



International Journal of Contemporary Educational Research (IJCER)

www.ijcer.net

Students' Attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course

Selda Özer¹, Ercan Yılmaz²

¹Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University

²Necmettin Erbakan University,

To cite this article:

Özer, S. & Yılmaz, E. (2016). Students' attitudes towards vocational foreign language course. *International Journal of Contemporary Educational Research*, 3(2), 55-64.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes.

Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

Authors alone are responsible for the contents of their articles. The journal owns the copyright of the articles.

The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of the research material.

Students' Attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course

Selda Özer^{1*}, Ercan Yılmaz²

¹Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University

²Necmettin Erbakan University

Abstract

The aim of the study was to determine students' attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course and if their attitudes display significant differences in terms of gender, age, department, the place they live, passing marks, the type of high school they graduated from, their mothers' and fathers' graduation levels and being abroad. The study was carried out in descriptive survey method. The population of the study comprised of senior students at two vocational colleges of Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University in 2015-2016 spring semester. "Attitude Scale towards Vocational Foreign Language Course" was used to collect data. Data were analyzed using independent samples t-test and one-way ANOVA. The findings revealed that students, in general, have positive attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course and their attitudes differed in terms of gender, age, department and passing mark; however, their attitudes did not have a difference in terms of other variables.

Key words: Attitude, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Vocational foreign language.

Introduction

Globalization of the world has led English to become lingua franca among countries. For economic, scientific and technological reasons, English is an international language. Thus, countries give more importance to teaching English as a second or foreign language. In a similar vein, students start learning English at second grade at primary school in Turkey. They study English in increasing levels each year. The course contents involve four language skills (reading comprehension, listening, speaking and writing) and three language areas (grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation). When students start studying at universities, they have new needs in terms of foreign language learning as they determine their professions. On the one hand, university students should take compulsory foreign language courses generally in their first year. On the other hand, the aim of foreign language teaching in higher education is to train students to communicate professionally in a foreign language and to develop their foreign language in their fields. In other words, foreign language can be considered as a tool of professional life-long learning and development.

In Turkey, students mastering at two-year vocational colleges take Vocational Foreign Language Course in their second year after compulsory foreign language courses. As vocational colleges include different departments/programs, students' needs and course contents for each department are diversified. Indeed, vocational foreign language can be regarded as a part of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), which Hutchinson and Waters (1987) described as an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning. In addition, Richards (2001) expressed that the purposes for which a learner needs a language rather than a syllabus reflecting the structure of general English should be used in designing a course for ESP. In addition, when websites of universities, faculties and vocational colleges, it is observed that different words are used for the name of the course, such as Vocational English/Foreign Language, Occupational English/Foreign Language, Professional English/Foreign Language and Business English. In this study, Vocational Foreign Language is used.

Different variables can influence language learning. These components not only affect students' interests, behaviors and actions in the language classrooms but also promote or prevent their language learning performances. One of the most crucial of the components is attitude. In the literature, attitude is defined in several ways, the most accepted of which is Gardner's definition. For him, attitudes are the sum total of a man's instincts

* Corresponding Author: *Selda Özer,sozer@nevsehir.edu.tr*

and feelings, prejudice or bias, preconceived notions, fears, threats, and convictions about any specified topic (Gardner, 1980). Attitude is also considered to be a component of motivation in language learning. In addition, it is a well known fact that attitudes play a very important role in language learning because they influence what, how much and how well a student can learn, which is one of the indicators of success or failure in learning a language. In other words, negative attitudes towards a foreign language can handicap learning the language; conversely, positive attitudes can increase language learning success.

Studies have been carried out about Vocational Foreign Language in Turkey. Some theses most of which are master theses were conducted mainly to analyze the needs of students in the course (Güleç, 2013; Albostan, 2012; Ayas, 2011; Sabuncuoğlu, 2010; Diken, 2006; Kaygan, 2005; Sezer, 2004), to evaluate the effects of some instructional strategies (Özer, 2016; İgrek, 2013; Veziroğlu, 2013; Sert, 2012; Akın, 2010; Güneş, 2008) and investigating students' perceptions of vocational English course book (Duymaz, 2014). However, the studies have ignored attitudes of students towards vocational foreign language and the course. On the one hand, there are various studies about attitudes towards foreign language (specifically English) and foreign language learning. On the other hand, all of them are about general foreign language and the number of studies about vocational foreign language is limited. Therefore, the study was carried out to meet this need and aimed at determining students' attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course and if the their attitudes displayed significant differences in terms of gender, age, department, the place they live, passing marks, type of high school they graduated from, their mothers' and fathers' graduation levels and being abroad. The research questions were:

1. What are the students' attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course?
2. Are there significant differences in students' attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course in terms of gender, age, department, the place they live, passing marks, type of high school they graduated from, their mothers' and fathers' graduation levels and being abroad?

Method

Descriptive survey method was used in the study. Descriptive survey method is generally used to determine the opinions of the participants about a particular subject or some features of the participants (Büyüköztürk, 2005). The method was used because the study aimed at determining vocational college students' attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course in term of different variables.

Sample

The population of the study comprised of senior students at two vocational colleges of Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli University in 2015-2016 spring semester. The questionnaire forms were given to all (N=436) students enrolled in the two colleges and taking Vocational Foreign Language Course and 331 students filled in the form on the basis of voluntariness. Table 1 shows demographic information about the participants.

Table 1. Demographic Information about the Participants

		N	%			N	%	
Gender	Female	150	45.3	Passing Mark	F (0-44)	52	15.7	
	Male	181	54.7		C (45-56)	104	31.4	
Age	20 and younger	121	36.6	High School	B (57-74)	103	31.1	
	21-22	142	42.9		A (75-100)	72	21.8	
	23-24	35	10.6		Anatolian	51	15.4	
	25 and older	33	10.0		State	108	32.6	
Department	Tourism & Hotel Management	76	23.0	Mother Graduation Level	Vocational	156	47.1	
	Tourism & Travel Services	63	19.0		Other	16	4.8	
	Office Management & Executive Assistance	51	15.4	Father Graduation Level	Primary School	203	61.3	
	Marketing	18	5.4		Secondary School	58	17.5	
	Cooking	59	17.8		High School	60	18.1	
	Catering Services	19	5.7	University	University	10	3.0	
	Tourism Animation	13	3.9		Primary School	129	39.0	
	Tourism Guiding	32	9.7		Secondary School	91	27.5	
	Residence	Village	42	12.7	Level	High School	79	23.9
		Town	33	10.0		University	32	9.7

District	88	26.6	Being	Yes	39	11.8
City	74	22.4	Abroad	No	292	88.2
Metropolis	94	28.4		Total	331	100

As seen in Table 1, 150 students were female and 181 of them were male. Most of the students (42.9%) were 21 or 22 years old while only 10% of them were 25 and older. In terms of department, 76 students study Tourism and Hotel Management, 63 students study Tourism and Travel Services, 51 students study Office Management and Executive Assistance, 18 students study Marketing, 59 students study Cooking, 19 students study Catering Services, 13 students study Tourism Animation and 32 students study Tourism Guiding. Students lived most of their lives in villages (12.7%), towns (10.0%), districts (26.6%), cities (22.4%) or metropolises (28.4%). 15.7% of the students fail in the course in fall semester, 31.4% of them got C, 31.1% of them got B and 21.8% of them got A. Nearly half of the students (47.1%) graduated from vocational high schools. More than half of the students' mothers (61.3%) and most of their fathers (39.0%) graduated from primary schools. Only 39 (11.8%) of them have been abroad before.

Data Collection Tool

The data were collected via a questionnaire form including demographic information about the participants and "Attitude Scale towards Vocational Foreign Language Course". The scale was developed by Özer (2016). The scale has a one-factor structure and is composed of 28 statements rated on five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree).

158 voluntary students taking Vocational Foreign Language courses at a vocational college in 2014-2015 academic year filled in the scale and some analyses were made. Item-total correlation coefficients ranged from 0.61 to 0.82. According to Büyüköztürk (2005), item-total correlation coefficients should be 0.30 and above. KMO coefficient was examined to check whether sample size was adequate for factor analysis and Barlett's test was investigated to control whether variables are distributed normally. KMO coefficient was 0.953 and Barlett's test was 0.00. If KMO is higher than 0.60 and Barlett's test is significant, factor analysis can be used for the data (Büyüköztürk, 2005: 126). Then, explanatory factor analysis was applied to determine the factor loadings and construct validity. The explanatory factor analysis showed that the eigenvalues of 28 items in the scale were distributed on four factors bigger than 1, which explained 65.668% of the total variance. The contribution of the four factors to the total variance was 52.525%, 5.127%, 4.284% and 3.731% respectively. The eigenvalues of the factors were 14.707; 1.436; 1.200 and 1.045 respectively. Factor loading values of all the items in the scale were high in the first factor.

Factor loading values of items in the first factor ranged from 0.619 to 0.829. Thus, Scree Plot was analyzed and there was a rapid decrease in the first factor. When all the analyses were taken into account, the scale was considered to have one factor. In other words, the fact that the first factor loading values of all items in the scale were high, that the variance explained by the first factor was significant, and that the eigenvalue of the first factor was three times higher than the eigenvalue of the second factor were evidences that the scale had one factor (Büyüköztürk, 2005). Therefore, it was concluded that the scale had a one-factor structure. Moreover, the first factor alone accounted for 52.525% of the total variance. That the explained variance is 30% and more is acceptable for a one-factor scale (Büyüköztürk, 2005; Çokluk, Şekercioğlu and Büyüköztürk, 2014). Cronbach Alpha reliability analysis was applied to the scale and it was estimated as 0.96. The psychological scales with 0.70 and higher Cronbach Alpha are assessed as reliable scales (Büyüköztürk, 2005: 171). Therefore, the scale was commented to be a reliable, valid and one-factor scale (Özer, 2016).

Since the scale has a one-factor structure, confirmatory factor analysis was carried out for the scale in the current study to test one-factor structure of the scale and convenience of the model proposed after explanatory factor analysis (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). Fit indices of the one-factor model were analyzed and chi-square ($\chi^2=1068.43$, $sd=350$, $\chi^2/sd=3.05$, $p<0.001$) was significant. Fit indices of the model were RMSEA=0.08 and CFI=0.81. When estimated fit indices were examined, the values were observed to be close to the ones expressed in the literature (Kline, 2005; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007) but not at the expected level. When modification indices about the variables in the model were examined, it was observed that there was relationship between the errors of some items. Modification indices show the decrease in the chi-square value as a result of adding a particular parameter (releasing it) or new parameters (Sümer, 2000). Based on these indices, error correlations for item parceling of the same latent variable were added to the model and reanalyzed. Final confirmatory factor analysis exhibited that chi-square values ($\chi^2=727.55$, $sd=336$, $\chi^2/sd=2.17$, $p<0.001$) were significant. Fit indices of the model were RMSEA=0.06, SRMR=0.06, IFI=0.90 and CFI=0.90. Therefore, the results of the analyses

indicated that the model had acceptable fit indices (Kline, 2005; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). Factor loading values and error correlations of the items were observed to be statistically significant. Figure 1 displays the final confirmatory factor analysis.

After the confirmatory factor analysis, Cronbach Alpha reliability analysis of the one-factor scale was estimated as 0.93 for the current study.

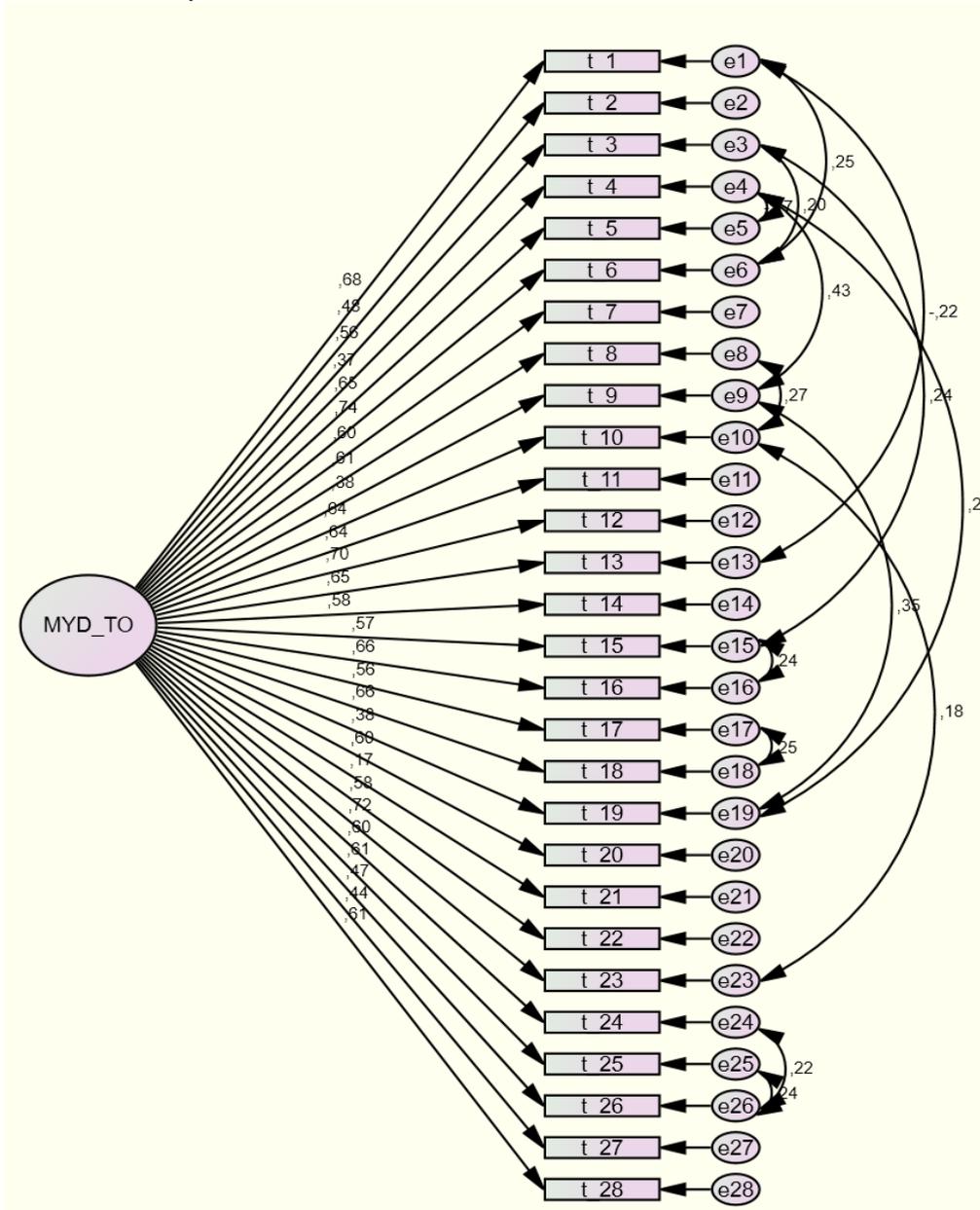


Figure 1. CFA Model of Attitudes Scale towards Vocational Foreign Language Course (n=331, $\chi^2=727.55$ sd= 336, $p<0.001$)

Data Analysis

Confirmatory factor analysis was carried out for the scale in the current study to test one-factor structure of the scale and convenience of the model proposed after explanatory factor analysis. Mean and standard deviation values were found out for data to determine the distribution of students' attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course. Independent samples t test was applied to find out whether there were significant differences between attitudes of female and male students and the students who have been abroad and those who have not. One-way ANOVA was applied in order to find out whether students' attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course changed in terms of age, departments that students study, the place students live, passing marks

of the students in the first semester, types of high schools that students graduated from, their mother's and father's graduation level.

Results

First of all, mean and standard deviation values were calculated for obtained data to determine the distribution of students' attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course. When values of the items are examined, it is remarkable that students are happy when they understand reading passages ($X=4.08$), they think it is useful to take the course no matter however hard it is ($X=4.02$) and they believe that they learn necessary information about their profession in the course ($X=3.92$). Some other striking findings are that negative behaviors of the instructor towards students do not reduce their attention in the course ($X=2.40$), even if the activities are hard, it does not reduce their motivation ($X=2.72$) and they think that the course is not difficult ($X=2.80$).

Moreover, students can get minimum 28 and maximum 140 from the scale as a total mark. The highest total mark from the scale was 140 and the lowest was 40. Moreover, the mean of the total scale was 95.73, which means students, in general, have positive attitudes towards the course. Independent samples t test was applied to find out whether there was a significant difference between attitudes of female and male students (Table 2) towards Vocational Foreign Language Course.

Table 2. Results of Independent Samples t Test for Attitudes of Students in terms of Gender

Gender	N	Mean	Sd	t	p
Female	150	99.2733	20.11107	2.958	.003
Male	181	92.8066	19.41852		

As it seen in Table 2, female and male students' average attitude scores towards Vocational Foreign Language Course were 99.27 and 92.80, respectively. This means that there was a significant difference between attitude mean scores of female and male students ($t_{(329)}=2.958$, $p=0.003<0.05$) in favor of female students. Thus, female students have more positive attitudes than male students.

A one-way ANOVA was applied in order to see whether students' attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course changed in terms of age factor. Then Scheffe test was used to determine which group caused the difference. The findings obtained in this process are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of One-way ANOVA Test for Attitudes of Students in terms of Age

Age	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	Scheffe
Between Groups	4564.266	3	1521.422	3.917	.009	(25 and older) and
Within Groups	127003.867	327	388.391			(20 and younger) /
Total	131568.133	330				(25 and older) and (21-22)

When Table 3 is examined, it can be seen that one-way ANOVA test displayed a significant difference ($F_{(3,327)}=3.917$; $p=0.009<0.05$). Scheffe test showed that there were significant differences between not only 20 and younger students and 25 and older students but also 21-22 year-old students and 25 and older ones in favor of 25 and older students. In other words, the older the students are, the more positive attitudes they have.

One-way ANOVA was applied to examine if there was a significant difference in terms of departments that students study. Scheffe test was used to determine the reason of the difference. The findings obtained in this process are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of One-way ANOVA Test for Attitudes of Students in terms of Department

Department	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	Scheffe
Between Groups	18887.164	7	2698.166	7.734	.000	T&HM and OM&EA /
Within Groups	112680.969	323	348.857			T&TS and OM&EA /
Total	131568.133	330				TG and OM& EA / TG and C

It can be seen in Table 4 that one-way ANOVA test showed a significant difference ($F_{(7-323)} = 7.734$; $p=0.000<0.05$). Scheffe test showed that there was a significant difference between Tourism and Hotel Management and Office Management and Executive Assistance in favor of Tourism and Hotel Management; Tourism and Travel Services and Office Management and Executive Assistance in favor of Tourism and Travel Services; Tourism Guiding and Office Management and Executive Assistance in favor of Tourism Guiding; and Tourism Guiding and Cooking in favor of Tourism Guiding. The finding reveals that students studying at different tourism departments have more positive attitudes towards the course. In addition, among tourism departments, Tourism Guiding had the highest score.

One-way ANOVA was applied to see if there was a difference in terms of passing marks of the students in the first semester. Scheffe test was used to determine which group caused the difference. The findings obtained in this process are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of One-way ANOVA Test for Attitudes of Students in terms of Passing Mark

Passing Mark	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p	Scheffe
Between Groups	23802.537	3	7934.179	24.075	.000	C and F/ B and F/ A and F/ B and C/ A and C
Within Groups	107765.596	327	329.558			
Total	131468.133	330				

As seen in Table 6, one-way ANOVA test revealed a significant difference ($F_{(3-327)} = 24.075$; $p=0.000<0.05$). Scheffe test showed that there was significant difference between C (45-56) and F (0-44); B (57-74) and F; A (75-100) and F; B and C; and A and C in favor of the higher marks. The finding can be interpreted that if students have positive attitudes, they will get higher marks, or vice versa; in other words, if students get high marks in the course, they will develop more positive attitudes.

One-way ANOVA was applied to examine if there were differences in terms of the residence (the place they live), types of high schools that students graduated from, their mother's and father's graduation level. After the analyses, there found to be no significant differences between groups. Moreover, independent samples t test was used to examine a variable (being abroad) and independent samples t test revealed that there was not a significant difference between the students who have been abroad and those who have not.

Discussion

As mentioned before, there are various studies about attitudes towards foreign language (specifically English) and foreign language learning (Güryay, 2016; Karataş et al., 2016; Tetik, 2016; Akgöz and Gürsoy, 2014; Kazazoğlu, 2013; Kiziltan and Atli, 2013; Soleimani and Hanafi, 2013; Duman et al., 2011; Gömleksiz, 2010; Gökçe, 2008; Hashwani, 2008; Çakıcı, 2007; Karahan, 2007; Saracoğlu and Varol, 2007; İnal, Evin and Saracoğlu, 2005; Altunay, 2004; Bağçeci, 2004) but all of them are about general English. Moreover, the number of studies about vocational foreign language is limited (Özer, 2016; Duymaz, 2014; Güleç, 2013; İğrek, 2013; Veziroğlu, 2013; Albostan, 2012; Sert, 2012; Ayas, 2011; Akın, 2010; Sabuncuoğlu, 2010; Güneş, 2008; Diken, 2006; Kaygan, 2005; Sezer, 2004) and they did not examine the attitudes of students towards the course. Therefore, the study was carried out to meet this need and aimed at determining students' attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course and whether their attitudes showed significant differences in terms of different variables. Attitudes of students are discussed in this part of the study using those studies carried about English/foreign language and English/foreign language learning.

To start with, students are happy when they understand reading passages. In fact, it is true for everything about the language. If students feel they know something about the subject, they are more interested in and motivated to the course and they can learn more easily. Students believe that they learn necessary information about their profession in the course and that is why they think it is useful to take the course no matter however hard it is. In addition, negative behaviors of the instructor towards students do not reduce their attention in the course, the difficulty level of activities does not reduce their motivation and they think that the course is not difficult. The findings may be resulted from their opinion that they learn necessary information about their profession in the course and no other variable can distract their focus on learning the language and more specifically the subject that they regard as necessary for their profession. In conclusion, students in general have positive attitudes towards the course.

There is a significant difference between attitudes of female and male students in favor of female students; in other words, female students have more positive attitudes than male students. There are similar findings (Akgöz and Gürsoy, 2014; Gömleksiz, 2010; Hashwani, 2008; Karahan, 2007; İnal, Evin and Saracoğlu, 2005) in the literature that female students have more positive attitudes towards English language learning. In a high school context, in parallel with the study finding, Gökçe (2008) expresses a statistically significant difference between female and male students. Female students tend to have more positive attitudes than male students do.

As opposed to the finding in this study, Tetik (2016), Soleimani and Hanafi (2013) and Kazazoğlu (2013) find out that male students have more positive attitudes towards learning English than female students. In addition, in studies conducted by Güray (2016), Karataş et.al (2016), Kiziltan and Atli (2013), Saracoğlu and Varol (2007) and Çakıcı (2007) reveal that there is not a significant difference in attitudes of students towards English in terms of gender. These various findings may be resulted from the difference in samples with regard to grade and level.

Students' attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course change in terms of age factor. There are significant differences between both 20 and younger students and 25 and older students and 21-22 year-old students and 25 and older ones in favor of 25 and older students. Likewise, Akgöz and Gürsoy (2014) find out in their study that there is a significant difference between 23-25-year-old students and 17-19 year-old students. In other words, the older the students are, the more positive attitudes they have.

There is a significant difference in terms of departments that students major. There is a significant difference between Tourism and Hotel Management and Office Management and Executive Assistance in favor of Tourism and Hotel Management; Tourism and Travel Services and Office Management and Executive Assistance in favor of Tourism and Travel Services; Tourism Guiding and Office Management and Executive Assistance in favor of Tourism Guiding; and Tourism Guiding and Cooking in favor of Tourism Guiding. In a similar vein, Akgöz and Gürsoy (2014) reveal in their study that there is a significant difference in terms of departments that students study. In short, students of different majors have different attitudes towards English language learning. In addition, students majoring tourism have more positive attitudes towards the course than other departments. Besides, while Tourism Guiding has the highest score, Office Management and Executive Assistance has the lowest score among departments. The results of a study carried out by Duman et al. (2011) presents that students majoring Office Management and Executive Assistance fail in gaining skills of vocational foreign language and teaching foreign language in this department is unsuccessful. The finding of this study highlights that positive attitude towards foreign language enables success in the course. As the attitudes of the students majoring Office Management and Executive Assistance is usually negative, their success in the course is often low.

Students' attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course change in terms of their passing marks in the first semester. There is a significant difference between C and F; B and F; A and F; B and C; and A and C in favor of the higher marks. The finding can be interpreted that if students have positive attitudes, they will get higher marks. Similarly, a study carried out by İnal, Evin and Saracaloğlu (2005) reveals that the students with more positive attitudes are much more successful in foreign language learning. In addition, according to Prodromou (1992), a successful learner is the one who possesses positive attitudes towards the target language. Another study shows that there is a significant positive correlation between students' achievement in English exams and their attitudes towards English (Altunay, 2004).

The finding may also be interpreted that if students get high marks in the course, they will develop more positive attitudes. Nevertheless, Schibeci and Riley (1986) argue that there is support for the proposition that attitudes influence achievement rather than achievement influencing attitudes (cited in Güray, 2016). In other words, when students with positive attitudes experience success, their attitudes are intensified. Likewise, students with negative attitudes might fail to advance, which results in more negative attitudes in their language learning attitudes. On the other hand, if students start foreign language classes with neutral attitudes, or even positive ones, their attitudes about foreign language and foreign language learning will be strongly influenced by the situation itself and the success in the course. Since experience may change attitudes, effective language teaching strategies may not only help teachers but also encourage students to have more positive attitudes towards the language.

There is not a significant difference between attitudes of students in terms of types of high schools that students graduated from. In their study, Karataş et.al (2016), Saracoğlu and Varol (2007) and İnal, Evin and Saracoğlu (2005) find out similar findings. However, Çakıcı (2007) and Güray (2016) determine a significant difference between attitudes of students in terms of types of high schools that students graduated from. Güray's study indicate that the vocational high school graduates have the highest mean whereas the lowest mean belongs to the graduates of private schools. Anatolian high school graduates are found to have the second highest mean score.

The study conducted by Çakıcı (2007) shows that the Anatolian high school graduates have the lowest mean score, while the graduates of the state high school have the highest mean score. Moreover, in Gökçe (2008)'s study, attitudes of high school students are examined and a significant difference is found between attitudes of students studying at Anatolian high school and state high school. Students at state high school sections were observed to have more positive attitudes than students at Anatolian high school sections do.

There is not a significant difference between attitudes of students in terms of the places they live. In parallel with the finding, Akgöz and Gürsoy (2014)'s study ascertains that there is not a significant difference in students' attitudes towards learning a foreign language in terms of their residence. In other words, whether students live in a metropolis or in a village does not affect their attitudes towards learning a foreign language.

There is not a significant difference between attitudes of students in terms of their mother's and father's graduation level. On the contrary, Bağçeci (2004) finds out in her study that students' attitudes towards learning English differ with regard to their mother's graduation level while they do not differ in terms of their father's graduation level.

There is not a significant difference between attitudes of students who have been abroad and those who have not. Nevertheless, when the mean scores of the students are examined, it is observed that the ones being in a foreign country have higher scores. The findings of the studies carried out by Saracoğlu and Varol (2007) and İnal, Evin and Saracoğlu (2005) bear a similarity to the finding in the study. The students who have been in a foreign country are expected to have more favorable attitudes; however, the finding represents otherwise. The result implies that being abroad is not a statistically significant indication of positive attitude.

Conclusion

The study revealed that female students have more positive attitudes than male students. Lecturers of English may make use of cooperative learning strategies more and lead male students to participate in activities with female students.

Another result of the study is that older students have more positive attitudes than younger ones. Younger students may be exposed to the sectoral practices which reflect them the necessity of knowing and speaking a foreign language. Some conferences or seminars may be carried out by vocational colleges to broaden students' horizons. The colleges may invite experienced and successful employees working in different companies to be a model for junior students.

In addition, students studying at tourism departments have more positive attitudes towards the course. Students majoring Tourism Guiding have the highest score whereas students studying Office Management & Executive Assistance have the lowest score. Students studying at Office Management & Executive Assistance should be made aware of the need for a foreign language, specifically English, to be able to work in international or multi-cultural companies.

The study reflected that students with positive attitudes get higher marks. Within the scope of the course, students who get lower marks in the exams may be motivated to participate in the course more frequently. Thus, they will have more chances to achieve in the activities, which will lead them to develop and have more positive attitudes and to get higher marks.

In this study, vocational college students' attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course were examined. It may be useful for further studies to investigate attitudes of students studying at faculties and taking Vocational Foreign Language Course. The findings of this study will shed light on further studies. Further studies might also examine relationship between attitudes towards Vocational Foreign Language Course and some other variables that influence language learning in general and Vocational Foreign Language learning in particular.

References

- Akgöz, E. & Gürsoy, Y. (2014). Turizm eğitiminde yabancı dil öğrenme, istek ve kararlılıkları: Selçuk Üniversitesi Beyşehir örneği. *Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies*, 2(1), 21-29.
- Akın, G. (2010). *Andragojik ilkelere göre geliştirilmiş problem temelli mesleki İngilizce eğitimi programının etkililiği*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Ankara.

- Albostan, Y. (2012). *An investigation of the occupational English language needs of diplomats whose second language is English*. (Unpublished master thesis). Bilkent University the Graduate School of Education, Ankara.
- Altunay, U. (2004). *Üniversite İngilizce hazırlık öğrencilerinin İngilizce'ye yönelik tutumlarıyla bazı bireysel değişkenler arasındaki ilişkiler*. XIII. Ulusal Eğitim Bilimleri Kurultayı, 6-9 Temmuz 2004 İnönü Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi, Malatya.
- Ayas, Ö. (2011). *The academic and professional English language needs of the school of health students*. (Unpublished master thesis). Çukurova University Institute of Social Sciences, Adana.
- Bağçeci, B. (2004). *Ortaöğretim kurumlarında İngilizce öğretimine ilişkin öğrenci tutumları (Gaziantep İli Örneği)*. XIII. Ulusal Eğitim Bilimleri Kurultayı. 6-9 Temmuz 2004, Malatya: İnönü Üniversitesi, Eğitim Fakültesi.
- Büyüköztürk, Ş. (2005). *Sosyal bilimler için veri analizi el kitabı: İstatistik, araştırma deseni, SPSS uygulamaları ve yorum* (5th ed.). Ankara: Pegem A Yayıncılık.
- Çakıcı, D. (2007). The attitudes of university students towards English within the scope of common compulsory courses. *GÜ, Gazi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 27 (3), 21-35.
- Çokluk, Ö., Şekercioğlu, G. & Büyüköztürk, Ş. (2014). *Sosyal bilimler için çok değişkenli istatistik: SPSS ve LISREL uygulamaları* (3th ed.). Ankara: Pegem Yayıncılık.
- Diken, Ü. (2006). *Gereksinim çözümlemesi kullanılarak uygulanan özel amaçlı dil (İngilizce) öğretimi (S.D.Ü. Eğirdir Meslek Yüksekokulu Örneği)*. (Unpublished master thesis). Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Isparta.
- Duman, H., Çöğür, İ., Çakmak, V. & Atay, M. (2011). Büro yönetimi ve yönetici asistanlığı programı öğrencilerinin mesleki becerilerinin incelenmesi üzerine bir araştırma: Kazım Karabekir Meslek Yüksekokulu Örneği. *Gümüşhane Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Elektronik Dergisi*, 2 (4), 45-64.
- Duymaz, Z. (2014). *Investigating the tourism and hotel management students' perceptions of their vocational English coursebook*. (Unpublished master thesis). Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University Institute of Educational Sciences, Çanakkale.
- Gardner R. (1980). On the validity of affective variables in second language acquisition: Conceptual and statistical considerations. *Language Learning*, 30 (2), 255-270.
- Gökçe, S. (2008). *Attitudes and motivational intensity of foreign language learners at vocational high schools: A comparative study*. (Unpublished master thesis). Middle East Technical University Graduate School of Social Sciences, Ankara.
- Gömlüksiz, M. N. (2010). An evaluation of students' attitudes toward English language learning in terms of several variables. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 9, 913-918.
- Güleç, H. (2013). *Identifying English language needs of the Turkish National Police Academy students: A needs-based syllabus suggestion for law enforcement English course*. (Unpublished master thesis). Anadolu University Graduate School of Educational Sciences, Eskişehir.
- Güneş, İ. (2008). *Eski Yunan ve Roma mitolojisinin İngilizce mesleki yabancı dil derslerinde materyal olarak kullanımı (S. Ü. Beyşehir Meslek Yüksekokulu Turizm Rehberliği Programı Örneği)*. (Unpublished master thesis). Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Konya.
- Güryay, B. (2016). Individual variables, attitudes towards English and being a teacher: A study on prospective teachers of English. *International Journal of Psychology and Educational Studies*, 3 (2), 14-23.
- Hashwani, S. M. (2008). Students' attitudes, motivation and anxiety towards English language learning. *Journal of Research and Reflections in Education*, 2 (2), 121-144.
- Hutchinson, T. & Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A learner-centered approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- İgrek, E. (2013). *İçerik tabanlı yabancı dil öğretim yaklaşımının mesleki yabancı dil (İngilizce) derslerinde öğrencilerin akademik başarılarına etkisi*. (Unpublished master thesis). Gazi Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Ankara.
- İnal, S., Evin, İ. & Saracaloğlu, A. S. (2005) The relation between students' attitudes toward foreign language and foreign language achievement. *Language Journal*, 130, 37-52.
- Karahan, F. (2007). Language attitudes of Turkish students towards the English language and its use in Turkish context. *Journal of Arts and Sciences*, 7, 73-87.
- Karataş, H., Alçı, B., Bademcioğlu, M. & Ergin, A. (2016). Examining university students' attitudes towards learning English using different variables. *The International Journal of Educational Researchers*, 7 (2), 12-20.
- Kaygan, A. D. (2005). *Özel amaçlı İngilizce öğretiminde gereksinim çözümlemesi (Hava trafik terminolojisi eğitimi alan pilotlar ile alan çalışması)*. (Unpublished master thesis). Marmara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, İstanbul.
- Kazazoğlu, S. (2013). İngilizce ve Türkçe derslerine yönelik tutumun akademik başarıya etkisi. *Eğitim ve Bilim*, 38 (170), 294-307.

- Kiziltan, N., & Atli, I. (2013). Turkish young language learners' attitudes towards English. *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 28 (2), 266-278.
- Kline, R. B. (2005). *Principles and practice of structural equation modeling*. NY: Guilford Publications, Inc.
- Özer, S. (2016). *Düşünme stillerine göre farklılaştırılmış öğretim etkinliklerinin öğrencilerin erişilerine, mesleki yabancı dil dersine yönelik tutumlarına ve öğrenilenlerin kalıcılığına etkisi*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Konya.
- Prodromou, L. (1992). What culture? Which culture? Cross-cultural factors in language learning. *ELT Journal*, 46 (1), 39-50.
- Richards, J. (2001). *Curriculum development in language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sabuncuoğlu, A. (2010). *Meslek liselerinde özel amaçlı İngilizce öğretimine yönelik gereksinim çözümlemesi uygulaması*. (Unpublished master thesis). Ankara Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Ankara.
- Saracaloğlu, A. S. & Varol, S. R. (2007). Beden eğitimi öğretmeni adaylarının yabancı dile yönelik tutumları ve akademik benlik tasarımları ile yabancı dil başarıları arasındaki ilişki. *Eğitimde Kuram ve Uygulama*, 3 (1), 39-59.
- Sert, S. (2012). *A case study on improving reading strategies of Turkish ESP learners*. (Unpublished master thesis). Mersin Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Mersin.
- Sezer, S. (2004). *An investigation of occupational English language needs of Turkish police officers*. (Unpublished master thesis). Bilkent University the Institute of Economics and Social Science, Ankara.
- Soleimani, H., & Hanafi, S. (2013). Iranian medical students' attitudes towards English language learning. *International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences*, 4 (12), 3816-3823.
- Sümer, N. (2000). Yapısal eşitlik modelleri: Temel kavramlar ve örnek uygulamalar. *Türk Psikoloji Yazıları*, 3 (6), 49-74.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics (5th ed.)*. New York: Allyn and Bacon.
- Tetik, N. (2016). Tourism guidance students' attitudes towards the English language course. *International Journal of Education and Research*, 4 (3): 271-284.
- Veziroğlu, F. N. (2013). *The ways of increasing students' participation level in business English classes: Integrating multiple intelligence theory into teaching and using literature*. (Unpublished master thesis). Çağ University Institute of Social Sciences, Mersin.