get through guidance.

Lastly, a very broad definition from Brown (1995) states that needs analysis is the “systematic collection and analysis of all subjective and objective information necessary to define and validate defensible curriculum purposes that satisfy the language learning requirements of students within the context of particular institutions that influence the learning and teaching situations” (p.36).

2.3.3. The Purposes of Needs Analysis

Based on the needs analysis definitions above, it can be concluded that a needs analysis is mainly done with the purpose of determining what a particular group of students need or wish to learn and designing the language course accordingly (Richards, 2001). Thus, the data obtained from the needs analysis is undoubtedly useful for the administrators, teachers and material developers. Conducting needs analysis also serves the purposes of making decisions regarding learner placement, skills assessments, teaching approaches, and teacher training programs (Weddel & Van Duzer, 1997).

Richards (2001) lists four reasons for conducting needs analysis. The first one is determining the language skills learners need in particular target situations. The second reason is pinpointing the gap between the students' present abilities and the desired abilities. Thirdly, needs analysis can be done in order to evaluate the effectiveness of a course. And lastly, gathering information about the difficulties the learners are experiencing is another reason why institutions can conduct needs analysis.

2.3.4. Steps in Conducting Needs Analysis

Once the purposes of a needs analysis are decided, the following decision is about the way of conducting NA. Selecting a framework for the needs analysis process would provide the researcher a path to follow and help make sure all angles of the process are taken into consideration. In foreign language education literature, several needs analysis steps have been introduced (McKilip, 1987; Witkin & Atschuld, 1995; Brown, 1995; Jordan, 1997; Graves, 2000; Brown, 2009). In Table 2, an overview of the cited steps is presented and briefly summarized below.

According to McKilip (1987), a needs analyst should follow the steps of identifying users and the uses of the needs analysis, describing the target population and the service environment, identifying needs including describing problems and solutions, assessing the importance of the needs, and communicating results. Another listing of needs analysis steps by Witkin & Altschuld (1995) states that the first step is deciding on the objectives, focus, and scope of the assessment; and then, obtaining commitment to the effort and the use of its results. The third step is appointing a needs assessment committee; and lastly, designing and implementing needs assessment procedures. Brown (1995) preferred to label the steps in rather general terms and listed three steps in conducting a needs analysis, which are making basic decisions about the needs analysis, gathering the information and using the information. The basic decisions in Brown's needs analysis process includes deciding on who will be involved, what kind of information should be collected and which points of view should be represented. Brown revisited his classification in 2009 and again listed three general steps, yet this time with ten sub-steps within them. Three general steps are named very straightforwardly: Get ready to do NA (Needs Analysis), Do the NA research, and Use the NA results (Brown, 2009). Under the first general step are defining the purpose of the NA, delimiting the student population, deciding upon approach(es) and syllabus(es), recognizing

constraints, and selecting data collection procedures. The second step involves collecting data, analyzing data and interpreting results. The last step includes determining objectives and evaluating the report on the NA project. Jordan (1997) lists a ten step process to needs analysis (p. 23). The steps are as follows: defining the purposes of analysis, delimiting student population, deciding upon approaches, acknowledging constraints/limitations, selecting methods of collecting data, collecting data, analysing and interpreting results, determining objectives, implementing decisions, and evaluating procedures and results. Graves (2000) depicts a cyclical, six-step process of needs assessment, where the needs analyst should go back to step number one to complete the cycle. The first step is deciding what information to gather and why; and the second step is deciding the best way to gather it: when, how and from whom. The third step is gathering the information and then interpreting the information. The fifth step is evaluating the effect and effectiveness of the action. As mentioned, the last step requires going back to step number one and deciding on further or new information to gather. The reviewed literature revealed that even though the steps compared are not fully parallel, there are some common steps such as deciding on the information, the users, the data collection methods of needs analysis and evaluating the results of the needs analysis data. The following sections will elaborate on the overlapping steps in Table 2.

Table 2. A listing of several needs analysis steps in foreign language education literature

McKillip (1987)	Witkin&Atschuld (1995)	Jordan (1997)	Graves (2000)	Brown (2009)
1 Identify users and uses of NA	1 Decide on the objectives, focus and scope of the assessment	1 Define the purposes of NA	1 Decide what information to gather and why	1 Define the purpose of the NA
2 Describe the target population and the service environment	2 Obtain commitment to the effort and the use of its results	2 Delimit student population	2 Decide the best way to gather it: when, how and from whom	2 Delimit student population
3 Identify needs including describing problems and solutions	3 Appoint a NA committee	3 Decide upon approaches	3 Gather the information	3 Decide upon approaches and syllabuses
4 Assess the importance of needs	4 Design and implement NA procedures	4 Acknowledge constrains / limitations	4 Interpret the information	4 Recognize constraints
5 Communicate results		5 Select methods of collecting data	5 Act on the information	5 Select data collection procedures
		6 Collect data	6 Evaluate the effect and effectiveness of the action	6 Collect data

7 Analyse and interpret results	7 Decide on further or new information to gather	7 Analyze data
8 Determine objectives		8 Interpret results
9 Implement decisions		9 Determine objectives
10 Evaluate procedures and results		10 Evaluate and report on the NA project

Taking the suggested steps of needs analyses into account, the scope, participants, data collection tools, timing and uses of needs analysis will be discussed.

2.3.4.1. The scope of NA

In this part, the scope of NA refers to what kind of information would be collected and under which philosophy it would be collected during the NA process.

Through needs analysis, a researcher can gather information of various kinds. One of the information types that is commonly collected is the learner profile, which includes information about the learners' age, language proficiency level, learning styles, and attitudes towards language learning (Graves, 2000).

Apart from learner profile, needs analysis aims to collect many other kinds of information from the students. According to Brown (1995), a needs analyst can gather information about the problems students are facing while learning a foreign language, the priorities students have as what the most important skills, tasks, or topics are to learn, students' attitudes towards

learning a language, their linguistic competence, students' ideas and suggested solutions for existing problems and students' expectations from the program; in that, what they wish to learn, how and where they will use the language, and in which skills they need more practice (Graves, 2000).

The kind of information collected during NA could be affected by the needs analysts' ideas and beliefs. According to Benesch (1996), needs analysis process is influenced by the beliefs and viewpoints of the people conducting the analysis. The questions asked and the tools used to collect information will be their choice, which shapes the outcomes of the needs analysis. Therefore, it would be meaningful to look at which philosophies a needs analysis can be conducted under.

Needs analysis can be conducted under four different philosophies. Needs analysts need to specify under which philosophy the study will be conducted because the philosophies might influence the type of information collected (Brown, 1995).

The first one of these philosophies is the democratic philosophy, which occurs when the most people in a group demand a change and needs analysis is done to satisfy that need. The second philosophy is analytic philosophy. It asserts that the hierarchical learning should take place, so the needs analysis should be done to gather information about the next learning step the students will get to. The third philosophy is the discrepancy philosophy. It looks for the difference between what the students already know and what they should know. It uses data to create desired behaviour. Finally, the last philosophy is diagnostic philosophy. It suggests to specify linguistic points and functions the learner group needs to learn and to make sure vital learning skills are not missing in the programme (Stufflebeam *et al.* (1985) cited in Brown, 1995).

Even though the needs analysts decide which philosophy they would adopt, the data to be gathered has to be specified and refined. Following any philosophy, the researcher can make a very long list of needs for a specified group. It is vital that the needs listed are prioritized and narrowed down to a reasonable volume.

2.3.4.2. Participants of NA

The participants of NA include from whom and for whom the information will be collected. According to Brown (1995), there are four groups of participants in a needs analysis: the target group, the audience, the needs analysts and the resource group. The needs analysts are the people who are conducting the analysis. They can be experts or faculty assigned for this task. Needs analysts collect information about the target group. The audience are the people who should be interested in the information obtained; such as the teachers, administrators and program designers. In large scale needs analyses, the audience can even be the policy makers or ministry of education of the country (Richards, 2001). The resource group can be anybody who can provide useful information about the target group or situation. In order to achieve a reliable data on needs analysis, it is vital to access as many resources of information as possible (Porcher, 1983).

2.3.4.3. Data Collection Tools of NA

During NA process, in order to obtain information of different sorts, the need analyst can make use of several instruments and procedures. To illustrate, tests, self-reports, observations, interviews, meetings, and questionnaires can be given as examples. As with any data collection method, the researcher can choose between qualitative and quantitative methods or both. Some of the qualitative data collection methods for NAs are classroom observations, interviews, and learner diaries.

Classroom observations are conducted with the researcher present in the language class and taking notes of learners' language use, errors and needs. As such, this method usually serves for deficiency analysis which aims at defining the lacks of learners (West, 1994). Interviews and semi-structured interviews provide a chance for in-depth analysis of the participants' thoughts, feelings and perceptions. An interview data can be used to design questionnaire questions (Richards, 2001) or it can serve as complimentary data for a given questionnaire. Learner diaries are retrospective logs of learning accounts by the students. They provide information about learners' thoughts on their improvement, language materials, activities, teaching and the classroom environment (O'Brien, 1989).

Some quantitative methods of data collection methods for NA research are entry tests, self-ratings and questionnaires. Entry tests can be administered to the newly arrived students in order to diagnose their lacks, assess their proficiency level and in some cases they can serve the purpose of placement tests and the students can be grouped in classes according to their scores on the entry test (West, 1994). Self-ratings are scales which give learners a chance to rate their proficiency and mastery of skills (Richards, 2001). They can also be a part of questionnaires. Questionnaires are written forms that can be distributed to a larger sample size compared to other data collection methods. Questionnaires may include various question types such as, multiple choice items, Likert scale items, short answer questions and so on.

2.3.4.4. Timing of NA

When a needs analysis should be conducted to a group of learners might be determined according to the purpose of the needs analysis because the information gathered might change based on the time of its application. A needs analysis can be done at the beginning, during or at the end of a language program (Rossi, Lipsey & Freeman, 2004). If it is done at the beginning of a course, it provides information to the instructor and learner about what the

learner brings to the course. It shows what the learners already know and what they lack in knowledge. If it is done during the course, it conveys what has been accomplished or not. It displays the progress made by the learners and the program's success in helping the learners achieve their wishes. If it is done at the end of the course, it provides guidance for improvement. It can serve the purposes of program evaluation and the instructors and administrators can benefit from the needs analysis data to make changes in the program for future learners.

2.3.4.5. Uses of NA

After the purposes of NA are specified, and the scope, participants, tools and timing of the NA are decided, the data can be gathered. The following step is how to analyse and interpret the data obtained. The analysis of the data is usually descriptive, in that, the data is presented in listings and tables of means, frequencies and standard deviations. Depending on the kinds of questions, the results can give information about learners' perceptions of their abilities or lacks, expressions of their perceived difficulties regarding specific tasks, and opinions on the language course (Richards, 2001).

Richterich (1983) states that needs analysis has a very wide scope which comprises of the totality of the educational process including not only specifying objectives and selecting materials but also testing, program evaluation and teacher training. According to the mentioned NA processes, goals and objectives of a language program is expected to be based on NA information. Nation & Macalister (2010) point out that the results of NA should be used for designing the language programme. Nevertheless, it would not be feasible for a language programme to immediately alter its goals after implementing a needs analysis. Careful consultation with the stakeholders of the programme is advised before radical decisions about the it are taken (Richards, 2001).

2.4. Needs Analysis Studies

There have been numerous needs analysis studies in the field of education in various disciplines and levels. Needs analysis can be conducted for any subject area and the needs of students from primary to tertiary level can be assessed. For the purposes of the present study, only the studies conducted at preparatory schools of universities are included in the review below. The preparatory schools (or intensive English programs) serve the purpose of teaching English to speakers of other languages so that the students can reach a level of English proficiency which enables them to follow their English-medium instructed courses at undergraduate or graduate level.

Needs analysis studies at prep schools are conducted with the purpose of determining what to teach to the students in the prep year. They aim to specify what students lack in knowledge, what they consider important or which skills they find difficult to use. Furthermore, needs analysis studies at prep school can be conducted with the aim of assessing the effectiveness of language program or evaluating the language curriculum in order to make improvements.

The studies reviewed in this section will be scrutinized under two groups, which are EFL contexts and ESL contexts. Prep schools or Intensive English Programs (IEP) in English speaking countries differ from prep schools in EFL countries in two aspects. Firstly, prep schools in English speaking countries receive international students from various backgrounds, whereas the majority of prep school students in EFL countries are native to that country. For example, almost all of the prep school students in Turkey are Turkish. Another difference is the target situation the EMI (English Medium Education) education takes place. Prep school students in English speaking countries will live and study in an English speaking country, while prep school students in EFL countries will receive EMI education yet they use their native language among their friends and in their social lives. This situation results in

needs analysis studies in prep schools in English speaking countries to focus not only on students' academic needs but also on their social needs to function in the English speaking community. In EFL prep schools; however, students' academic language needs are more important. The present study reviews needs analysis studies first in English speaking countries and then in EFL contexts.

2.4.1. Prep School Needs Analysis Studies in English Speaking Countries

Some researchers who conducted needs analysis studies in English speaking contexts aimed to define which language skills the learners perceive to be the most important in their academic and social lives. One example of these studies is Williams' (1993) qualitative study which asked ten students to write journals about their language learning motivation and English language needs at a university in California, USA. The ranking of their perceived needs revealed that students needed to improve their listening skill the most. They also noted that they needed more information about American culture.

Another such study, conducted at a Canadian University, was Zhao's (1993) study. It investigated the social and academic language needs of international students via an English Language Needs Survey Questionnaire. The analysis of the responses of 195 students revealed that students prioritized their needs for English language for daily living and social interactions, followed by listening and speaking, and then reading and writing skills for daily studying. The study also showed that there were no significant differences in language needs between the students who joined the preparatory training program and those who did not.

Lastly, focusing on academic listening needs of Chinese students at two Canadian universities, Shen (2007) gave questionnaires to 37 students and conducted follow-up interviews with three students. The results of the study showed that students' perceived difficulty in academic listening stemmed from a linguistically and socially unfamiliar context.

While acknowledging that listening was a necessary skill to be successful in academic contexts, the students also pointed out that they needed to improve their reading, speaking and writing skills as well.

Some researchers, on the other hand, adopted a more holistic view of needs analysis and attempted to define what non-native learners' language needs were and whether the prep program was able to meet those needs. For example, in her mixed research method study, Nakaprasit (2010) gathered data from 17 students, 6 instructors and 1 administrator at a prep school of a Canadian university. The main question to be answered was whether students' academic English language needs were met. The results indicated that the prep school failed to meet students' needs and this was attributed to the administrative rather than instructional problems. Students also stated that they lacked confidence to communicate in academic and social environments because of the fact that their speaking and listening instruction at school were inadequate.

Moreover, Samuel (2016) conducted a qualitative case study with five faculty members and 11 students who were beginner level international students at a prep school in New England with the purpose of understanding the general needs of international beginner level students. The analysis of the data suggested that the students needed both academic and social language. Speaking skill was given the most importance, yet students pointed out that they needed to understand speaking registers to function in academic and social environments. They also stated they were not proficient enough in their command of vocabulary and grammar.

The studies focusing on the needs of prep school students studying at English speaking countries illustrate that the students are aware that they not only need academic language

skills to be successful at school, but also target culture knowledge, social and daily language use to function effectively in the campus and in their daily lives in English speaking contexts.

2.4.2. Prep School Needs Analysis Studies in EFL Contexts

Some studies in EFL contexts investigated the effectiveness of prep programs to prepare the students for their departmental studies. For example, Al Busaidi (2003) conducted a needs analysis study to assess the effectiveness of the intensive language program at a university Language Centre in the Sultanate of Oman. The researcher utilized a questionnaire and interviews to gather the data. The participants were both students and faculty. The results showed that students saw the intensive language program as a preparation for their academic studies at their departments. Therefore, they expected the program to integrate academic skills to the college course content. In addition, they desired four language skills training to be intensified.

In the same vein, Kırkgöz (2009) conducted a study at a Turkish state university. The main aim of the study was to do a target situation needs analysis which intended to specify the academic language needs of students for their departments. Besides, the study assessed the prep school program's effectiveness in preparing students for their departments. The data were gathered from 220 students and 15 lecturers via a needs analysis questionnaire. In addition, there were follow-up interviews with 120 students and 15 lecturers. The results showed that the students found listening to a lecture and taking notes as the most frequently required skill, followed by writing a summary and asking and answering questions during lectures. Regarding the effectiveness of the prep program in preparing students for those academic requirements, most students stated that their education was not adequate.

Coşaner's (2013) study reported the effectiveness of a state university's prep school program through a needs analysis survey. Two hundred and fifty students and two instructors took part in the study. The results suggested that the program was effective to some extent. It needed

improvements in content, materials and assessment. The students reported that they needed listening and speaking skills the most. They also highlighted the importance of vocabulary knowledge.

Similarly, Öner and Mede (2015) conducted a program evaluation for A1 level repeat students at a private university in Turkey. A needs analysis questionnaire was used to gather the quantitative data. There were semi-structured interviews as well. The results showed that the program was effective in general; however, more importance should be given to the speaking skill in terms of content, materials and activities used in the classroom.

In Akbulut's (2016) study, a need analysis was conducted with 75 intermediate level prep school students at a state university in Turkey. Both questionnaires and interviews were used to gather data. The results revealed that more emphasis should be placed on listening, speaking and reading skills in the program. As for the materials, students stated that they should be more authentic and interesting.

In response to the recurring findings that show that students need speaking skills to be given more importance in prep school programs, Doğan and Mede (2017) conducted a need analysis study to assess the speaking needs of 80 pre-intermediate level prep school students at a private university. The study first identified the speaking skill needs and then checked if the identified needs were met by the program. Through questionnaires and interviews the data were gathered and students perceived all speaking sub-skills important. Among these, answering questions and expressing oneself were stated to be the most important.

To sum up, most of the studies looked at the perceived importance of four skills in prep school education from the perspective of students. A large number of these studies found that speaking and listening skills should be given more importance. It can be clearly seen that students learning English in EFL contexts generally feel that they need more practice in

listening and speaking, which is understandable given the limited hours of instruction and lack of exposure to real-life situations outside the classroom.



CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This chapter defines the methodology of the present study. It starts with explaining the research design and the setting the study took place in. Then, the chapter gives detailed information regarding the participants of the study and the instruments that were used to gather data. The chapter concludes with describing the data analysis procedures undertaken in this study.

The main purpose of this study was to conduct an in-depth needs analysis for Prep school students at Marmara University. The researcher aimed to find out the English language needs of prep school students who would study in EMI (English Medium Instructed) departments. The opinions of the students, language instructors working at prep school and faculty instructors who give English medium instruction were asked. The researcher intended to understand the participants' perceptions regarding the importance of the four skills, the importance of tasks used in prep school education, and the difficulties students experience while using four language skills and strategies. In order to achieve this aim, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What are the perceptions of Prep school English language learners, instructors and faculty instructors offering EMI regarding the importance of the four language skills (Reading, Listening, Writing, Speaking)?
2. What are the perceptions of Prep school English language learners, instructors and faculty instructors offering EMI regarding the importance of different academic tasks related to four language skills (Reading, Listening, Writing, Speaking) in the Preparatory programme?
3. What are the perceptions of prep school English language learners, instructors and EMI instructors regarding the difficulties experienced by students when performing tasks related to four language skills (Reading, Listening, Writing, Speaking)?

3.2. Research Design

This study was conducted for descriptive purposes. Descriptive research is a process of data collection to define a situation or problem as it is (Fox & Bayat, 2007). It does not aim to alter the variables while describing a phenomenon. This type of research intends to answer the question of ‘what’ rather than ‘how’ (Nassaji, 2015).

The present study utilized a mixed-method research design which included both qualitative and quantitative methods of research. According to Creswell (2015), a mixed-method research aims to investigate both qualitative and quantitative data to check whether they complement each other or not. The researcher also interprets both types of data together to answer the research questions.

Creswell (2015, p. 3) lists four characteristics of mixed-method research, as follows:

- Collection of qualitative and quantitative data in response to research questions.
- Use of rigorous qualitative and quantitative methods.
- Combination or integration of quantitative and qualitative data using a specific type of mixed methods design, and interpretation of this integration.
- Sometimes, framing of the design within a philosophy or theory.

In order to prove the gathered data’s validity, researchers use triangulation, which is a procedure used to compare different sets and sources of data with one another (Long, 2005).

In this study, triangulation of the data was enabled as the data were collected from various sources (learners, language instructors, and EMI instructors) by two different methods (questionnaires and semi-structured interviews).

3.3. Setting

This study took place at the School of Foreign Languages (Prep School) at Marmara University. When students are first admitted to the university, they are given a proficiency test prepared by the Prep School Testing Unit to determine their English proficiency level. The

proficiency levels are set according to the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference). In the proficiency test, the passing point 60 equals B1+ level proficiency in CEFR. The students who get 60 points out of 100 pass the test and start their education in their departments. The proficiency test is also used as a placement test and the students who fail the test are placed in the classes based on their proficiency scores. There are 3 levels in the Prep school programme, which are A (A1 starters), B (A2 starters) and C (B1 starters).

A student can take the proficiency test up to eight times until s/he can pass it. There are four proficiency exams in a year; Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer. All the new-coming students take the Fall Proficiency. A2 and B1 starters in the Prep school can take Winter Proficiency. All levels take the Spring Proficiency. Only the students who pay for the summer school education can take the Summer Proficiency.

The proficiency test has four sections; Use of English, Reading, Listening, and Writing. All questions are in multiple-choice format except writing. The first section, Use of English, tests vocabulary and structure knowledge of the students with discrete items. In the reading section, there are three reading passages and 25 comprehension questions in total. In the listening section, there are four listening texts and 25 while-listening questions. In the writing section, the students are asked to write a well-developed essay with at least 250 words. Each section constitutes 25% of the total score.

The Prep school programme is based on teaching four skills: reading, listening, writing and speaking. A group of voluntary teachers form a Curriculum Unit. This unit collaborates to decide on the content of the Prep programme and choose the materials. They work on which skills and strategies should be included in the programme and in which order they should be presented in the classroom. All in all, they prepare the syllabus for the year.

In 2018-2019 academic year, all proficiency levels used a commercially available course book, a listening skills book and a grammar book. There were also supplementary compilation

books prepared by the curriculum unit members. There are compilation books for the Reading, Listening, and Writing skills. These books include extra tasks and exercises that the curriculum unit members considered important to be included in the programme.

The Prep school year is made up of two terms, Fall and Spring. A1 starters receive 24 hours of instruction a week (8 hours of main course and 4 hours of reading, listening, writing, and speaking each. A2 and B1 starters receive 20 and 16 hours, respectively. Students take two midterm exams and two pop-quizzes each term. There are also several in-class speaking and writing tasks that make up a certain percentage of their grade.

In the main course classes, students follow a course book that presents four language skills and a compilation book for extra grammar practice. In the reading classes, students have a compilation course handout with reading passages and related comprehension questions and vocabulary exercises. In the listening classes, the students follow a listening skills book and a compilation course handout. The exercises practice while listening skills. In the writing classes, the students follow a writing compilation course handout. The handout presents essay types and students practice writing essays with their instructors. In the speaking classes the students do the speaking exercises in the course book because the main course instructors skip the speaking exercises in the course book.

There is also a summer school for the underachievers but students need to pay for the courses in the summer school. It is an intensive 7-week programme to boost students' English proficiency.

In conclusion, the prep school has a testing unit that prepares the exams and a curriculum unit that prepares the syllabus for the academic year. The language instructors are provided with the selected materials for their courses. The students are placed in three proficiency levels with A the lowest, and C the highest.

3.4. Target Population and Participants

The participants of the present study are comprised of prep school English language students (see Table 3), prep school English language instructors and EMI instructors at the faculties

The target population of the study consisted of all the students who would receive English-medium instruction when they started their departments. Of those 900 students, 435 were reached to fill-out the Needs Analysis Questionnaire (NAQ). The average age of the students was 19. The age range varied from 17 to 36. The students of all proficiency levels were included in the study. There were 206 students from A Programme, 142 from B Programme and 87 from C Programme.

Of the 98 language instructors that work in the prep school, 47 of them returned the questionnaire. The teachers varied in age and years of teaching. Their ages ranged from 22 to 60. The average age was 42. The mean of teachers' experience of working at Marmara University prep school was 13 years.

Eleven EMI instructors participated in the study. Three of them worked at the faculty of Economics, two at Engineering, two at Medicine, two at Business Administration and two at International Relations. Their average years of experience in teaching in English was 18.

Table 3. Prep school students participating in the study

Number of Students in Each Programme	Number of Students in Each EMI Department	Mean Age
206 - A Programme	235 - Engineering	19
142 - B Programme	57 - International Relations	
87 - C Programme	42 - Medicine	
Total: 435	31 - Business Administration	
	22 - Sociology	
	24 - Economics	
	11 - Theology	
	8 - Translation	
	7 - ELT	

3.5. Procedures

Information regarding how the data were collected and analysed for the purposes of answering the research questions of the present study will be discussed under the following section.

3.5.1. Data Collection Procedures

The study took place in the 2018-2019 academic year at Marmara University, School of Foreign Languages and faculties that give English-medium education (Faculty of Medicine,

Engineering, Business Administration, Economics, International Relations and Politics, Sociology, Theology, Translation Studies and English Language Teaching).

First, the piloting of the questionnaire was achieved with 40 Prep School students. Two classes were randomly chosen for this task. The reliability coefficient was 0,925.

The questionnaire was distributed to students and language instructors during the first term of the 2018-2019 academic year after the students had taken the first Progress Exam. The timing was chosen as such to ensure that the students had spent enough time in the programme to get a general idea of the Prep school programme, language tasks, strategy use and their English language needs.

The qualitative data for the study was gathered in the second term of the 2018-2019 academic year. The researcher conducted focus group interviews with randomly chosen prep school students from each level and purposefully selected English language teachers. EMI instructors at the faculties were interviewed individually.

3.5.2. Data Collection Instruments

The present study utilized a needs analysis questionnaire and semi-structured interview questions to gather data so as to answer the research questions. The following table shows the research questions and by which tools the questions were answered in the present study.

Table 4. Research question correspondence with data collection instruments

Research Questions	Data Collection Instruments	
	NAQ for students and language instructors	Interviews with students, language instructors & EMI instructors
RQ 1 “importance of four language skills”	NAQ Part A	Semi-structured Interview Questions
RQ 2 “importance of language tasks”	NAQ Part B	Semi-structured Interview Questions
RQ 3 “difficulty experienced in application of strategies”	NAQ Part C	Semi-structured Interview Questions

As can be seen in Table 4, in order to answer the research question 1 “What are the perceptions of Prep school students, language instructors and EMI instructors regarding the importance of the four language skills?” the answers to questionnaire Part A, which asks the participants to rate the importance of four language skills, were used.

The research question 2 “What are the perceptions of Prep school students, language instructors and EMI instructors regarding the importance of different academic tasks related to four language skills?” was answered by the Part B of the questionnaire, which lists academic tasks on four language skills to be rated by the students and language instructors on their importance.

Part C of the questionnaire is about the use of different language strategies. The students and language instructors will select how often the students have difficulty in using them. This part of the questionnaire was analysed to answer research question 3 “What are the perceptions of

Prep school students, language instructors and EMI instructors regarding the difficulties experienced by Prep school students during the application of strategies related to four language skills?”.

All three parts of the NAQ are represented in the semi-structured interviews. The answers to the semi-structured interview questions were used to support the data gathered from the questionnaires for prep school students and language instructors.

3.5.2.1. The Needs Analysis Questionnaire (NAQ)

The quantitative data were collected through a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire which consists of 80 items in total. The questionnaire was adopted from a PhD study on program evaluation (Mede, 2012). This specific questionnaire was chosen because the items in the questionnaire asked about academic skills, which prep school students needed to function in their future departments. Moreover, the prep school programme teaches four language skills and the adopted questionnaire collects information about the four language skills. The NAQ (Needs Analysis Questionnaire) was translated in Turkish and an English teacher with a PhD on translation studies also checked the accuracy of translation. The Turkish version of the questionnaire was first piloted with three students and any items that did not sound right or were vague were corrected before the application. The questionnaire is of two sections; the first section collects personal information and the second section aims to measure language needs. The second section is divided into three parts. The first part (PART A) asks the participants to evaluate the importance of the four language skills, the second part (PART B) asks about the importance of the use of tasks in lessons; and the last part (PART C) analyses the difficulties experienced by students when applying strategies on four language skills.

The questionnaire for prep school students can be seen in Appendix A. The language instructors were given the same questionnaire as the student questionnaire with an accustomed wording (see Appendix B). For example, the first part of the second section of the

questionnaire for students asks *“Please rate the importance of the following language skills regarding your academic studies in your future departments.”*, in the instructors’ questionnaire, it was reworded as follows: *“Please rate the importance of the following language skills regarding your students’ academic studies in their future departments.”*

3.5.2.2. The Semi-Structured Interviews

In the present study, semi structured interviews were conducted with prep school students, language instructors and EMI instructors. The information regarding each round of interviews is elaborated under the following headings:

3.5.2.2.1. Focus Group Interview with Students

The researcher conducted a focus group interview with Prep school students. A focus group is one of the techniques to gather qualitative data where the researcher conducts an in-depth group interview with participants that are known to have similar characteristics, and have something to say on the given topic (Thomas et al., 1995). Six to eight participants in a focus group interview is suggested to be ideal given that smaller groups could create better synergy (Kruger & Casey, 2000).

The programme coordinators were asked to randomly choose two students from each programme to participate in the focus group interview. Three students from A programme, two students from B programme and two students from C programme turned up for the focus group interview. The average age of the students was 18,5. Two of those students were male, and five of them were female. The interview was audio-recorded and lasted one hour and seven minutes. The students were asked semi-structured interview questions (see Appendix C).

The questions, in parallel with the questionnaire, asked about what students considered important regarding the materials they used and tasks they carried out on four language skills. The students were also asked about which skills and strategies they had difficulty in using in

four language skills. They were encouraged to talk about their English language needs during their preparatory school education.

3.5.2.2.2. Focus Group Interviews with Language Instructors

As for the language instructors, the researcher utilized purposeful sampling because according to Cresswell & Plano Clark (2011), this procedure involves selecting participants that are known to be knowledgeable about the subject and are available to participate to the study. There were six purposefully selected Prep school English language instructors. The decision was based on the instructors' experience in the Prep school and willingness to contribute to the study. Six language instructors were interviewed in two groups of three. The interviews were audio recorded and each focus group session lasted about an hour. There were ten semi-structured interview questions for language instructors (see Appendix D). The perceptions of language instructors on prep school students language needs were asked during the interviews.

3.5.2.2.3. One-to-One Interviews with EMI Instructors

The EMI instructors at the faculties were first reached by email to ask if and when they would be available to join the study. The instructors who volunteered for an interview were met individually. The researcher reached 11 faculty instructors from Medicine, Economics, Business Administration, Engineering, and International Relations faculties. Each interview was audio-recorded and lasted approximately 30 minutes. The semi-structured interview questions for EMI instructors can be seen in Appendix E.

3.5.3. Data Analysis Procedures

The quantitative data were analysed by the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 21.0) using descriptive statistics. The mean and standard deviation of each item were calculated and presented in a table. The table listed the items for each part of the questionnaire

and showed learners', language instructors' and EMI instructors' answers to provide a description of the perceptions of the stakeholders.

The qualitative data were transcribed and coded according to Bogdan and Biklen's (1998) framework. The questions in the semi-structured interview all aimed to support the quantitative data and to gain insight into the reasons why prep school students, language instructors and EMI instructors perceived specific skills, tasks and strategies to be important or difficult for Prep school students. The transcriptions of the interview data were analysed using content analysis. Content analysis was described in Holsti (1969) as "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages" (p. 14). According to Stemler (2000), in content analysis, the message is embedded in the context of communication; therefore, the context – in the case of this present study, the interview transcriptions- should be analysed systematically to extract the message. The researcher analyses the data according to emerging or structured categories that are set before the analysis. In this study, the items in the questionnaire were used as pre-set categories. In addition, any emerging categories that are missing in the questionnaire items, but present in the interview transcripts were also added in the qualitative analysis.

In order to achieve inter-rater reliability, the data was coded by the researcher and another expert in ELT separately. When the raters compared their analyses, it was found out that they reached a high degree of agreement on the emerging categories.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the data gathered from preparatory school English language learners, language instructors and EMI instructors at the faculties regarding their perceptions on the English language needs of preparatory school English language learners. The data were gathered through a Need Analysis Questionnaire (NAQ) for students and NAQ for language instructors, a focus group interview with students, two focus group interviews with language instructors, and one-to-one interviews with EMI instructors. The data corresponding to the three research questions are presented in the order of Research Question 1 (RQ1), RQ2, and RQ3. Each section is further divided into three parts to present the findings of the three parties involved in the present study, which are the prep school students, the prep school language instructors and EMI instructors. The chapter concludes with a summary of the results.

4.2. Research Question 1

The first research question of the study is: “What are the perceptions of Prep school English language learners, instructors and faculty instructors offering EMI regarding the importance of the four language skills (Reading, Listening, Writing, Speaking)?” In order to answer this question, the perceptions of prep school students, prep school language instructors, and EMI instructors are presented below.

4.2.1. Prep School Students

The quantitative data for RQ1 came from PART A of the NAQ for prep school students, which asked: *“Please rate the importance of the following language skills regarding your academic studies in your future departments. Circle the appropriate number according to the following scale.”* According to the scale, 1 means ‘not important’, and 5 means ‘extremely

important'. Table 5 shows the mean scores of students' ratings for the importance of four language skills.

Table 5. The perceptions of students regarding the importance of four skills

	M	SD
Speaking	4.74	.65
Listening	4.45	.80
Reading	4.25	.92
Writing	4.15	.93

According to Table 5, the grand mean of all the skills is 4.39, which is higher than 4, which means "important" in the NAQ. Therefore, it can be said that the students thought all four skills were almost equally important. The speaking skill, with a mean of 4.74, was perceived to be more important than other skills by students. Writing, on the other hand was rated to be the least important (M=4.15) compared to the other skills in the questionnaire.

In the focus group interview, as well, all of the participating students stated that they considered speaking to be the most important skill for their future studies. When asked why speaking was the most important skill for them, they said they needed speaking for successful communication, for their self-confidence and for their future academic education.

In order to achieve successful communication, the students stated that they needed to be able to carry out daily conversations, speak fluently, ask clarification questions when they had problems understanding the lesson, and express themselves clearly and effortlessly. The following excerpts show their perceptions on this issue:

“I believe the skill that we need the most in the Prep school is definitely speaking. After all, if you can’t speak a language, you can’t claim to know that language.”

(Student B2)

“What I need the most from this year is the ability to express myself in speaking. I want to speak fluently.” (Student A2)

“I think apart from academic English, I should also have a good command of general English so that I can easily raise my hand in the classroom when I don’t understand the lecture and ask the teacher to repeat or clarify the information. Or I should be able to ask something related to our course.” (Student A3)

Moreover, students stated that they needed speaking for self-confidence. Students admitted that sometimes even though they knew the answer of a question, they felt intimidated to speak in front of their peers, yet they also acknowledged that the only way to overcome that was to practice speaking more in the classroom. The following comment illustrates their point:

“I believe the ability to speak improves over time. The more we speak, the better we will get at it. We need to speak more to gain confidence” (Student C1)

Lastly, students stated that they needed speaking for their future academic studies. They especially highlighted the importance of making presentations because they said it was what they would need to do when they started their departments the following year. One participant commented on this issue as follows:

“I have a friend who is a second year student at my department. She said they are making presentations all the time. I think this is a skill we need more practice in so that we could be better prepared when we start our departments.” (Student C1)

In relation to the significance of developing their speaking skill, students mentioned their needs such as, having more class hours for speaking and having native speaker teachers for speaking lessons.

Some students suggested that more class hours should be devoted to speaking because they could only get better with more opportunities to practice the language. One of the students in the A programme stated that they “should have more speaking lessons.” He believed that there “should be more speaking practice in the classroom.” Another student from the B programme added: “I would rather have less reading and more speaking classes in a week.”

Students also suggested that they should have native speaker teachers and they should be forbidden to speak Turkish in the classroom. They thought that they should be in a situation where their only option is to speak English, so they would force themselves to participate more in the classroom. One of the participants commented as follows:

“Even though I know that our native speaker is fairly proficient in Turkish, I still feel I can’t speak Turkish with her. I feel like I have to speak English with native speakers. It’s a mental orientation maybe.” (Student A1)

4.2.2. Language Instructors

The results of the NAQ for language instructors is presented in Table 6. RQ1 aimed to find out the perceptions of language instructors on the importance of the given language skills regarding their students’ academic studies in their future departments. According to the questionnaire scale, 1 meant ‘not important’, and 5 meant ‘extremely important’.

Table 6. The perceptions of language instructors regarding the importance of four skills

	M	SD
Reading	4.88	.38
Listening	4.68	.46
Writing	4.55	.62
Speaking	4.46	.72

The NAQ results showed that language instructors considered all skills to be ‘important’ as the grand mean of all four skills was 4.64, which could also be interpreted as ‘extremely important’ according to the scale. Of the four skills asked, reading was seen as the most important skill for the language instructors for their students’ future studies. Speaking, with a mean score of 4.46, was perceived to be less important than other skills.

In the focus group interviews, when asked which skills were important for their students’ future studies, language instructors stated that all four language skills were equally important and students needed to be proficient in all skills to be successful in their departments. Furthermore, they firmly believed that skills should be taught in an integrated fashion to create a more efficient teaching and learning atmosphere. The following comments illustrate their view:

“When we teach skills individually, it is difficult for students to transfer their knowledge of one skill to others. For example, the students should be able to use the grammar structures they have learnt in their writing, that’s why I believe that grammar and writing should be taught by the same teacher.” (Teacher A2)

“I personally prefer to teach reading and writing skills together. It is difficult for students to write without reading about that topic because they don’t have enough input to produce an output.” (Teacher A1)

4.2.3. EMI Instructors

Eleven instructors who use English Medium Instruction to teach their classes were interviewed one-to-one. When they were asked to talk about which skills they considered important for academic success in their departments, they gave varying answers.

Most EMI instructors chose to rank the skills in the order of importance. When their answers were tallied, it was concluded that speaking was ranked as more important than other skills. The second skill that was rated as important after speaking was reading, followed by listening and writing, respectively.

Four EMI instructors pointed out that all skills are equally important as they should be used in an integrated fashion. They did not choose to rank the skills in an order of importance. They clarified why all language skills were equally important in their departments. The following comment came from one of the instructors who supported the view that all four language skills were equally important:

“For me, it is impossible to say one skill is more important than the others. For example, in order to communicate, they need speaking and listening at the same time. Or when they are listening to the lecture, they need to listen and take notes, read the slide presentation or the textbook and ask a question to the teacher if necessary.” (EMI 7, International Relations)

Of the EMI instructors who attempted to rank the skills in the order of importance, four of them stated that speaking was the most important skill and nine EMI instructors in total talked

about the importance of the speaking skill to achieve academic success in their departments. They mentioned that students needed speaking skill in order to express themselves and their ideas in the classroom, join class discussions and make presentations in their classes. These three points are demonstrated in the following comments:

“Sometimes I ask a question and I know the students know the answer but they cannot say it because they are not proficient enough to express what they think.”

(EMI 2, Engineering)

“I want to have interactive classes and it is important that the students can actively engage in discussions and they need to speak well to do that.” (EMI 6, Business Administration)

“Making presentations is very common in our department and some students really feel intimidated to speak in front of their friends to present their work or project.” (EMI 11, Economics)

When talking about the most important skills, even though some EMI instructors regarded some skills to be more important than others, they did not perceive any skill to be completely unimportant. Although not picked as the most important by most EMI instructors, reading and listening were established to be important by all EMI instructors interviewed. As all classes are conducted in English, students should be able to comprehend the lectures they listen to and understand the textbooks and course handouts they read. The following excerpt illustrates this view:

“The key to success is attending the classes. Students need to be able to understand when they read the textbook and understand what the teacher is explaining when they listen to the lectures.” (EMI 2, Engineering)

Writing was also found to be important by all EMI instructors for the reason that students were required to write essays or short essays in exams or assignments for most courses. Only did the instructors from the faculty of Medicine perceive writing not as important as the other skills. One of them justified this as follows:

“Because of the large number of students, we cannot assign much written homework. The questions in the exams are in multiple choice format so the students do not really need the writing skill in the exams, either.” (EMI 4, Medicine)

4.3. Research Question 2

The second research question of the study aimed to find out the perceptions of Prep school English language learners, instructors and faculty instructors offering EMI regarding the importance of different academic tasks related to four language skills (Reading, Listening, Writing, Speaking) in the preparatory programme. In an attempt to answer this question, the perceptions of prep school students, prep school language instructors, and EMI instructors are presented below separately for each language skill.

4.3.1. Prep School Students

In an attempt to answer the RQ2, the students were asked to rate the importance of the given tasks for each language skill (reading, listening, writing and speaking) regarding their academic studies in their future departments. According to the NAQ scale, 1 meant ‘not important’ and 5 meant ‘extremely important’. In addition, a focus group interview was held to gather the qualitative data on the importance the students give for each language task and the reasons they have for their opinions. The following sections will present the quantitative and qualitative data for each language skill for prep school students.

4.3.1.1. Reading

The quantitative data that revealed the importance of the reading tasks according to the students were gathered from the NAQ. The students were asked to rate the importance of each reading item in the questionnaire. Students' perceptions on the importance of reading tasks according to the NAQ are presented in Table 7 below:

Table 7. The perceptions of students regarding the importance of reading tasks

Reading	M	SD
lecture notes	4.00	1.04
course handouts	3.87	.99
reference tools (e.g. dictionaries)	3.74	1.06
articles in journals	3.45	1.10
newspapers/magazines	3.44	1.14
texts on the Internet	3.42	1.00
instructions for projects	3.27	1.19
graphs/ charts/ diagrams/ tables	3.17	1.24
computer-presented texts	3.16	1.00
textbooks	3.10	1.15
works of literature	2.96	1.31

The grand mean score (3.41) suggests that the students considered reading tasks ‘somewhat important’ overall. Of the items asked, *reading lecture notes* was considered to be the most important reading task with a mean score of 4.00, followed by *reading course handouts* with a mean of 3.87. *Reading works of literature* received the lowest rating (M=2.96).

In the focus group interview with students, when students talked about the importance of the reading tasks, their conversations mostly supported the NAQ findings. The students stated that being able to read *course handouts* was the most important task for them. They thought reading course handouts was what they needed most in the prep school. As can be seen in Table 7, as well, reading course handouts (M=3.87) was perceived to be more important than textbooks (M=3.10). Students thought that the course handouts prepared by the programme design team of the prep school were more useful than the textbooks they bought. The reasons they gave for this was the irrelevance of some of the reading exercises in the textbooks to the question types in the exams. The following comments illustrate their views:

“The content and exercises in the course handouts were more relevant to our proficiency level and interests than the textbooks we bought for this year.”

(Student B2)

“I think the course handouts really prepare us for the proficiency exam. The textbooks have some very irrelevant exercise types.” (Student A3)

One student suggested that the content of the course handouts should have been more academic and related to their future departments. Three other students agreed with him. The following quote illustrates his view:

“I think what we really need is reading texts that are related to our future departments so that we can be better prepared for next year.” (Student A3)

During the interview, students also mentioned the task of *using reference tools* such as dictionaries and thesauruses. They stated that using them effectively was an important part of their reading process.

“When I learn a new word, I look up the synonyms and try to memorize it with its synonyms rather than its Turkish translation.” (Student C1)

While discussing the importance of reading tasks, students also referred to the strategies they used for successful reading. All students stated that they *guessed the meaning of an unknown word from context* and found that strategy very helpful. As one student puts it:

“When you try to guess the meaning of an unknown word from the context, you tend to remember its meaning later. On the other hand, if I use a dictionary and look up the meaning, I tend to forget the meaning of the word later.” (Student B2)

Other strategies they mentioned in the focus group interview were *skimming* (going through a text to get the general idea) and *scanning* (reading quickly and selectively to find important information). They stated that these skills promoted faster reading, which was an important factor for success in the exams. Here is their comment:

“I find skimming and scanning very useful as they help save reading time in the exams. I can quickly get the general idea of a text.” (Student C1)

4.3.1.2. Listening

In order to identify the importance given by the students for listening tasks, the students were asked to rate the following items in Table 8. The mean scores and standard deviations of the listening items are presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8. The perceptions of students regarding the importance of listening tasks

Listening	M	SD
dialogues	4.42	.85
lectures	4.24	1.02
question/answer sessions	4.18	.93
class presentations	3.58	1.17

It is shown in Table 8 that students thought listening tasks were generally important as the grand mean score of the entire listening section of NAQ is 4.10. They considered all listening tasks to be important. The most important of the given items was *listening to dialogues* with a mean of 4.42; followed by *listening to lectures* (M=4.24). *Listening to class presentations* was ranked the least important (M=3.58) by the students.

Students in the focus group interview were asked about the importance of listening tasks regarding their future studies. Even though the researcher intended to inquire about listening tasks, the students repeatedly preferred to talk about the content of the listening texts instead. They mentioned that the content of the listening text was more important than the task type they were doing. The students mainly talked about the irrelevance of the content of the listening texts to their interests and other materials they covered in the class. One student stated her opinion as follows:

“If I read something about environment in the class, then I want to listen to something about environment as well.” (Student B1)

Another student supported this view by saying:

“I don’t want to do a listening activity just for the sake of being challenged. I don’t want to listen to irrelevant stuff just because it is suitable to our level.”

(Student C1)

The students also talked about the importance of pre-listening activities. They stated that they always read the questions before they started listening, which they found a helpful way to *predict the content* of the listening track. One student said:

“It is good to read the questions before listening because you can think about the content of the listening and you can familiarize yourself with the topic.” (Student A3)

As another effective pre-listening activity, one student mentioned *guessing the answers of the questions* before listening and then listening to check their answers.

“Before we start listening, we first read the True/False statements and try to guess if the statements are true or false. We compare our first assumptions to our answers after we listen to the text and see how many correct guesses we have.”

(Student B1)

4.3.1.3. Writing

The results of the quantitative data are presented below in Table 9. The students were asked to rate the importance they gave to various writing tasks in relation to their usefulness in their future departments.

Table 9. The perceptions of students regarding the importance of writing tasks

Writing	M	SD
essays in reaction to readings	4.14	.99
essay-type questions	3.57	1.17
a resume (CV)	3.46	1.15
workbook exercises	3.24	1.20
book reports	3.03	1.26
term papers	2.93	1.36
references for a report or project	2.68	1.19

The grand mean of writing tasks is 3.29 which suggests that students think studying writing at prep school is somewhat important. With the highest mean (M=4.14) of the seven items, *writing essays in reaction to readings* was considered to be the most important for students. However, *writing references for a report or project* had the lowest mean score (M=2.68). This task was found to be slightly important for the students.

The results of the focus group interview revealed similar results to the NAQ. The students stated that their writing classes included essay writing; as a result, *writing essays* was the most important task for them. Other tasks they mentioned were all parts of essay writing such as brainstorming for ideas, outlining the essay, and developing a paragraph. One student described the flow of the writing lessons as follows:

“First, our teacher presents the essay type and then we read sample essays. After that the teacher gives us an essay topic and we brainstorm for ideas together.”

(Student B1)

Another student contributed to Student B1’s comments:

“We write the first draft either in pairs or in groups. Later, the teacher corrects our mistakes and we individually try to write the final draft.” (Student A1)

4.3.1.4. Speaking

Lastly, the importance of speaking tasks was rated by the students. The quantitative data derived from the analysis is presented below in Table 10:

Table 10. The perceptions of students regarding the importance of speaking tasks

Speaking	M	SD
state opinions on different topics (discussions / debates)	4.43	.97
oral presentations	3.85	1.20
oral presentations using multimedia tools	3.58	1.22

It can be seen in Table 9 that students considered speaking tasks generally important with a grand mean score of 3.95. The task that received the highest rating among the three was *stating their opinion on different topics in discussions and debates* (M=4.43). The lowest ranking belonged to *making oral presentations using multimedia tools* with a mean score of 3.58.

In the focus group interview, the students stated their opinions on the importance of the speaking skill in the prep programme. They highlighted the importance of being able to *express their ideas* in English. This view is supported by one of the students as follows:

“I think what we essentially need is daily English. We need to speak English all the time in the lessons so that we can learn how to express ourselves.” (Student B2)

The students stated that speaking tasks such as debates, presentations and games could be more beneficial in the prep programme. Some students commented as follows:

“Our teacher gave us a topic, we got into two groups and debated. It was a very good speaking activity. I think we should have more debates in the classroom.” (Student C1)

“When we start our departments, we will be making lots of presentations but we don’t make any presentations this year.” (Student B2)

4.3.2. Language Instructors

The quantitative data which answered the language instructors’ views for RQ2 was gathered from NAQ for language instructors. The language instructors working at prep school rated the importance of the given tasks for the four language skills.

The qualitative data came from focus group interviews with six instructors in total. The language instructors were asked about the importance of reading, listening, writing and speaking tasks in the prep programme and their reasons for their choices and any suggestions.

The quantitative and qualitative results of language instructors’ perceptions on the importance of language tasks for each skill are presented below.

4.3.2.1. Reading

The language instructors were asked to rate the reading tasks in Table 11 regarding the degree of importance they gave for each item. The quantitative results are presented below:

Table 11. The perceptions of language instructors regarding the importance of reading tasks

Reading	M	SD
instructions for projects	4.35	.82
course handouts	4.31	.79
articles in journals	4.20	.72
textbooks	4.17	.83
lecture notes	4.15	.82
texts on the Internet	3.68	.90
newspapers/magazines	3.68	.87
graphs/ charts/ diagrams/ tables	3.42	1.03
computer-presented texts	3.40	1.05
reference tools (e.g. dictionaries)	3.26	1.11
works of literature	3.06	1.07

The results of the NAQ revealed that the language instructors at prep school found reading tasks important (Grand Mean=3.78) in general. The most important tasks for them were *reading instructions for projects* and *reading course handouts*, followed by *reading articles*

in journals. The language instructors perceived reading *works of literature* not as important as other reading tasks for the students' future academic studies.

The results of the focus group interviews supported the quantitative results. Language instructors believed that *reading course handouts* was very important for students. They stated that course handouts provided the necessary practice for students. As one instructor explained:

“The textbook only presents the reading skills. Without the course handouts, students would lack the practice in those skills presented in the textbook.”

(Teacher A2)

The language instructors also talked about the importance of *reading texts from the Internet*. The school has Moodle and every student has an access to the system. However, the language instructors believed that it was more effective to give students reading texts as course handouts rather than uploading them on Moodle. The reason they gave for this was practicality. Here are their comments:

“There is no point in wearing a broken Rolex. Yes, technology is good but it is of no use if the students can't access it easily.” (Teacher A2)

“Reading texts on mobile devices is not as easy as reading them on a laptop. Our students mostly access the Internet on their mobile phones and it is very difficult to read a long text from such a small screen and do the exercises.” (Teacher A1)

Reading graphs/charts/diagrams was not considered very important by one of the instructors and two other instructors agreed with her. She made the following comment:

“Teaching how to read graphs or charts should not be prep school’s responsibility. The students have more fundamental problems with reading. Such academic skills can be taught in the first year of their departments.” (Teacher B6)

4.3.2.2. Listening

The NAQ intended to find out the importance the language instructors gave to listening tasks.

The results of the listening part of the questionnaire can be found in Table 12 below:

Table 12. The perceptions of language instructors regarding the importance of listening tasks

Listening	M	SD
class presentations	4.48	.66
question/answer sessions	4.37	.68
dialogues	4.37	.71
lectures	4.22	.87

According to Table 12, the language instructors believed all listening tasks were important as the grand mean score was 4.36. They believed *making class presentations* could help the students the most in their listening. Even though *listening to lectures* was considered the least important of all the items asked in the questionnaire, its mean score was 4.22, which indicates that it was considered important by the language instructors. Therefore, it can be concluded that all listening tasks were considered important by the language instructors.

When asked about the tasks that were important to be taught to students during prep year, all language instructors unanimously stated that the task *note-taking* should be practiced in the prep school. They pointed out that being able to comprehend a lecture and taking effective

notes as they listen to the lecture was the single most important task the students should master in the prep school. Here are some comments:

“What the students really need is taking effective notes while listening to a lecture.” (Teacher B4)

“It would be better if we could make students listen to open courses of some EMI universities and take notes as they listen. Then, we can prepare some comprehension questions related to the lecture and assess their comprehension.”

(Teacher B6)

Contrary to quantitative findings, language instructors did not mention *listening to presentations*- the highest ranked item in the NAQ- in the interview. The reason behind this could be the fact that they associated *making presentations* with the speaking skill, not the listening since in the speaking part of the interview they all agreed that students needed to make presentations more often in the prep programme.

4.3.2.3. Writing

The quantitative results for the language instructors' perceptions of writing tasks were collected by the NAQ. The language instructors rated each item in the writing part according to the importance they gave for each task. The analysis of the results can be found in Table 13 below.

Table 13. The perceptions of language instructors regarding the importance of writing tasks

Writing	M	SD
essays in reaction to readings	4.55	.69
essay-type questions	4.40	.86
workbook exercises	3.75	.93
term papers	3.66	1.16
book reports	3.51	.99
a resume (CV)	3.46	1.03
references for a report or project	3.17	1.19

Table 13 demonstrates that the language instructors found writing tasks generally important (Grand Mean=3.78). The most important writing task was *writing essays in reaction to readings*, followed by *writing essay type questions*. The importance given to writing essays was so high that the means of those items were above 4.5, which meant extremely important in the questionnaire scale. *Writing references for a report or project* received the lowest mean score 3.17, which can be translated as somewhat important. The reason behind this could be the fact that in the prep school writing programme, students did not write academic reports, papers or projects; therefore, this item was not relatable to the prep school program.

During the focus group interviews, the language teachers stated that they believed *writing essays* was the most important task for the writing skill, which supported the quantitative findings. They all agreed that students needed to learn how to write essays in order to be successful in their future departments. Here are their comments:

“When I talked to my students from the previous years, they said that they used the essay types we teach in the prep programme.” (Teacher A3)

“In their departments, students will need to write essays for their assignments or answer essay type questions in their exams.” (Teacher A2)

4.3.2.4. Speaking

Language instructors’ perceptions on the importance of speaking tasks were collected via the NAQ, the results of which are presented below in Table 14. The language instructors were asked to rate the speaking items regarding the importance they believed should be placed on each task in speaking classes in the prep school.

Table 14. The perceptions of language instructors regarding the importance of speaking tasks

Speaking	M	SD
state opinions on different topics (discussions / debates)	4.68	.55
oral presentations	4.60	.61
oral presentations using multimedia tools	4.40	.78

With a grand mean score of 4.60, speaking was clearly perceived to be the most important skill by the language instructors. *Speaking to state opinions on different topics* was considered extremely important by language instructors (M=4.68) while *making oral presentations using multimedia tools* received the lowest rating (M=4.40) of the items given in the NAQ.

In the focus group interviews, the language instructors were asked about the importance of speaking tasks in the prep programme. Most of the language instructors believed that *making*

presentations was an important skill to be mastered in the prep programme because of the fact that students would be asked to make presentations in their future departments. For example, one of them said:

“We need to have more presentation tasks in the pacing. It is a very important skill, but sadly missing in the prep programme.” (Teacher A1)

The language instructors also referred to the content of teaching materials and suggested that the speaking material should be improved to help students develop their speaking skill.

“The part that is most frequently skipped in the textbook is the speaking part. It is very boring for students as it doesn’t provide much for them.” (Teacher B5)

4.3.3. EMI Instructors

In order to answer the second research question, eleven EMI instructors were interviewed one-to-one. The qualitative results gleaned from these interviews are presented in this section. The EMI instructors’ perceptions on the importance of Reading, Listening, Writing and Speaking skills are presented separately in the following headings.

4.3.3.1. Reading

The EMI instructors were asked which reading tasks were important for students to master in the prep programme so that they could be successful in their departments. An overwhelming majority of the EMI instructors stated that *reading textbooks* was the most important task for the reading skill. They underlined the significance of comprehending the textbooks correctly as the information presented in them was vital for course achievement. An EMI instructor working at the faculty of Engineering explained:

“I don’t think it’s possible for students to understand the subject matter of a course if they do not read and understand what is written in the textbook” (EMI 1, Engineering)

Several EMI instructors stressed the importance of students’ *reading journals and articles* related to their subject area. The reasons they gave for this were academic: familiarizing themselves with their subject area, learning academic vocabulary and being exposed to the academic writing style. One EMI instructor stressed the importance of reading journals as follows:

“It is imperative that they read journals related to their field of study. I always ask my students to read an article from a journal, which they can easily find online, and present it in the classroom.” (EMI 6, Business Administration)

Few EMI instructors talked about the importance of *reading lecture notes* as in power point presentations. They stated that they used power point presentations to present a new subject to the classroom and students read those slides throughout the lesson and took notes. One of the EMI instructors from Business Administration faculty stated that her students “need to follow the slides and make notes” during her classes.

Only one EMI instructor from the faculty of Engineering mentioned the importance of *using dictionaries* while reading textbooks. She pointed out the fact that students got demotivated when they were confronted with too many unknown words in a text. According to EMI 5, using dictionaries while reading “is a habit that students should develop” in order to comprehend the texts accurately.

Another EMI instructor from Engineering faculty believed in the power of *reading works of literature* to improve reading comprehension in general. He focused on the importance of being exposed to target structures through reading in a foreign language for producing similar

structures later in students' language development. In his words, "in order to improve their language skills, students should read more novels".

4.3.3.2. Listening

When the EMI instructors were asked to present their opinions on what listening tasks were important for students in their departments, all instructors unanimously reported that *listening to lectures* was the most important task. They justified their choices as the students were mainly required to listen to lectures in their departmental courses. They believed misunderstanding or misinterpretation of the information the instructors conveyed might result in complications for students when they needed to build up on that information. One EMI instructor elaborated on this issue:

"If a student fails to comprehend basic terminology in an introduction course, how is s/he going to be successful in a more advanced course when that terminology should be used in an argumentative essay?" (EMI 7, International Relations)

Several EMI instructors also mentioned the importance of *taking effective notes* as students listened to the lectures. They were also concerned about the effectiveness of the notes students took when they listened to the lectures. An Economics instructor pointed out students should be explicitly taught how to take notes. He further commented:

"When it comes to taking notes, the students do one of the two: either they write nothing or they try to write every single word I say, both of which are ineffective." (EMI 10, Economics)

Listening to class presentations was brought up by three EMI instructors. They explained that their courses required students to make presentations and that the students needed to listen to

the presenters carefully in order not to miss out important course content. One instructor commented as follows:

“I believe listening to power point presentations is also very important. Students can’t comprehend the topic from some bullet points written on the slides. They need to listen effectively.” (EMI 11, Economics)

4.3.3.3. Writing

As for the importance of writing skill, all instructors, except for the ones in the Medicine faculty, stated that they believed students needed to have good writing skills. Medicine instructors did not regard writing as a very important skill on the grounds that they did not assign many written homework or ask open ended questions in the exam. When EMI instructors were asked about what writing tasks were commonly used in their departments, majority of the EMI instructors mentioned two types of tasks, which were *writing essay type questions* in exams and *writing essays* for assignments. Given its significant role in the departments, the instructors believed writing essays should be mastered in the prep year. One EMI instructor stated:

“We expect students to be able to write a proper essay when they finish the prep year. We don’t want to spend time explaining the basics of essay writing.” (EMI 2, Engineering)

Four EMI instructors stated that several courses required students to *write reports*. An EMI instructor from Engineering faculty pointed out that students should be able to “read and understand academic publications” so that they could “produce academic language in their reports”.

Even though they acknowledged the fact that prep school could not teach *writing references and citations for papers*, the EMI instructors said that students would write references for projects when they would start their departments, hence it was viewed as an important task.

4.3.3.4. Speaking

All of the EMI instructors interviewed perceived speaking tasks to be very important. Nine EMI instructors highlighted the importance of *making presentations* in their departments. They stated that students should learn the necessary skills to make a presentation in the classroom. They suggested that the prep school should create more opportunities for students to make presentations so that they could be equipped with the highly needed presentation skills. The following comment illustrates their point:

“It is important in our department that students can stand up in front of their peers, make a presentation, and draw attention to what they are explaining.” (EMI 5, Business Administration)

According to EMI instructors, an equally important task as making presentations was *asking and answering questions* in the classroom. They said the students needed to ask clarification questions or join class discussions on a daily basis. In interactive classes, students needed to answer the instructor’s questions to participate in the lesson. They viewed asking and answering questions as a basic skill that students needed throughout their studies in their departments. One instructor commented as follows:

“I think what they need for any course is to be able to ask and answer questions confidently in English.” (EMI 11, Economics)

4.4. Research Question 3

The third research question was about the difficulties experienced by prep school students when applying strategies related to four language skills. The perceptions of prep school students, language instructors and EMI instructors are presented below. The quantitative data were gathered through a NAQ and the relevant part of the questionnaire asked the participants to rate the items in terms of the difficulty they believed the prep school students experienced in four skills. In the questionnaire scale, 1 meant “never”, and 5 meant “always”.

4.4.1. Prep school students

In order to illustrate the perceptions of prep school students on how often they have difficulties in using strategies, analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data coming from the NAQ and the focus group interview is presented for each language skill separately.

4.4.1.1. Reading

The quantitative data regarding the reading difficulties experienced by prep school students was obtained from the NAQ. The students were asked to rate the items in terms of the difficulty they had while using the mentioned strategies. Table 15 shows the relevant results:

Table 15. Students' perceptions on the difficulty experienced with the reading strategies in performing the related tasks

Reading	M	SD
recognize words automatically	2.84	.96
go through a text quickly to get the general idea	2.84	1.25
guess the meaning of an unknown word from context	2.81	1.01
read quickly and selectively to find important information	2.81	1.28
understand information in a text when not openly stated	2.80	1.05
read carefully and understand the details of the text	2.79	1.20
recognize the organization of ideas to see their relationships	2.72	1.17
ask questions about a text	2.69	1.24
distinguish the main idea from the supporting detail(s)	2.69	1.11
identify cause-effect relationships	2.65	1.07
identify key information	2.64	1.19
read and respond critically	2.63	1.26
understand writer's aim/attitude	2.58	1.19
predict the content of a text	2.55	1.37
distinguish fact from opinion	2.52	1.26
search for simple information	2.45	1.28

Table 15 shows that students believed they “sometimes” had difficulty in the reading skill as the grand mean of all items was 2.68. The skills students more frequently had problems in were *automatic word recognition* (M=2.84), *skimming* (going through a text quickly to get the general idea), and *guessing the meaning of a word from context*. The strategy they had the least difficulty in was *searching for simple information*.

In the focus group interview, students were inquired about the strategies they thought they had difficulty in reading a text. Most of them stated that *reading quickly* was their main area of difficulty. Here is one of the student’s comment:

“I always have issues with time. I can never finish reading in time. I read very slowly.” (Student, A1)

They further commented that because they tried to read a text word by word, they failed to apply *skimming* (going through a text quickly to get the general idea) and *scanning* (reading quickly and selectively to find important information).

“To answer a reading question, we sometimes need to scan the text quickly but I find this hard to do.” (Student, B2)

In addition, the students talked about their problems with *fluent reading*. They stated that coming across an unknown word or an unfamiliar grammar structure caused the students to lose focus of the reading text. One student said:

“I can get easily distracted when I read a word I don’t know or if the sentences are too long.” (Student, A3)

4.4.1.2. Listening

In the NAQ students were asked to rate how often they had difficulties in applying the given listening skills. In the questionnaire, 5 meant “always” and 1 meant “never”. The detailed results of the questionnaire for the listening section are presented in Table 16.

Table 16. Students’ perceptions on the difficulty experienced with the listening strategies in performing the related tasks

Listening	M	SD
understand information when not openly stated in a lecture	2.95	1.31
distinguish fact from opinion	2.93	1.22
listen for specific information	2.77	1.27
follow question / answer sessions	2.70	1.29
understand the subject matter of a lecture	2.66	1.16
listen to a lecture to take effective notes	2.66	1.22
understand spoken instructions	2.64	1.25
predict the content of a lecture	2.63	1.22

The NAQ results revealed that the students sometimes experienced difficulty in listening as the grand mean score was 2.74. The item they perceived to be the most struggling was *understanding information when not openly stated in a lecture* (M=2.95). The item they believed they had the least difficulty was *predicting the content of a lecture* (M=2.63).

During the focus group interview, in general, students talked about the nature of their listening classes. They all stated that one strategy they always practiced in the classroom was *predicting the content of a lecture*. This before listening activity was claimed by students to have been the mostly practiced, thus the least difficult for them to apply. This finding also supported the quantitative data for the least difficult item. Here is a comment of one of the students:

“Our teacher always gives us time to read the questions before we start listening the audio, which creates an opportunity for us to think about the content of the listening.” (Student, A3)

One student commented that in more difficult listening exercises, the listening questions had a different wording than the sentences they heard in the listening audio. She said that “usually the paraphrase of what they hear is the answer of a difficult question”. This entailed the students to comprehend a listening text and to *make an inference* based on what they heard to find the correct answer, which refers to the NAQ item: *understanding information when not openly stated in a lecture*. She stated that:

“If it’s an easy listening text, you can write the words that you hear to fill in the blanks; but if it’s a difficult text, you need to understand what you hear because in the correct option it is written in different words.” (Student, C2)

4.4.1.3. Writing

In an attempt to answer RQ3, the quantitative data for writing was derived from the NAQ. In the questionnaire, students reported their experienced difficulty in using the listed strategies for the writing skill. The results are shown in Table 17:

Table 17. Students' perceptions on the difficulty experienced with the writing strategies in performing the related tasks

Writing	M	SD
summarize information in your own words	2.91	1.18
write references and quotations	2.91	1.18
organize ideas for argumentative purposes	2.76	1.20
combine information from multiple texts to prepare an assignment	2.74	1.21
organize ideas to show cause and effect relationships	2.64	1.20
organize ideas for compare and contrast purposes	2.63	1.22
organize writing to express major and minor ideas	2.59	1.33
organize ideas to describe events	2.36	1.25

The grand mean score of the entire writing section of the NAQ was 2.69, which suggested that students perceived that they did not frequently have problems in applying writing strategies. Table 17 demonstrates that *summarizing information in their own words* and *writing references and quotations* were the most frequently struggled writing strategies with shared a mean of 2.91. *Organizing ideas to describe events* was rated to be the least struggled strategy by the students (M=2.36).

The qualitative data for the writing section of research question three was obtained from the focus group interview. The analysis revealed that the qualitative results were compatible with the quantitative results. The students reported that they usually had difficulty in *summarizing information in their own words*. One student exemplified this as follows:

“Writing introduction is very challenging for me because in the introduction paragraph, I need to summarize the information I will present in the rest of the essay.” (Student A3)

The students also stated to have difficulties in *expressing themselves* in English. They stressed the fact that when they were writing essays, they did not have difficulties in finding ideas and deciding what to write about. What they found difficult was forming sentences to express their ideas in English. One student commented:

“At first I think of Turkish sentences but when I try to translate them, I usually fail to express what I wanted to say in my mother tongue. It is difficult for me to form complex structures.” (Student A1)

When asked about what writing strategies they used with less effort, students stated that they found *making an outline* to organize their ideas before they started writing not as difficult as other processes of writing an essay. One of the students stated that:

“Before I start writing, I spend a couple of minutes to decide what I will write about in each paragraph. I start writing after I am satisfied with my outline.”
(Student C1)

4.4.1.4. Speaking

In the NAQ, the students were asked to rate the speaking items in terms of the difficulty experienced. The results can be found in Table 18 below:

Table 18. Students' perceptions on the difficulty experienced with the speaking strategies in performing the related tasks

Speaking	M	SD
summarize information in your own words	2.95	1.20
express your ideas in your own words	2.93	1.26
give oral presentations	2.90	1.37
produce correct pronunciation	2.86	1.18
react to speech and lecture	2.84	1.28
participate in discussions/debates	2.80	1.48
provide solutions to given problems	2.77	1.18
ask relevant questions in class	2.73	1.27

Among four skills, with a grand mean score of 2.84, speaking was perceived to be the most difficult skill to apply by prep school students. Among the individual items asked for speaking, *summarizing information in their own words* was the skill the students most frequently had difficulty in using, followed by *expressing ideas in their own words*. The skill the students reported to have the least difficulty in using was *asking relevant questions in class*.

When asked about how often they had difficulty in using speaking strategies, students in the focus group interview stated that they usually found it difficult to organize their ideas to *answer a question* during speaking exams. When confronted with a general question, the

students said that it was difficult to understand what was expected of them in their answer.

One student commented as follows:

“When the instructor asks me a question in the speaking exam, I am not sure what I need to include in the answer so I spend a lot of silent time in the exam.”

(Student A1)

“We are not taught how to make an introduction, develop ideas and make a conclusion in the speaking classes. That’s why it is difficult to answer questions in the exam.” (Student C1)

Another point mentioned by students as being challenging was *producing correct grammar* while speaking. Students pointed out that their desire to speak with few mistakes and monitoring their grammar as they spoke resulted in halted speech. Here is one of the student’s comment:

“I would like to speak fluently but I worry about my grammar too much. I make many mistakes when I try to speak fast.” (Student B1)

When inquired about the reasons behind their struggles, the students provided three reasons; which were lack of lexical and structural knowledge, lack of motivation to speak to Turkish people and lack of practice opportunities in the classroom. The first reason they put forward was about their low proficiency level in English. They believed that if they were equipped with the necessary vocabulary and grammar knowledge, they would have less problems in speaking. The second reason they mentioned was about the fact that they studied in an EFL environment and talking to Turkish instructors and fellow students did not provide them with a real motivation to speak English. They stated that they preferred to have speaking classes with native teachers. One student clarified this issue as follows:

“I would try harder to express my ideas in English if the instructors were not Turkish.” (Student B2)

Lastly, the students in the focus group interview stated that they experienced difficulty in speaking as the amount of speaking practice was limited in the classroom. They felt that more classroom hours should be devoted to speaking practice. One student commented as follows:

“We can’t overcome this difficulty [in speaking] without practicing more. We need to have more speaking class hours.” (Student A3)

4.4.2. Language instructors

The third research question of the study asked prep school language instructors about their opinions on the difficulties experienced by prep school students. In this part of the results section, the quantitative and qualitative results for language instructors are presented for each language skill separately.

4.4.2.1. Reading

The quantitative data that shed light into the perceptions of language instructors on the difficulty students experience in reading skill is presented in Table 19 below:

Table 19. Language instructors' perceptions on the difficulty experienced by students with the reading strategies in performing the related tasks

Reading	M	SD
understand information in a text when not openly stated	3.93	.88
read and respond critically	3.82	1.00
guess the meaning of an unknown word from context	3.66	.92
recognize the organization of ideas to see their relationships	3.55	.98
recognize words automatically	3.42	.72
identify key information	3.40	1.00
read carefully and understand the details of the text	3.35	.85
distinguish fact from opinion	3.33	1.00
ask questions about a text	3.31	1.12
identify cause-effect relationships	3.22	1.18
understand writer's aim/attitude	3.17	1.15
read quickly and selectively to find important information	3.15	1.14
distinguish the main idea from the supporting detail(s)	3.11	1.13
go through a text quickly to get the general idea	3.08	1.18
predict the content of a text	2.84	1.10
search for simple information	2.46	1.32

Table 19 illustrates that language instructors believed that students sometimes (Grand Mean=3.30) had difficulty in using reading strategies. The skill that language instructors thought students had the most difficulty in was *inferring* (understanding information in a text when not openly stated). Language instructors believed students generally had difficulty in *inferring* as the mean score of that item was 3.93. The second item that students were thought to have difficulty in was *reading and responding critically* (M=3.82). The item that received the lowest rating was *searching for simple information* (M=2.46).

In the focus group interviews with language instructors, some instructors stated that students mainly had difficulties in *reading quickly*. Students were observed to spend a significant amount of time trying to read and understand each word in a text thus failing to get a general idea of the text. Another result of reading slowly was the disadvantage students faced in the exams. As they had limited time to comprehend a text and answer related questions in the exams, instructors mentioned the stress students went through to finish the questions on time. One instructor exemplified this situation as follows:

“Reading slowly leads to a comprehension problem for students. In the exam, students fail to complete the questions of a reading text because they lose a lot of time just reading the text.” (Teacher B6)

In addition, language instructors reported that it was difficult for students to *make inferences* (understand information in a text when not openly stated) while reading. According to an A level instructor, students struggled when “they need to understand what a particular pronoun refers to” or when “they need to use *inferring* to retrieve meaning from a paragraph.”

4.4.2.2. Listening

For listening, the instructors rated each listening item regarding the difficulty they perceived their students had while using them. The results can be found in Table 20.

Table 20. Language instructors' perceptions on the difficulty experienced by students with the listening strategies in performing the related tasks

Listening	M	SD
understand information when not openly stated in a lecture	3.80	1.27
distinguish fact from opinion	3.51	1.50
follow question / answer sessions	3.40	1.07
understand the subject matter of a lecture	3.28	1.03
listen to a lecture to take effective notes	3.20	1.25
listen for specific information	3.15	.92
predict the content of a lecture	3.02	1.11
understand spoken instructions	3.02	1.23

It can be seen in Table 20 that language teachers thought that their students sometimes had difficulty when applying listening strategies (Grand Mean=3.30). Of the items asked, the most difficult listening strategy for students to use was reported to be *inferring* (understanding information when not openly stated in a lecture), followed by *distinguishing fact from opinion*. The item that received the lowest rating was *understanding spoken instructions* (M=3.02)

During the focus group interviews, the language instructors commented on how often their students had difficulties in applying listening strategies. Majority of language instructors stated that students generally had difficulties in *following the flow of a conversation*, especially when there were more than two people involved. One A level instructor stated that

students got confused as to “understand which idea belonged to which speaker” when they listened to multiple people conversing. Another A level instructor commented that “students *fail to recognize the turn taking signals*” in a conversation to differentiate the speakers and their ideas.

Furthermore, language instructors talked about listening problems students faced related to *pronunciation*. They mentioned that if students did not know how a word was pronounced, it was very likely that they would miss that word when they heard it in a listening text. Being another aspect of pronunciation, knowing the stress patterns of words or sentences also played a significant part in understanding listening, according to some language instructors. As one B level instructor puts it:

“Sometimes students fail to keep track of when a sentence ends and a new one begins. It is difficult for them to keep listening when they get confused like that.”

(Teacher B6)

4.4.2.3. Writing

The language instructors rated each writing item in terms of the difficulty they perceived their students experienced while applying writing strategies in the prep school. The findings are listed in Table 21 below:

Table 21. Language instructors' perceptions on the difficulty experienced by students with the writing strategies in performing the related tasks

Writing	M	SD
summarize information in their own words	4.06	.91
organize ideas for argumentative purposes	3.55	1.13
combine information from multiple texts to prepare an assignment	3.44	1.35
organize writing to express major and minor ideas	3.42	1.43
organize ideas to show cause and effect relationships	3.40	1.13
organize ideas for compare and contrast purposes	3.28	1.01
organize ideas to describe events	3.22	1.04
write references and quotations	2.77	1.83

The grand mean score in the writing section was 3.42. This showed that language instructors believed that their students sometimes had difficulties in writing. The item that received the highest rating was *summarizing information in their own words*. The second item with the highest rating was *organizing ideas for argumentative purposes*. Language instructors' ratings also revealed that they thought that the students had less problems when they were *writing references and quotations*.

Focus group interviews with language teachers revealed that language instructors reported their students having difficulties with *language use* the most. Language instructors repeatedly stressed the fact that students struggled with forming grammatical sentences and choosing the correct vocabulary. The reasons they gave for this was students' lack of grammatical and

lexical knowledge. Even though students came up with an idea, their incorrect wording and structure use would cause their writing to become incomprehensible. One language instructor further commented on this issue:

“The problem, I think, is they think in Turkish and then try to translate their sentences in English. When I read their sentences, I can’t understand them sometimes, their message is not clear. They can’t express their ideas clearly with incorrect grammar.” (Language instructor A2)

Another writing skill the students had difficulty in using was reported by the language instructors as *organizing their ideas into paragraphs*. Students were observed to have difficulty in grouping their ideas into meaningful paragraphs. Language instructors stated that students sometimes had difficulty in *differentiating main idea from the supporting ideas*. One instructor commented as follows:

“Sometimes I grade a writing paper where there is one very long body paragraph and another that is just too short, only a couple of sentences. Obviously, the student can’t realize that there should be two paragraphs in that long body paragraph and that s/he shouldn’t have a paragraph of two sentences only.”
(Teacher A1)

4.4.2.4. Speaking

The quantitative data for language instructors’ perceptions on students speaking difficulties is presented in Table 22. The table lists the ratings of language teachers on each speaking strategy and how often the language teachers taught the students had difficulty in applying them.

Table 22. Language instructors' perceptions on the difficulty experienced by students with the speaking strategies in performing the related tasks

Speaking	M	SD
summarize information in their own words	3.95	1.02
express their ideas in their own words	3.84	1.10
participate in discussions/debates	3.60	1.28
produce correct pronunciation	3.60	.83
ask relevant questions in class	3.33	1.12
provide solutions to given problems	3.33	1.27
give oral presentations	3.31	1.31
react to speech and lecture	3.24	1.06

With a grand mean score of 3.52, of the four skills, speaking was clearly seen as the skill that students were thought to be having difficulty in using. Among the strategies asked, the language instructors reported *summarizing information in their own words* as the strategy that students had more difficulties in using than other speaking strategies. The second highest rated strategy was *expressing ideas in their own words*. The results revealed that *reacting to speech and lecture* was the least difficult strategy used by the students.

The qualitative results for this question came from the focus group interviews with language instructors. During the interviews, the instructors pointed out that students usually had difficulty in *expressing their ideas in their own words*. More specifically, they had difficulty in *finding ideas and organizing ideas* when they were asked a question or expected to talk

about a specific topic. For example, for the speaking exams, students were given a suggested list of questions and they were expected to prepare for them. However, most of the students could not talk spontaneously and they produced mechanic, recited speech that was not authentic. According to the teachers, what students needed to achieve was producing genuine and spontaneous speech in order to communicate effectively with their instructors during the exams. The following excerpts illustrate this issue:

“In the speaking exam, many students were reciting from their memories. This was not meaningful for me. When I asked a question, they couldn’t even comment on that. They couldn’t carry out an authentic conversation.” (Language instructor A2)

“The real problem is producing their own sentences and ideas. I make them read a text and then watch a video on the same topic. Then I ask them to talk about that topic but they can’t.” (Language instructor B4)

Furthermore, language instructors stated that most of their students were usually *reluctant to participate in class discussions*. They believed that their students were intimidated to talk in front of their peers. One reasons they thought for this was students’ fear of making mistakes or pronouncing some words incorrectly. One instructor stated that:

“I always tell my students not to be shy to speak in class. There is nothing to be shy about, all their classmates are in the same proficiency level. They are all here for the same purpose. They need to be more willing to participate and practice speaking in class.” (Language instructor A2)

4.4.3. EMI Instructors

In an attempt to answer the third research question, the perceptions of EMI instructors were collected via one-to-one interviews. The EMI instructors were asked to talk about the strategies they thought their students had difficulty in using in the four language skills. The results of the qualitative analysis of the EMI instructor interviews are presented in the following headings for each language skill.

4.4.3.1. Reading

All EMI instructors unanimously pointed out *lexical incompetence* as the major source of difficulty in students' reading related to their academic fields. The EMI instructors stated that the biggest problem students faced in their freshman year was getting used to the terminology of the department and understanding the textbooks. They all believed that if students had been familiar with relevant vocabulary for their departments, they would have gone through less problems in reading for the introduction courses. The following comment illustrates their view:

“When students open the textbook in their first year, they are taken aback with all the unfamiliar words. They get easily demotivated and stop trying to read the textbook and try to find alternative ways to understand course content, such as course handouts or Turkish translations of the textbooks.” (EMI 8 International Relations)

One suggestion EMI instructors presented during the interviews was integrating ESP courses in the prep school programme. They believed reading texts related to their departments would benefit the students. One EMI instructor who is a Marmara University graduate stated that she found ESP classes useful as a student. Here is her comment:

“I wish the prep school can give ESP classes again. I remember learning so many new vocabulary in that class and it helped me feel more confident when I started my department.” (EMI 9 Economics)

Another reading difficulty mentioned in the interviews was the reluctance students had to read long texts. The EMI instructors believed that students in this generation were not used to doing *extensive reading*. They observed their students getting restless when asked to read long texts. Some of the EMI instructors also reported that with the fast developing technology, it was now easier for students to find a summary of a book or find power point presentations of a chapter in a textbook so that they wouldn't have to read longer chunks of text. One instructor reported:

“I overheard my students talking about a Dropbox folder where they are sharing their summaries of the chapters or their lecture notes so that they do not have to read the entire book.” (EMI 7 International Relations)

4.4.3.2. Listening

During one-to-one interviews with EMI instructors, the difficulties their students had when applying listening strategies were inquired. Some of the instructors stated that they were not able to pinpoint problems in students' listening skill owing to the lack of reactions from the students. One instructor illustrated this issue as follows:

“When students listen to the lecture I can't tell if they understand what I am explaining. Sometimes they ask me to explain a particular point again, but I don't know if it's because they didn't understand the content or they didn't understand English.” (EMI 2 Engineering)

Of the eight EMI instructors who mentioned the listening difficulties students faced, four of them reported that the main problem students had in the department courses was *lack of concentration* to listen to a lecture. They stated that students could get easily distracted by external factors. The instructors said that sometimes they observed their students quit listening to the lecture. Two of the instructors believed this lack of interest stemmed from students' lack of English proficiency, whereas two other instructors thought the reason was the content of the lectures. They believed the students did not find the content of the lectures interesting enough to listen for an uninterrupted hour. One of the instructor's comment exemplifies this situation:

“Students get bored fairly quickly in the lessons. Some of them look at their mobile phones all the time.” (EMI 5 Business Administration)

For the difficulties that the students were going through in the listening skill, EMI instructors offered a couple of suggestions. Firstly, most of the EMI instructors stated that they advised their students to watch movies or TV series in English with English subtitles in order to improve their listening. Another suggestion was increasing the amount of visual support in the lectures. One instructor from the Faculty of International Relations believed that “students are getting more and more dependent on visuals to process information”. He further stated that this generation relies on visuals constantly; as a result, he believed “the modes of lecturing should be modified to involve more visuals to meet students' changing needs.”

4.4.3.3. Writing

EMI instructors were asked about the difficulties their students faced when applying writing strategies for their courses. During the interviews two main types of tasks emerged, which were answering *essay type questions* during the exams and *writing an assignment*; such as, *writing reports, essays, and literature reviews*. The difficulties students went through when

writing in the exams were specified by the EMI instructors as *grammatical, lexical, and organizational*. One instructor from International Relations Faculty stated that in the exams, students were required to answer the questions in a limited amount of time; therefore, “they tend to make more grammar and vocabulary mistakes because they did not have enough time to revise and edit their writing”. In addition, “students fail to organize their ideas logically when they are under time pressure”, he added.

As for the difficulties students had when writing assignments, EMI instructors talked about how students failed to apply *academic writing skills*. They stated that students were expected to write essays or reports for assignments. Even though students had taken a research methods course in the first year, which explained the nature of academic writing as in how to make citations, references and so forth, many students failed to master those skills in their writings. One instructor commented as follows:

“We underline the importance of abstaining from plagiarism in their written work. We teach them how to compose their genuine essays, however students still copy and paste information they find online and provide no references for their sources.” (EMI 11 Economics)

Although the EMI instructors emphasized the importance of creating references for a written report, they stated that they did not expect the prep school to teach such academic writing skills. They acknowledged that the prep school programme did not have the necessary time and resources to teach referencing or citation.

4.4.3.4. Speaking

During one-to-one interviews, the EMI instructors were asked which speaking tasks their students more frequently had difficulties in applying strategies. Half of the instructors interviewed stated that their students usually had difficulties in *asking relevant questions in*

class. They mentioned that their students remained silent during lectures and felt reluctant to ask for clarification questions when needed. One instructor from Engineering faculty commented that sometimes “students request the subject to be explained in Turkish and even ask that in Turkish.” This comment illustrates that students lacked the necessary lexical and grammatical proficiency in English to pose a proper question.

Another speaking skill that the instructors found to be generally challenging for students was *participating in class discussions*. The instructors stated that they opted for more interactive classes; however, their students were unwilling to participate. The instructors identified the source of this difficulty as not having the confidence to speak English in large groups because if put in smaller groups, the students tended to participate in discussions more. Deriving from that observation, some EMI instructors suggested more pair work and group work speaking activities to be included in the prep school programme. One of the instructors demonstrated this by commenting:

“I see that my students participate more in small group discussions rather than in whole class discussions. I think they feel intimidated to speak English in large groups.” (EMI 7 International Relations)

The final difficulty the students generally had in speaking was mentioned by EMI instructors as *making presentations*. Given the importance some faculties placed on presentations and the fact that students would receive a fair amount of their grade from presentations, it was important to talk about the difficulties students experienced in that speaking skill. The instructors stated that making presentations was a skill that should have been mastered in high school, still they had to spend time to teaching students how to prepare power point slides. They also acknowledged the fact that even though students had started university without this

skill set, they could get better at it by more practice. Thus, they suggested prep school to entail students to make more presentations in the prep year.

“Students should have more opportunities to make presentations in the prep year because when they start their departments, they are extremely nervous for their first presentation. Over time, they get used to speaking in front of their friends and get better at it.” (EMI 8 International Relations)

4.5. Summary of the Results

4.5.1. Research Question 1

The quantitative and qualitative analyses of the collected data revealed that prep school students believed speaking to be the most important skill to be mastered in the prep programme. In the quantitative results, speaking was followed by listening, reading and writing. In the qualitative data, the speaking skill was singled out as the most important skill by the students.

The language instructors’ answers in the NAQ revealed that they viewed reading to be the most important skill followed by listening, writing and speaking. The qualitative findings showed that language instructors perceived all four language skills equally important and were in favour of teaching them in an integrated fashion.

The EMI instructors considered the speaking skill more important than others. When the number of times each skill was mentioned as the most important was counted, speaking was the most frequently cited skill in the qualitative data, followed by reading, listening and writing. The EMI instructors stated that speaking well was very important for students to be an active participant in the courses. The EMI instructors pointed out that expressing their

ideas, joining class discussions and giving presentations were the speaking tasks the students were frequently required to do in their classes.

4.5.2. Research Question 2

The second research question dealt with the importance given to individual tasks on four skills. The students' quantitative answers revealed that overall they considered the individual tasks in the listening skill more important than the other language skills. When the grand mean scores for all the items in each part (reading, listening, writing, and speaking) were compared, the students gave the highest rating to listening tasks (Grand Mean=4.10), followed by speaking (Grand Mean=3.95), reading (Grand Mean=3.41) and writing (Grand Mean=3.29).

In the NAQ, the listening tasks students considered the most important were *listening to dialogues and lectures*. In speaking, the students stated that *expressing their ideas in class discussions* and *making presentations* were very important for them. As for reading, students considered *reading lecture notes* and *course handouts* very beneficial for their future studies, while *reading works of literature* was rated as somewhat important. Among the writing tasks, students regarded *writing essays* very important, whereas *writing references for a project* was rated as the least important for them. In the focus group interview, students talked about the importance of *listening to lectures*, *expressing themselves* in speaking, *reading course handouts* and *writing essays*.

The language instructors' findings revealed that in general they assigned the individual speaking tasks high importance. In the NAQ, the grand mean score for all the items in each skill for the second part of the questionnaire showed that the language instructors considered speaking tasks very important (Grand Mean=4.60), followed by listening (Grand Mean =4.36), reading (Grand Mean =3.78) and writing (Grand Mean =3.78).

The tasks they gave higher importance for the speaking skill were *expressing their ideas*, *asking and answering questions* and *making presentations*. For the listening tasks, the language instructors believed *listening to lectures* and *taking effective notes*, as well as *listening to dialogues* were very important. As for the reading tasks, the instructors stated *reading course handouts* was very important. They did not think *reading works of literature* was very important for students. All language instructors viewed *writing essays* the most important task for the writing skill. *Writing references* received the lowest rating in the questionnaire. During the focus group interviews, the language instructors reported that they found *asking and answering questions* and *making presentations* very important speaking tasks. They believed *note-taking while listening to a lecture* was the most important listening task. For reading, they considered *reading course handouts* very important. And as for writing, *writing essays* was reported to be the most important writing task.

The EMI instructors' answers to the interview questions revealed which language tasks they considered important. They stated that *reading textbooks* and *articles from journals* were the main important tasks for the reading skill. They talked about the importance of *listening to lectures* and *taking effective notes*. Furthermore, *listening to class presentations* was very important for them. For the writing skill, EMI instructors highlighted the importance of *writing essays* and *answering essay type questions* in the exams. They also stated that their departments require students to prepare reports and *write references for their reports* and projects properly. *Asking and answering questions* and *making presentations* were pointed out to be very important speaking tasks for most of the EMI instructors.

4.5.3. Research Question 3

The third research question of the study asked about the difficulties the students experienced when they used strategies related to four language skills. The grand mean scores of all the

items for each language skill were calculated and it was found out that students had relatively more difficulties in speaking (Grand Mean =2.84) than listening (Grand Mean =2.74), followed by reading (Grand Mean =2.69), writing (Grand Mean =2.66), successively. In Part C of the questionnaire, 1 meant “never”, and 5 meant “always”. It is clearly seen that students did not think they had extreme difficulty in applying any of the language skills as all the grand mean scores were under 3, which meant “sometimes” in the questionnaire.

The findings for the prep school students revealed that among the reading strategies, students more frequently had difficulties in *recognizing words automatically, skimming, scanning and guessing the meaning of a word from context*. In the focus group interview, the students stated that they struggled with *unknown vocabulary and reading speed* the most in their reading practices. Among the listening strategies, *inferring and distinguishing fact from opinion* were the ones they had the more difficulty in. During the interview, the students stated that they found *understanding information when not openly stated* usually difficult. Their writing problems were reported to stem from *summarizing information, writing references and writing argumentative essays*. The students considered *writing descriptive essays* easier when compared. Expressing their ideas in English was stated by the students during the focus group interview as the task they more frequently had difficulty in. As for the speaking skill, the students stated that they struggled in *summarizing information in their own words, expressing their ideas and making presentations*. *Asking relevant questions* in class was found to be the least problematic skill for students. The qualitative data revealed that students more frequently had difficulty in *answering questions and producing correct grammar while speaking*.

The language instructors at the prep school reported that students sometimes had difficulties in using four language skills. When the results of the NAQ were reviewed, it was seen that the grand mean scores for each language skill were as follows: speaking (Grand Mean=3.52), writing (Grand Mean=3.42), listening (Grand Mean=3.30), and reading (Grand Mean=3.30).

The skill that language instructors thought the students had the most difficulty in was speaking. *Summarizing information* and *expressing ideas in their own words* and *participating in class discussions* were reported to be the problematic areas. In writing, students were observed to struggle with *summarizing information*, *writing argumentative essays* and *using grammar and vocabulary accurately*. Both in reading and in listening, language instructors stated that *inferring* was difficult for students to master. In listening, other areas of difficulty were *following the flow of a conversation* and *differentiating facts from opinion*. Lastly, in reading students were considered to have difficulty in *critical reading* and *guessing the meaning of a word from context*. In the focus group interviews with language instructors, it was revealed that students were thought to have more difficulty in *expressing their ideas in their own words* when speaking. In writing they were perceived to have problems with *language use*. Students were observed to struggle with *following the flow of a conversation*. They also frequently failed to *read quickly*.

The EMI instructors stated that the reason why students had difficulty in reading was their *lexical incompetence*. They also reported that students were not able to read longer texts and struggled when they needed to do *extensive readings*. During lectures, the EMI instructors observed their students *losing focus* very quickly and not paying attention to the lecture. When students wrote essays, they failed to *provide references* and in the exams, their writings included grammar, vocabulary and organization problems. In terms of speaking, EMI instructors believed students found *asking relevant questions in class* difficult, they struggled when asked to *join discussions* or *make presentations*.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

This section presents the discussions of the research findings of the present study. The study aimed to define prep school students' English language needs. In order to find out students' needs, three research questions were asked and the perceptions of prep school students, language instructors and EMI instructors were gathered related to four language skills, namely reading, listening, writing and speaking. The first research question attempted to understand the importance placed for language skills. The second research question asked about the importance of tasks related to language skills. Lastly, the third research question inquired the difficulties experienced by prep school students when applying language skills.

This chapter initially discusses the findings of the research questions under separate subheadings. Then, the implications of the findings will be presented, followed by limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

5.2. Research Question 1

Analysis of the data has revealed that the prep school students' and EMI instructors' ratings for the importance of the four skills mostly overlap. Both groups viewed speaking as the most important skill and writing the least important skill of all. Language instructors, on the other hand, perceived reading as the most important skill and rated speaking the least important skill as revealed in their responses in the questionnaire.

However, during the interviews, language instructors stated that all four skills were equally important for the students. In addition, there was not a big gap between the highest ranked (listening, $M=4.88$) and the lowest ranked (speaking, $M=4.46$) skill in the language instructors' questionnaire results. The mean scores for each skill in the questionnaire was

around 4.5, which indicated the almost equal importance given to all skills by the language instructors.

In conclusion, prep school students and EMI instructors perceived speaking as the most important skill and writing the least important skill of all. The language instructors stated in the interviews that they considered all four skills equally important, yet ranked reading the highest important, and speaking the least important in the questionnaire.

There were several studies with parallel results in the literature. For example, in Zhao (1993) and Samuel (2016), prep school students considered speaking the most important skill, followed by listening, writing and reading. In Nakaprasit, prep school students also rated speaking the most important along with listening. Writing was rated the least important skill. Similarly, in Öner and Mede (2015), both prep school students and language instructors highlighted the importance of the speaking skill in the prep programme. In Nakaprasit's (2010) study, the language instructors also rated reading as the most important skill and speaking the least important skill. Results of Kırkgöz (2009) partially contradict with the findings of the present study. In Kırkgöz's study, EMI instructors viewed reading the most important skill, followed by listening and speaking, whereas in the present study, EMI instructors considered speaking the most important skill, followed by reading and listening. Writing was considered the least important skill for EMI instructors both in Kırkgöz (2009) and the present study.

5.3. Research Question 2

In relation to the importance of tasks related to four language skills, the findings for all participating groups (students, language instructors and EMI instructors) on each language skill (reading, listening, writing, speaking) will be discussed separately.

The results of the second research question for the reading skill revealed that prep school students and language instructors considered reading *course handouts* very important, whereas EMI instructors viewed reading *textbooks* very important. In the prep school programme, students were given a compilation book and that was referred to as the course handout for reading, listening and writing classes. In the EMI faculties, the students were asked to get a textbook for most courses. This situation shows that both groups viewed reading the main source book (course handouts in the case of prep school; and textbooks in the case of EMI faculties) very important. Reading *articles in journals* was also found to be important by all participating groups. All groups viewed reading *works of literature* somewhat important. The reason behind this was inquired in the interviews and it was found out that students would not be required to read literary texts in their future departments.

Reading *course handouts* was also found important by students in Zhao (1993) and Nakaprasit (2010). In Zhao (1993) and Samuel (2016) reading *articles in journals* was considered important both by the students and language instructors. In the present study, *reading instructions* was not found important by the students, however, it was considered important by the language instructors. In Samuel's study, language instructors found *reading instructions* important as well.

With regard to the listening skill, the language instructors and EMI instructors considered *listening to lectures* and *taking effective notes* very important for students' future academic studies. The students stated that they viewed *listening to lectures* important but they did not mention *taking effective notes*. The reason behind this could be the fact that note taking was not one of the tasks taught in the prep programme. As a result, students could not mention a task they had not practiced before.

Taking effective notes while listening to the lecture was found an important task in most of the studies conducted (e.g., Zhao, 1993; Shen, 2007; Samuel, 2016; Kırkgöz, 2009). Another task that was mentioned as important in relevant studies (e.g., Zhao, 1993; Shen, 2007; Samuel, 2016; Nakaprasit, 2010) was *listening to lectures*.

Concerning the writing skill, all participating groups stated *writing essays* and *essay type questions* were the most important writing tasks. In addition, the EMI instructors talked about the importance of *writing reports* and *writing references for projects*. These tasks were not mentioned by the prep school students on the grounds that those tasks were not part of the prep school programme. Both the language instructors and EMI instructors mentioned the importance of *writing references* in students' future departments. Even though they underlined its importance, they acknowledged the difficulty to integrate that task type in the prep school programme.

The writing results corroborated similar findings in reviewed studies in the literature. *Writing essay type questions* was also found important in Zhao (1993), Samuel (2016) and Kırkgöz (2009). Language instructors in Samuel (2016) also stressed the importance of *writing essays*. Even though *summarizing* was found important in Kırkgöz (2009), the present study did not yield that result. The particular task, *writing summaries*, was one of the items asked in the last part of the NAQ which assessed the difficulty experienced for each skill. Both by students and language instructors, *writing summaries* was reported as the most difficult writing skill in the NAQ. The reason for this outcome could be the fact that prep school writing programme did not have summarizing tasks much. This lack of practice resulted in students' experiencing more difficulty in applying that particular task.

Lastly, when the results of the speaking skill for all participants were analysed, it was seen that the perceptions of students and language instructors were completely compatible. Both

groups considered *expressing their ideas* and *participating in class discussions* very important. They also reported *making presentations* as an important task to be practiced in the prep programme. The EMI instructors also pointed out the importance of *making presentations*. In addition, they stated *asking and answering relevant questions* in class were very important in their departments.

Similar results were found in other needs analysis studies in the literature. *Expressing ideas* was also found important in Doğan and Mede (2017) by prep school students and language instructors. *Participating in class discussions* was considered an important task by students in Zhao (1993) and Nakaprasit (2010) and by students and language instructors in Samuel (2016). *Making presentations* was rated as an important skill by students in Samuel (2016) and Nakaprasit (2010). Both students and language instructors in Doğan and Mede (2017) rated *making presentations* the least important speaking subskill; however, the mean scores of the item (M=3.45 for students; M=3.58 for language instructors) clearly suggested that for the participants, *making presentations* was an important task.

5.4. Research Question 3

The third research question inquired how often the prep school students experienced difficulty for each language skill (reading, listening, writing, speaking). The perceptions of all participating groups (students, language instructors and EMI instructors) will be discussed in detail.

With regard to the reading skill, both quantitative and qualitative data suggest that students experienced difficulty in *fluent reading*, which entails automaticity in word recognition and reading at a good pace (Beers, 2003). Both the students and the language instructors stated that students had difficulties in *fast reading*. The NAQ results showed that students regarded *skimming*, *scanning*, and *word recognition* as difficult tasks. In addition, the language

instructors commented in the interviews that because students failed to master fundamental reading subskills such as *skimming*, *scanning*, and *guessing meaning from context*, it became very hard for them to read fast and they could easily get frustrated when they needed to read longer texts. The EMI instructors also pointed out students' problems with *extensive reading* and they reported that students failed to complete a reading task if the text was too long or too academic.

The findings are in accord with Kırkgöz's (2009) and Coşaner's (2013) studies, where *guessing meaning of unknown words from context* was also perceived as difficult by students. It was found in Kırkgöz (2009) that *lexical incompetence* was the reason for low reading speed which, in turn, affected reading comprehension.

As for the listening skill, the prep school students' perceptions are highly congruous with those of language instructors'. Both groups considered *inferring* and *distinguishing fact from opinion* while listening difficult tasks for students. In Nakaprasit's (2010) study, the language instructors also reported that *inferring* was a difficult listening tasks for students. Language instructors in the present study also pointed out during interviews that students' listening difficulty stemmed from their lack of *pronunciation* knowledge. The language instructors and students also thought *predicting the content of a lecture* was the least problematic for students. The EMI instructors did not have much insight about the problems students faced in listening. The reason behind this could be the fact that listening is a receptive skill. Since the students did not make a production for instructors to assess, it was not possible for the EMI instructors to detect any problems. Another point worth discussing here is the fact that listening is taught explicitly in the prep programme; therefore, the teachers and students were aware of the tasks and strategies used during the listening process. The EMI instructors, on the other hand, only observed the students as they lectured; thus, had limited information regarding students' listening skills or the difficulties they went through.

Majority of the needs analysis studies conducted at prep schools (e.g. Shen, 2007; Nakaprasit, 2010; Coşaner, 2013) found that *note-taking* while listening was a difficult skill for students. The findings of the present study contradict with the literature as note-taking was not found to be difficult by prep students in the NAQ. This finding might be explained by the fact that *note taking* was not a task that was practiced in the prep school. As a result, students did not perceive a task that they had not practiced before as difficult.

Concerning the writing skill, all participating groups stated that students had difficulty in *using proper grammar and vocabulary* when writing in a limited amount of time; such as exams. In Coşaner (2013), *writing essay type questions* was found difficult by prep school students. In Nakaprasit (2010), students were found to have difficulties in using *correct grammar* in writing and produced poorly structured essays as a result. Other difficulties mentioned by students and language instructors in the present study were *summarizing* and writing *argumentative essays*. Both students and language instructors stated that writing *descriptive essays* was easier. In the prep school programme, descriptive essay was the first essay type to be covered in the programme, whereas argumentative essay type was taught in the second term. The NAQ was distributed in the first term of the academic year; therefore, the timing of the questionnaire might have resulted in students' feeling more capable of writing descriptive essays and less capable of writing argumentative essays.

Speaking was the skill mentioned as the most problematic by all groups in the study. The skills all participants pointed out as difficult were *making presentations* and *participating in class discussions*. Both students and language instructors believed that students had difficulty in *expressing their ideas*. The EMI instructors considered *asking relevant questions in class* a difficult skill for students, whereas students rated it as the least difficult in the NAQ.

Making presentations was also found to be a difficult speaking task by students in Coşaner (2013) and Doğan and Mede (2017) and by language instructors in Doğan and Mede (2017). *Participating in class discussions* was also rated difficult in Coşaner (2013) by the students. Both the students and language instructors in Doğan and Mede (2017) viewed *expressing their ideas* a difficult task for students. *Answering questions* was found the most difficult task by students in Coşaner; however, it was rated as one of the least difficult items by language instructors in Doğan and Mede (2017).

5.5. Limitations

There were a couple of limitations of the present study regarding its participants. First of all, only eleven EMI instructors were reached to carry out interviews. Had more instructors been reached, the results would have been more representative of the target population. In addition, only qualitative data were obtained from the EMI instructors. Despite the fact that the researcher intended to distribute NAQ to EMI instructors as well, only a couple EMI instructors responded to the questionnaire. Eventually, the researcher had to decide against including quantitative data for EMI instructors.

Finally, in the present study there were three groups as the participants, which were prep school students, prep school language instructors and EMI instructors at the faculties. One more group could have been added to the existing groups, which was students at EMI faculties. The perceptions of students taking EMI courses could have provided deeper insight regarding the importance of tasks and the difficulties they were having while performing those tasks.

In spite of the above listed limitations, the study has significant contributions to the needs analysis literature in second language learning at prep schools.

5.6. Implications

The findings of the present study suggest several implications. The most prominent implication of the study is the necessity to revise the prep school programme in the light of the results of this study. The present study focused on the use of four language skills and it was stressed by all participants that all four skills were important for students to practice in the prep school. The language instructors and EMI instructors specifically highlighted the importance of teaching and using the four skills in an integrated fashion. As for the separate skills, the results suggest that students need to practice speaking more often in the prep school. Speaking should be given more emphasis in the programme via tasks such as participating in class discussions and making presentations. Due to the fact that students study in an EFL country, it was suggested in the interviews that students should be provided with opportunities to join extra-curricular activities such as drama clubs, choirs, or quiz shows prepared by the prep school to practice speaking English. There is also a significant emphasis on the importance of the ability to take effective notes while listening to a lecture. Since both EMI instructors and language instructors pointed out note-taking's significance in students' future departments, this listening task should be integrated in the prep school programme in order to better prepare the students for their EMI courses. The students should be equipped with the necessary reading subskills to enable fast reading and extensive reading for academic purposes. Inclusion of ESP classes in the prep programme might create the necessary material for students to familiarize themselves with readings related to their future departments. More guidance for correct grammar and vocabulary use should also be given to students to help them write essays and communicate their message with ease.

The curriculum unit and the language instructors at the prep school should be informed about the results of the needs analysis study; and they should also be given necessary trainings and

workshops to revise their objectives, teaching methods and materials so that they can accommodate students' needs better.

Another implication of the study is to build stronger connections with the EMI faculties to better understand the target needs of the students. As the main purpose of the prep school is to prepare students for their future departments, understanding students' target needs would help specify their learning needs better. That's why, the perceptions of EMI instructors and students should provide fruitful data to analyse and help prep school students to be better prepared for their future departments.

5.7. Recommendations for Further Research

Further studies should be conducted to create a larger needs analysis studies database and to understand the subject deeper. There are several suggestions for the direction of future studies.

One of the implications of this study is basing the needs analysis results to create a written curriculum for the prep school. Future studies might contribute to the remaining steps of designing a curriculum; such as, conducting situation analysis, setting goals or selecting materials.

Based on the limitations of this study, conducting needs analysis with EMI faculty students could be complimentary to the data of this study. Therefore, it is suggested that the perceptions of students studying at EMI faculties be taken into account, as well. The students in the present study can be asked to participate in a follow-up needs analysis study after they start their future departments.

In the present study the needs of students from all proficiency levels (A, B, C) are sought. Finding out the differences between the needs of different proficiency levels of the prep

programme was not one of the purposes of this study. For future research, it is possible to compare the data from different proficiency levels in order to find out whether different proficiency levels have different needs.

In addition, the needs of students from different departments could be compared. The perceptions of EMI instructors and students in relation to students' language needs might vary for each department and in return raise the necessity to implement customized prep programmes for students of different departments.



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APPENDICES

PART B. Please rate the importance of the following tasks in the Prep programme for each language skill (reading, listening, writing and speaking) regarding your academic studies in your future departments. Circle the appropriate number according to the following scale.

1: not important 2: slightly important 3: moderately important
4: important 5: extremely important

	Reading	1	2	3	4	5
1	textbooks					
2	articles in journals					
3	reference tools (e.g. dictionaries)					
4	course handouts					
5	texts on the Internet					
6	computer-presented texts					
7	instructions for projects					
8	newspapers/magazines					
9	lecture notes					
10	works of literature					
11	graphs/ charts/ diagrams/ tables					

	Listening	1	2	3	4	5
1	question/answer sessions					
2	lectures					
3	class presentations					
4	instructions					

	Writing	1	2	3	4	5
1	resume (CV)					
2	essays in reaction to readings					

3	references for a report or project					
4	book reports					
5	workbook exercises					
6	essay-type questions					
7	term papers					

	Speaking	1	2	3	4	5
1	oral presentations					
2	oral presentations using multimedia tools					
3	state opinions on different topics (discussions/ debates)					

PART C. How often do you experience difficulty in using the following strategies in the Prep programme for each language skill (reading, listening, writing and speaking)? Circle the appropriate number according to the following scale.

1: never 2: rarely 3: sometimes 4: usually 5: always

	Reading	1	2	3	4	5
1	Recognize words automatically.					
2	Guess the meaning of an unknown word from context.					
3	Recognize the organization of ideas to see their relationships.					
4	Identify key information.					
5	Predict the content of a text.					
6	Understand information in a text when not openly stated.					
7	Read and respond critically.					
8	Distinguish fact from opinion.					
9	Ask questions about a text.					
10	Read carefully and understand the details of the text.					
11	Go through a text quickly to get the general idea.					

12	Read quickly and selectively to find important information.					
13	Search for simple information.					
14	Distinguish the main idea from the supporting detail(s).					
15	Identify cause-effect relationships.					
16	Understand writer's aim/attitude.					

	Listening	1	2	3	4	5
1	Understand information when not openly stated in a lecture.					
2	Predict the content of a lecture.					
3	Understand the subject matter of a lecture.					
4	Listen for specific information.					
5	Distinguish fact from opinion.					
6	Listen to a lecture to take effective notes.					
7	Follow question / answer sessions.					
8	Understand spoken instructions.					

	Writing	1	2	3	4	5
1	Summarize information in your own words.					
2	Combine information from multiple texts to prepare an assignment.					
3	Organize writing to express major and minor ideas.					
4	Organize ideas for compare and contrast purposes.					
5	Organize ideas to show cause and effect relationships.					
6	Organize ideas for argumentative purposes.					
7	Organize ideas to describe events.					
8	Write references and quotations.					

	Speaking	1	2	3	4	5
1	Ask relevant questions in class.					
2	Participate in discussions/debates.					
3	Give oral presentations.					
4	React to speech and lecture.					
5	Produce correct pronunciation.					
6	Provide solutions to given problems.					
7	Summarize information in your own words.					
8	Express your ideas in your own words.					

APPENDIX B

Needs Analysis Questionnaire for Language Instructors

Dear Colleague,

This questionnaire aims to identify your students' English language needs during the Preparatory school year. The questionnaire is part of my Master's Thesis at Marmara University, Foreign Language Education Department. Please answer the questions honestly. Your personal information and answers will be classified and used for research purposes only.

Fatma Kübra ÇAKIR

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please fill in the following information.

1. Age: _____
2. Gender: Male Female
3. The programme you work at this year: A B C
4. What year did you start teaching English: _____
5. What year did you start working at Marmara University: _____

ENGLISH LANGUAGE NEEDS

PART A. *Please rate the importance of the following language skills regarding your students' academic studies in their future departments. Circle the appropriate number according to the following scale.*

1: not important 2: slightly important 3: moderately important
4: important 5: extremely important

		1	2	3	4	5
1	Reading					
2	Listening					
3	Writing					
4	Speaking					

PART B. Please rate the importance of the following tasks in the Prep programme for each language skill (reading, listening, writing and speaking) regarding your students' academic studies in their future departments. Circle the appropriate number according to the following scale.

1: not important 2: slightly important 3: moderately important
4: important 5: extremely important

	Reading	1	2	3	4	5
1	textbooks					
2	articles in journals					
3	reference tools (e.g. dictionaries)					
4	course handouts					
5	texts on the Internet					
6	computer-presented texts					
7	instructions for projects					
8	newspapers/magazines					
9	lecture notes					
10	works of literature					
11	graphs/ charts/ diagrams/ tables					

	Listening	1	2	3	4	5
1	question/answer sessions					
2	lectures					
3	class presentations					
4	instructions					

	Writing	1	2	3	4	5
1	resume (CV)					
2	essays in reaction to readings					

3	references for a report or project					
4	book reports					
5	workbook exercises					
6	essay-type questions					
7	term papers					

	Speaking	1	2	3	4	5
1	oral presentations					
2	oral presentations using multimedia tools					
3	state opinions on different topics (discussions/ debates)					

PART C. How often do your students experience difficulty in using the following strategies in the Prep programme for each language skill (reading, listening, writing and speaking)? Circle the appropriate number according to the following scale.

1: never 2: rarely 3: sometimes 4: usually 5: always

	Reading	1	2	3	4	5
1	Recognize words automatically.					
2	Guess the meaning of an unknown word from context.					
3	Recognize the organization of ideas to see their relationships.					
4	Identify key information.					
5	Predict the content of a text.					
6	Understand information in a text when not openly stated.					
7	Read and respond critically.					
8	Distinguish fact from opinion.					
9	Ask questions about a text.					
10	Read carefully and understand the details of the text.					
11	Go through a text quickly to get the general idea.					

12	Read quickly and selectively to find important information.					
13	Search for simple information.					
14	Distinguish the main idea from the supporting detail(s).					
15	Identify cause-effect relationships.					
16	Understand writer's aim/attitude.					

	Listening	1	2	3	4	5
1	Understand information when not openly stated in a lecture.					
2	Predict the content of a lecture.					
3	Understand the subject matter of a lecture.					
4	Listen for specific information.					
5	Distinguish fact from opinion.					
6	Listen to a lecture to take effective notes.					
7	Follow question / answer sessions.					
8	Understand spoken instructions.					

	Writing	1	2	3	4	5
1	Summarize information in their own words.					
2	Combine information from multiple texts to prepare an assignment.					
3	Organize writing to express major and minor ideas.					
4	Organize ideas for compare and contrast purposes.					
5	Organize ideas to show cause and effect relationships.					
6	Organize ideas for argumentative purposes.					
7	Organize ideas to describe events.					
8	Write references and quotations.					

	Speaking	1	2	3	4	5
1	Ask relevant questions in class.					
2	Participate in discussions/debates.					
3	Give oral presentations.					
4	React to speech and lecture.					
5	Produce correct pronunciation.					
6	Provide solutions to given problems.					
7	Summarize information in their own words.					
8	Express your ideas in their own words.					

APPENDIX C

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Students

- 1.** When you think about the different courses (Main course, Reading, Listening & Speaking, Writing, Grammar) offered in prep programme, do you think the hours allocated for each course are suitable for your English level and language needs? Why? Do you have any suggestions?
- 2.** What kind of tasks do you do in a reading lesson? What materials do you use? Which of those will be beneficial for your studies in your future departments, why?
- 3.** What kind of difficulties do you experience while reading? What do you think are the reasons for your difficulties? Do your instructors teach you ways to overcome those difficulties? Can you give some examples? Do you find those tips useful?
- 4.** What kind of tasks do you do in a listening lesson? What materials do you use? Which of those will be beneficial for your studies in your future departments, why?
- 5.** What kind of difficulties do you experience while listening? What do you think are the reasons for your difficulties? Do your instructors teach you ways to overcome those difficulties? Can you give some examples? Do you find those tips useful?
- 6.** What kind of tasks do you do in a writing lesson? What materials do you use? Which of those will be beneficial for your studies in your future departments, why?
- 7.** What kind of difficulties do you experience while writing? What do you think are the reasons for your difficulties? Do your instructors teach you ways to overcome those difficulties? Can you give some examples? Do you find those tips useful?
- 8.** What kind of tasks do you do in a speaking lesson? What materials do you use? Which of those will be beneficial for your studies in your future departments, why?
- 9.** What kind of difficulties do you experience while speaking? What do you think are the reasons for your difficulties? Do your instructors teach you ways to overcome those difficulties? Can you give some examples? Do you find those tips useful?
- 10.** Does the prep school education meet your language needs? What changes or improvements in the programme are necessary to meet your needs? Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

APPENDIX D

Semi-Structured Interview Questions for Language Instructors

1. When you think about the different courses (Main course, Reading, Listening & Speaking, Writing, Grammar) offered in prep programme, do you think the hours allocated for each course are suitable for your students' English level and language needs? Why? Do you have any suggestions?
2. What kind of tasks do you do in a reading lesson? What materials do you use? Which of those will be beneficial for your students' studies in their future departments, why?
3. What kind of difficulties do your students experience while reading? What do you think are the reasons for their difficulties? Do you teach strategies to your students to overcome those difficulties? Can you give some examples?
4. What kind of tasks do you do in a listening lesson? What materials do you use? Which of those will be beneficial for your students' studies in their future departments, why?
5. What kind of difficulties do your students experience while listening? What do you think are the reasons for their difficulties? Do you teach strategies to your students to overcome those difficulties? Can you give some examples?
6. What kind of tasks do you do in a writing lesson? What materials do you use? Which of those will be beneficial for your students' studies in their future departments, why?
7. What kind of difficulties do your students experience while writing? What do you think are the reasons for their difficulties? Do you teach strategies to your students to overcome those difficulties? Can you give some examples?
8. What kind of tasks do you do in a speaking lesson? What materials do you use? Which of those will be beneficial for your students' studies in their future departments, why?
9. What kind of difficulties do your students experience while speaking? What do you think are the reasons for their difficulties? Do you teach strategies to your students to overcome those difficulties? Can you give some examples?
10. Do you think the prep school education meets your students' language needs? What changes or improvements in the programme are necessary to meet students' needs? Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

APPENDIX E

Semi Structured Interview Questions for EMI Instructors

Background Questions

Name Surname:

Faculty/Department:

Gender:

Years of teaching:

Years of teaching in English:

Which courses are you teaching in English?

Interview Questions

1. What do you think the primary aim of the Preparatory Programme should be?
2. What do you think the most important language skills and areas for students to learn during Preparatory Program are? Can you put them in the order of importance?

Reading

3. What are the common task types you do in your courses for reading? What are the main reading materials used in your courses?
4. What are the common problems that students face when reading in your classes? What do you think students need in order to cope with these problems?

Listening

5. What are the common task types you do in your courses for listening? What are the main listening materials used in your courses?
6. What are the common problems that students face when listening in your classes? What do you think students need in order to cope with these problems?

Writing

7. What are the common task types you do in your courses for writing? What are the main writing materials used in your courses?
8. What are the common problems that students face when writing in your classes? What do you think students need in order to cope with these problems?

Speaking

9. What are the common task types you do in your courses for speaking? What are the main speaking materials used in your courses?
10. What are the common problems that students face when speaking in your classes? What do you think students need in order to cope with these problems?