

An Evaluation of Speaking Portfolio Tasks at English Preparatory Level*

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Abstract

As an alternative method of assessment, portfolios have been implemented commonly in most instructional settings. However, there is a lack of research which demonstrate the views of students regarding portfolio based speaking assessment. Hence, this paper aims at measuring students' views on the use of speaking portfolio assessment in a preparatory English department at a state university. A questionnaire adapted from the questionnaires of Pintrich and De Groot (1990), Egel (2003) Özdemir Çağatay (2012) was administered to 289 students at the end of the module. The Likert type questionnaire includes the following subheadings: learner autonomy, skill development, self-confidence, challenges and self-efficacy. Data were analysed with SPSS 23 program. The results indicate the positive effects of portfolio based speaking assessment on different dimensions and present the variables which correlate with each other.

Keywords: Portfolio, Speaking Assessment, Alternative Assessment, Learner Autonomy, Self-Efficacy, Self-Confidence.

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İngilizce Hazırlık Düzeyinde Konuşma Portfolyosu Ödevlerinin Değerlendirilmesi

Öz

Alternatif bir değerlendirme yöntemi olarak, portfolyolar birçok üniversitede yaygın olarak uygulanmaktadır. Ancak, öğrencilerin portfolyo temelli konuşma değerlendirmesine ilişkin görüşlerini gösteren çok fazla çalışma yoktur. Bu nedenle, bu makale bir devlet üniversitesindeki bir İngilizce hazırlık programındaki öğrencilerin konuşma portfolyosu değerlendirmesinin kullanımı hakkındaki görüşlerini ölçmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Bir eğitim-öğretim yılında, üç farklı modülden rastgele seçilen öğrencilerin konuşma portfolyosu görevlerine ilişkin görüşleri alınmıştır. Modülün sonunda 289 öğrenciye Pintrich ve De Groot (1990), Egel (2003) ve Özdemir-Çağatay (2012)'in anketlerinden uyarlanmış bir anket formu uygulanmıştır. Likert tipi olan anket şu alt başlıkları içermektedir: öğrenen özerkliği, beceri geliştirme, özgüven, zorluklar ve öz yeterlilik. Veriler SPSS 23 programı ile analiz edilmiştir. Sonuçlar portfolyo temelli konuşma değerlendirmesinin farklı boyutlar üzerindeki olumlu etkilerini göstermektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Portfolyo, Konuşma Değerlendirmesi, Alternatif Değerlendirme, Öğrenen Özerkliği, Özyeterlilik, Özgüven.

1. Introduction

Teaching and assessment are inseparable components of formal education as testing and teaching always go hand in hand. Throughout years, various kinds of assessment methods have been adapted. While traditional assessment methods have been used to evaluate students' performance, students do not produce language in that kind of assessment. According to Nasab (2015), "in traditional selected-response assessments, students do not generate any language. Thus, these tests are most often used to measure receptive skills" (p.171). Alan and Pierson (2000) pointed to the importance of shifting to learner directed assessment from traditional assessment.

Recently, there has been a transition in testing practises from "decontextualized, atomic" test to "authentic and contextualized" ones. (Kulieke et al, 1990, p.5). Segers et al (2003) interpret this change as such: "it refers to the shift from the so-called objective tests with item formats such as short answer, fill-in blank, multiple-choice and true/false to the use of portfolio assessment, project based assessment, performance assessment, etc." (p.3) and therefore, "when traditional assessment fails to measure students' learning processes effectively, there is a need for new types of assessment" (Chang et al, 2005, p.30).

Alternative assessment is actually a concept that has been on the agenda of educators for decades. Ancess and Darling-Hammond (1994) suggested the necessity of using the alternative assessment methods more than two decades ago. They offered "performance assessments" in terms of traditional assessment methods (p.15). Whereas Reeves (2000) subdivided alternative assessment methods as; "performance or authentic assessment and, portfolio assessment", Erickson (2001) categorized them as "standard-based assessments, performance assessments, portfolio assessments, and authentic assessments".

What is more, studies about alternative assessment methods implies that their positive effects might surpass the advantages of traditional assessment types. Nasab (2015) summarizes the advantages of alternative assessment that the other researchers stated in their works as follows:

"evaluating the process and the product of learning besides other important learning behaviours, evaluating and scrutinizing instruction, producing momentous results to various stakeholders, providing a connection to cognitive psychology and other related fields, adopting a collaborative approach to learning, providing support for students' psychology, endorsing autonomous learning" (p.173).

Hence, the advantages of alternative assessment methods in language teaching give clues about the possible outcomes of using alternative assessment methods.

1.1. The definition of portfolio

A number of scholars presented definitions for portfolio use and most of them display similar characteristics. Whereas Segers et al (2003) define portfolio as “a purposeful collection of examples of learning collected over a period of time, and gives visible and detailed evidence of a person’s attainment of competences” (p.36), Paulson and Meyer (1991) defined portfolio as “a purposeful collection of students’ work that exhibits the student’s efforts, progress and achievements in one or more areas” (1991, p.60). Despite the fact that the word portfolio only refers to a folder in many cases, it is “separate and different from the students’ cumulative folder.” (Paulson, Meyer, 1991, p.62) Johnson, Mims-Cox, and Doyle-Nichols (2010) claims that portfolios “can be organized to assess competencies in a given standard, goal, or objective” (p. 5). Hamp-Lyons and Condon (2000) state that “they cannot simply be an indiscriminated collection of everything the student produced” (p. 120). It can be understood from various definitions of portfolio that it is process-based, and presents the development of learners over time, and has an educational purpose.

1.2. Advantages of portfolio use

Brown (1998) is in favour of using alternative assessment methods and specially portfolio assessment. He summarizes the advantages of portfolios as follows: “It applies records of L2 learners’ work over time and in different modes to demonstrate the profundity and progress of L2 learners’ abilities. It is a collection of L2 learners’ work which is purposeful and systematic and reflects learning achievement” (p.102). Irimia (2016) further states the advantages of portfolio studies and oral presentations as: “working individually provides learners with autonomy and privacy, training them to work independently, while working in groups encourages teamwork” (p. 244).

Portfolio based assessment is based on student centred learning environment and this learning atmosphere supports the autonomy of the students. According to Neamtipur (2001), “in order to contribute to the development of learner centred education in language classrooms, it’s vital that students be involved in taking control of their own learning” (p.126) as they make students assume more responsibility for preparing a remarkable end product. Hence, they give them to opportunity to decide which pieces of work should be included in their portfolio and evaluated.

There are a number of studies about learner autonomy of students in EFL classes. As the concerns about process-oriented assessment types increase, their suitability to give the learners the chance to be free has been noticed. In that sense, portfolio studies and learner autonomy cannot be thought separately from each other. The fact that portfolio studies encourage self-learning and promote learner autonomy has been explained by different scholars. “foster intrinsic motivation and responsibility, individualize learning, provide tangible evidence of a student’s work, offer opportunities for collaborative work with peers and facilitate critical thinking” (Brown, 2004, p.257). Students see their weak sides and try to take the necessary steps to cover their deficiencies. Therefore, portfolio does not only help the students to learn independently but it also “serves as a means for critical self-analysis,” (Demirel, 2014, p.2636). Using portfolio as an assessment tool enables learners to be aware of their improvements and solutions to deal with the possible problems. Therefore, it becomes a “diagnostic tool” which contributes them to be” independent learners” (Barootchi & Keshavarz 2002, p.281). According to Battidi, stated in Tezci & Dikici (2006) “this type of assessment has the ability to offer teaching and testing simultaneously, enhance L2 learners’ self-reflection and awareness, make them independent L2 learners, and promote cooperation among L2 learners and teachers” (p.4).

Little (2015) further states that “compiling their portfolio is ... a key constituent of reflective learning” (p.323). It helps their “self-reflection and self-evaluation skill.” Bahous (2008) states that “the portfolio both informs and persuades while documenting student learning in areas that do not lend themselves to traditional assessment such as skills of self-evaluation and reflection” (p.383). In that learning environment, the role of

the teacher also changes. According to Minstrell (2001), “the responsibility of teacher then is no longer to teach, but rather “be responsible for students’ learning” (p. 122).

CEFR specifies common standards for foreign language teaching (Council of Europe 2001a, 2001b, p.39). It envisions the teaching of four skills different from the traditional way. The role of teachers and students and the methods which are used for teaching change. Students become more active, and new methods are applied for learning. As a result of these changes, alternative assessment methods are used in CEFR. Portfolio studies constitute the centre of this new assessment methods which focus on the process. CEFR requires the assessment of each skill in a holistic manner. Therefore, speaking skill is also assessed in portfolio-based assessment.

2. Literature Review

In EFL literature, portfolios receive considerable attention in foreign language teaching literature. Different studies show the positive effects of portfolio studies on students’ language learning. A study conducted on Iranian EFL learners to determine the effects of portfolio and peer assessments on students. Although there is no major difference between two groups, it was concluded that “portfolio and peer assessment are accompanying tools for students’ engagement and empowerment which should be used along with teacher assessment” (Yaghoubi, 2015, p.2509). In the study of Nosratinia & Abdi (2017), the autonomy and anxiety levels of two groups were compared. The portfolio group was instructed based on the Classroom Portfolio Model while in the summative assessment group, the common traditional summative assessment approach was implemented. The results of the study showed the positive effects of portfolio studies on learners’ autonomy, writing skills and anxiety levels (p.831).

Abhakorn (2014)’s study examined the effects of portfolios on students’ metacognitive skills. The results gained from the participants which are divided as control and experimental groups show that “student’s metacognitive beliefs and strategies can be accessed through a written portfolio” (p.52).

Dynamic assessment and constructivist learning theory can be linked with portfolio-based assessment as both of them takes the students in the centre of education. Dynamic assessment focuses on students’ development by examining “what a learner is capable of doing independently and what becomes possible with assistance from a teacher (ZPD) (Davín, 2013, p.304). Constructivist learning theory presents a learning environment that cares the needs of the students. “If learning is individualistic (cognitive constructivism), the teacher has to know about the student’s personal information to provide suitable learning data. If learning is a social phenomenon (social constructivism), primarily the teacher himself has to interact, and next they have to find ways of making interaction among the learners, and this solely depends on a teacher’s reflection of their learners and their own teaching (Mahmud, 2013, p.243). Vygotsky thinks that effective “authentic activities”, or “those that involve applying learned knowledge and skills to complete real-world tasks within a meaningful cultural context” (Chen, 2007, p.54). At that point, speaking portfolio assignments can serve for this purpose. Role plays, discussions, individual presentations in the class or video recording assignments can be good facilitator for students to be more confident, learn independently and to get speaking skills.

2.1. Purpose of the study

There is some criticism about the language teaching in Turkey. There are not many studies which demonstrate the views of students and instructors regarding to skill assessment. According to Üstünoğlu (2009), “Because of the policies of Higher Education Institution and Ministry of Education, English teaching is exam oriented, aiming at training students for proficiency exams and focusing on grammar use, reading comprehension and writing skills” (p.152). There are not many studies which demonstrate the views of students and instructors regarding to portfolio based speaking assessment. Hence, in this study, the usage of portfolio studies in one of preparatory program of state university was examined.

Within the scope of the study, the following research questions have been formulated:

1. What are learners' views on the use of speaking portfolios in terms of (a) self-confidence, (b) learner autonomy, (c) skill development, (d) challenges, and (e) self-efficacy levels?
2. What is the level of correlation among the variables following sub-dimensions, namely (a) self-confidence, (b) learner autonomy, (c) skill development, (d) challenges, and (e) self-efficacy levels?

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The present study was conducted with 289 participants. Information about the participants is given in Table 1. According to Table 1, 32.5% (f = 94) of the 289 participants of the study are female and 67.5% (f = 195) are male. When the distribution of the students according to their ages is examined, it can be seen that 44.3% (f=128) of them are either 18 or under 18 years old, 28% (f=81) of the students are 19 years old, 15,2% (f=44) of them are 20, 12,5% (f=36) of them are above 21. 46.4% (f = 134) of the students included in the survey were in A1 module, 28.0% (f = 81) in A2 and 25.6% (f = 74) in B1 module. Based on participants' departments, we can see that 17,0% (f = 49) of the students study at Electrical and Electronical Engineering, 10,0% (f = 29) Automotive Engineering, 20,1% (f = 58) study at English Language and Literature, 9,0% (f = 26) Computer Engineering, 6,9% (f = 20) Biomedical Engineering, 10,0% (f = 29) Mechanical Engineering and 11,8% (f = 34) Applied English and Interpreting, and finally 11,8% (f = 34) are enrolled in the Departments called Other (Mechatronic Engineering, Medical Engineering, Rail Systems Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Industrial Product Design).

Table 1.

Frequency and percentage distributions of demographic characteristics of the students included in the survey (n = 289)

Variables	Groups	f	%
Gender	Female	94	32.5
	Male	195	67.5
Age	≥18	128	44.3
	19	81	28.0
	20	44	15.2
	≥21	36	12.5
Module	A1	134	46.4
	A2	81	28.0
	B1	74	25.6
Department	Electrical Engineering	49	17.0
	Automotive Engineering	29	10.0
	English Language and Literature	58	20.1
	Computer Engineering	26	9.0
	Biomedical Engineering	20	6.9
	Mechanical Engineering	29	10.0
	Applied English-Turkish Translation	34	11.8
	Others	44	15.2

3.2. Instrument

A Likert type questionnaire adapted from the self-efficacy questionnaire of Pintrich and De Groot (1990) autonomy learner questionnaire enhanced by Egel (2003) and a questionnaire developed by Çağatay (2012) was applied to 289 students from different genders and modules. The students were monitored by the instructors and mentored on necessary conditions when they responded the questionnaire. The participants were randomly selected since “the random selection of individuals in large numbers gives a reasonable assurance that the sample represents the population accurately” (Sapsford & Jupp, 1996, p.103). However, the questionnaire was aimed to be carried out on the close number of the students on each module to provide a homogenous distribution among the students.

The questionnaire was composed of demographic information (age and gender) of the students, the departments, and the module which the learners study. Totally 31 questions were categorized to subdimensions (speaking skills, learner autonomy, self-confidence, self-efficacy, challenges) and presented as Likert type items.

Table 2.

Findings of reliability analysis

	Number of questions	Reliability Coefficient (α)
Speaking Portfolio Assessment	36 items	0,962
Learner Autonomy	8 items	0,913
Skill Development	12 items	0,969
Self Confidence	5 items	0,927
Challenges	6 items	0,899
Self-Efficacy	5 items	0,894

According to the analysis results in Table 2; The reliability results of the scale used to determine the perspective of the students on the basic variables and sub-dimensions of speaking portfolio tasks used in language learning show that the scale is highly reliable with $\alpha = 0,962$. According to Cronbach's Alpha coefficients, reliability of the scale is higher than $\alpha = 0.70$ (Kayış, 2009).

3.3. Data analysis

The data obtained from the study were analysed using the "SPSS 23 for Windows" package program. In this framework, frequency analysis was conducted in the first stage to determine the demographic and descriptive information of the participants. In the second phase of the study, arithmetic mean and standard deviation values of the expressions related to the scales were analysed. In studies, it is generally envisaged to use parametric tests in comparisons between the quantitative variables, either within themselves or in groups (to provide 95% confidence level). As is known, the pre-requisites to use parametric tests are as follows: Quantitative data, normal distribution, homogeneity, random sample selection, independence of the samples and sample size have to be at least 30 and over (Ural and Kilic, 2013, p.81).

In the third phase of the study, to determine the relationship between variables, Spearman's rho correlation test, applied. In this context, the level of the relationship between the variables is characterized as "very weak" if the correlation coefficient is in the range of 0,00-0,25, "very weak" for 0,26-0,49, "weak" , for "0,50-0.69 "medium" for 70-0,89 "high" and "very high" for 0,90-1,00. Spearman's rho correlation is also between -1 and +1, like the Person correlation coefficient. As the correlation coefficient approaches + 1, it can be said that there is a strong positive correlation between the variables and when the correlation coefficient approaches -1, there is a strong negative correlation.

4. Findings

This part presents the findings of the study in a descriptive manner first and then focuses on the correlation analysis.

Research question 1: What are learners' views on the use of speaking portfolios in terms of (a) self-confidence, (b) learner autonomy, (c) skill development, (d) challenges, and (e) self-efficacy levels?

Table 3.

Findings regarding learner autonomy

Statements	Frequency Level					M	SD	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)			
I believe in myself to do best in speaking portfolio assignments.	f	28	43	67	115	36	3.30	1.16
	%	9.7	14.9	23.2	39.8	12.5		
I anticipate doing better than the other students in class in speaking portfolio assignments.	f	32	45	80	98	34	3.20	1.17
	%	11.1	15.6	27.7	33.9	11.8		
I can comprehend the instructions about the speaking portfolio assignments without any help or more teacher guidance.	f	34	49	70	91	45	3.22	1.24
	%	11.8	17.0	24.2	31.5	15.6		
Compared to the other students in the class, I am better at using the oral production patterns that are taught in the class.	f	33	58	103	60	35	3.02	1.16
	%	11.4	20.1	35.6	20.8	12.1		
I can handle the problems while preparing for the speaking portfolio task.	f	29	30	52	114	64	3.53	1.22
	%	10.0	10.4	18.0	39.4	22.1		
I am the decision maker during the process of speaking portfolio preparation.	f	35	30	60	112	52	3.40	1.24
	%	12.1	10.4	20.8	38.8	18.0		
Despite the misunderstandings or unclear points in assigning the speaking portfolio tasks, I am able to comprehend by myself.	f	38	43	76	94	38	3.18	1.22
	%	13.1	14.9	26.3	32.5	13.1		
I am the only responsible person about the any misunderstood points parts about speaking portfolio tasks.	f	69	64	64	62	30	2.72	1.32
	%	23.9	22.1	22.1	21.5	10.4		
General							3.20	0.961

(1): Strongly Disagree, (2): Disagree, (3): Undecided, (4): Agree, (5) Strongly Agree

In Table 3, when the arithmetic average values are examined, it is detected that the general average value of this dimension corresponds to the "undecided" option (M= 3, 20). This value indicates that the students have a moderate attitude towards the learner autonomy dimension. The participants agreed moderately to the statement "I believe in myself that I will do my best in Speaking portfolio assignments." with the average of M=3, 30. About the learner autonomy dimension, participants with M = 2.72 average value stated that the only responsible person for the points that were misunderstood in speaking portfolio assignments were not themselves. After the first two speaking portfolio assignments are set, most of the intermediate level students think while preparing their tasks, they learnt to organize dialogue/speech /opinions. They took responsibility for their learning to some extent and admitted their mistakes about pronunciation, content etc. However, they sometimes criticized the module system, the topic, and the length of the presentations and did not take the whole responsibility for their failures or mistakes. The quantitative data obtained from questionnaire and the qualitative data of the students' ideas before and after the tasks might show that students are eager to present something in English. However, they are not sure about deciding the reason of their mistakes. Sometimes, they tend to find something or someone to accuse (system, administration, topic etc.).

Table 4.

Findings regarding skill development dimension

Statements	Frequency Level					M	SD	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)			
I am of the opinion that I will improve my speaking skills with the help of speaking portfolio tasks.	f	50	36	42	96	65	3.31	1.40
	%	17.3	12.5	14.5	33.2	22.5		
Thanks to speaking portfolio tasks, I can now follow my progress in speaking more easily.	f	44	42	63	92	48	3.20	1.30
	%	15.2	14.5	21.8	31.8	16.6		
Speaking portfolio assignments are good evaluation tools for speaking skills.	f	49	36	59	100	45	3.19	1.31
	%	17.0	12.5	20.4	34.6	15.6		
The speaking portfolio tasks in my speaking portfolio allowed me to demonstrate my speaking skill ability exactly as it is.	f	54	40	74	79	42	3.05	1.32
	%	18.7	13.8	25.6	27.3	14.5		
The speaking portfolio tasks contributed to my speaking skills.	f	50	40	66	85	48	3.14	1.33
	%	17.3	13.8	22.8	29.4	16.6		
The speaking portfolio tasks contributes to my speaking skills in terms of planning my talk.	f	40	31	46	110	62	3.42	1.31
	%	13.8	10.7	15.9	38.1	21.5		
The speaking portfolio tasks contributes to my speaking skills in terms of stress.	f	51	36	67	82	53	3.17	1.35
	%	17.6	12.5	23.2	28.4	18.3		
The speaking portfolio tasks contributes to my speaking skills in terms intonation.	f	50	38	65	82	54	3.18	1.35
	%	17.3	13.1	22.5	28.4	18.7		
The speaking portfolio tasks contributes to my speaking skills in terms of vocabulary.	f	43	32	43	107	64	3.40	1.34
	%	14.9	11.1	14.9	37.0	22.1		
The speaking portfolio tasks contributes to my speaking skills in terms of grammar.	f	46	32	68	78	65	3.29	1.35
	%	15.9	11.1	23.5	27.0	22.5		
I would like to have speaking portfolio assignments in the upcoming modules.	f	85	47	51	54	52	2.79	1.48
	%	29.4	16.3	17.6	18.7	18.0		
I am of the opinion that the speaking portfolio assignments to be given in the upcoming modules will help improve my speaking skills.	f	59	39	60	72	59	3.11	1.41
	%	20.4	13.5	20.8	24.9	20.4		
General							3.19	1.17

(1): Strongly Disagree, (2): Disagree, (3): Undecided, (4): Agree, (5) Strongly Agree

In Table 4, the statistical values show that the participants are of the opinion that the speaking portfolio assignment contributed to “skill development” in language learning with the M= 3, 19 value on the moderate level. Participants partially agree on the statement that their speaking skills will improve with the help of speaking portfolio assignments with M=3,31 average level.

The participants think that the improvement of speaking skills could be followed much more easily thanks to the speaking portfolio assignments on a moderate level with M=3,20 average value. Also, participants note that speaking portfolio assignments contribute to speaking skills partially with M = 3.14 average value. More specifically, the participants point out that speaking portfolios mostly contribute to speaking skills in the category of “planning my talk” in a moderate level(M=3,42). The participants agreed that the speaking portfolio assignments contributed to their speaking skills on the average level in terms of "vocabulary " (M=3,40), grammar (M=3,29) "intonation ",” (M=3,18), and “stress.”. (M=3, 17) Finally, the participants declared that they did not agree on the statement: “I would like to have the speaking portfolio assignments in the upcoming modules” with an average value of 2.79.

After the first two speaking portfolio assignments are set, most of the beginner level students stated that “I understood that I was not able to speak English. Therefore, now I study more.” They also see the portfolios as the best assessment type to test their speaking skills in terms of pronunciation.

With these results, it can be maintained that speaking portfolio tasks have affected the students ‘speaking skills in a positive way. Students ‘vocabulary and grammar knowledge was developed and portfolio tasks contributed to metacognitive skills as well as they learnt to organize their talk without teacher help. However, their motivation to perform speaking portfolio tasks for the upcoming terms were really low. It might be because of students ‘bad experiences in preparation or presentation process. Their unwillingness can be because of their adaptation problem to system of preparatory school, grading, or their lack of experience in high school.

Table 5.

Findings regarding to self-confidence dimension

Statements		Frequency Level					M	SD
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)		
Speaking portfolio tasks enabled me to gain self confidence in speaking English.	f	48	46	67	92	36	3.07	1.28
	%	16.6	15.9	23.2	31.8	12.5		
Speaking portfolio tasks allowed me to overcome my stress and anxiety about public speech.	f	58	41	71	80	39	3.0	1.32
	%	20.1	14.2	24.6	37.7	13.5		
I think speaking portfolio tasks should be assigned frequently.	f	94	59	66	35	35	2.50	1.36
	%	32.5	20.4	22.8	12.1	12.1		
Speaking portfolio task helped me to learn talking before the audiences and gaining self-confidence.	f	55	40	73	83	38	3.03	1.31
	%	19.0	13.8	25.3	28.7	13.1		
It is not a problem if students are assigned speaking portfolio tasks periodically.	f	53	47	67	86	36	3.02	1.30
	%	18.3	16.3	23.2	29.8	12.5		
General							2.92	1.15

(1): Strongly Disagree, (2): Disagree, (3): Undecided, (4): Agree, (5) Strongly Agree

In Table 5, when the arithmetic average values are examined, the general average value of this dimension corresponds to the "I do not agree" or "undecided" option (M= 2.92).

Speakers expressed their indecisiveness about the statements: “Speaking portfolio task helped me to learn talking before the audiences and gaining self-confidence.” (M=3.03) and speaking portfolio tasks enabled me to gain self confidence in speaking English” (M=3.07). However, it was detected that participants did not agree on the statement “Speaking portfolio assignments should be given frequently” with an average value of (M=2.50). After the ideas of beginner level students are asked about the first two speaking portfolio assignments, most of them were of the opinion that speaking portfolio assignments were the good facilitators for learners. When they realized that they were able to speak, they became more self-confident and this situation motivated them to study more for the upcoming speaking portfolio assignments. Students’ indecisiveness about the quantitative data may stem from the fact that they had not had any experience about the assessment of their speaking skills in high school. When the students were asked about presentations, they said that their lack of experience in high school caused them to be unconfident in speaking in English. Therefore, they got nervous when they perform their speaking portfolio assignments before their classmates.

Table 6.

Findings regarding challenges dimension

Statements	Frequency Level					M	SD	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)			
Time limit made the speaking portfolio tasks more difficult.	f	30	49	53	72	85	3.46	1.34
	%	10.4	17.0	18.3	24.9	29.4		
Being recorded while presenting the Speaking portfolio tasks was a big problem (makes us anxious and nervous)	f	34	54	52	83	66	3.32	1.33
	%	11.8	18.7	18.0	28.7	22.8		
Technical things (video recording etc.) made the speaking tasks more challenging)	f	29	50	57	78	75	3.41	1.30
	%	10.0	17.3	19.7	27.0	26.0		
I had difficulty in time management during the speaking portfolio tasks.	f	39	49	62	75	64	3.26	1.33
	%	13.5	17.0	21.5	26.0	22.1		
Group work in speaking portfolio tasks made the preparation process longer.	f	36	59	69	61	64	3.20	1.32
	%	12.5	20.4	23.9	21.1	22.1		
I made a lot of effort in preparing Speaking portfolio assignments.	f	27	32	66	94	70	3.51	1.23
	%	9.3	11.1	22.8	32.5	24.2		
General							3.36	1.07

(1): Strongly Disagree, (2): Disagree, (3): Undecided, (4): Agree, (5) Strongly Agree

In Table 6, with the average score of M=3, 36, the participants stated that speaking portfolio assignments contributed to the sub dimension of challenges on a moderate level. Particularly, participants agreed on the statement that they made a lot of effort in preparing speaking portfolio assignments with an average value of M= 3, 51. Participants agreed that the time limit made speaking portfolio assignments more difficult, with an average of M=3.46. Finally, the participant partially agreed on the statement that the group work in speaking portfolio assignments (role play, discussions, etc.) extended the preparation process with the average value of M=3,20.

After the ideas of beginner level students were asked about the first two speaking portfolio assignments, most of them claimed that to be able to present something in another language before their classmates and teachers was really difficult and challenging but that challenge was beneficial for their improvement despite the fact that they got nervous before the presentation. The difficulties that intermediate level students had were similar to the ones of beginner level students. However, most of the students maintained that time limit was a big problem for them as most of the time they exceeded the time limit and preparation process lasted for a long time. They further stated that one of the tasks which required the students to record a video was really demanding as the technical process made the preparation process longer. Moreover, they stated that video recording assignments were suitable for cheating as some of the students only read the text while talking or they just memorized the text. Therefore, they thought in class presentations were more effective in assessing speaking skill though time limit or technical problems could be problems.

Table 7.

Findings regarding self-efficacy dimension

Statements	Frequency Level					M	SD	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)			
It wasn't difficult for me to deal with problems while presenting and preparing speaking portfolio assignments.	f	44	36	88	90	31	3.10	1.21
	%	15.2	12.5	30.4	31.1	10.7		
I didn't get into panic easily while solving the problems about speaking portfolio assignments.	f	46	52	78	85	28	3.00	1.23
	%	15.9	18.0	27.0	29.4	9.7		
I am more aware of my weak sides in English after speaking portfolio tasks.	f	40	38	76	90	45	3.21	1.25
	%	13.8	13.1	26.3	31.1	15.6		
I know how to improve my weak sides in speaking by myself.	f	46	42	85	86	30	3.04	1.22
	%	15.9	14.5	29.4	29.8	10.4		
I plan to take the necessary steps to overcome the deficiencies that I detected in my speaking.	f	37	23	61	105	63	3.46	1.27
	%	12.8	8.0	21.1	36.3	21.8		
General							3.16	1.04

(1): Strongly Disagree, (2): Disagree, (3): Undecided, (4): Agree, (5) Strongly Agree

In Table 7, statistical values show that the participants think that the speaking portfolio given in language learning contributed to their self-efficacy with an average value of $M= 3.16$ on moderate level. Particularly, participants improved their positive thinking towards the expression "I plan to take the necessary steps to overcome the deficiencies that I detected in my speaking." with a mean value of $M=3, 46$. Students partially agreed on the statement "I am more aware of my weak sides in English after speaking portfolio tasks" with $M= 3.21$ average value. They stated their indecisiveness about the statement "I didn't get into panic easily while solving the problems about speaking portfolio assignments" with the average value of $M=3, 00$. According to the results, it can be stated that students are ready to overcome their deficiencies. In that sense, it is possible to claim that students admit they learn something about speaking from the tasks.

Research question 2: What is the level of correlation among the variables following sub-dimensions, namely(a) self-confidence, (b) learner autonomy, (c) skill development, (d) challenges, and (e) self-efficacy levels?

It has been determined that the p values are less than 0.05 as a result of the tests conducted to see whether the data show normal distribution (Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test). Also, it was detected that number of samples used in the research is low. For this reason, nonparametric tests were used in the statistical analysis of the study. Spearman's rho correlation test was used to reach the research purpose. In this part of the research, the relationship between the basic variables and sub-dimensions of the speaking portfolio assignments used in language learning is examined.

Table 8.

Correlation analysis for basic variables and dimensions of speaking portfolio assignments

Spearman's Rho Correlation	Speaking Portfolio Assessment	Learner Autonomy	Skill Development	Self Confidence	Challenges	Self-efficacy
SpeakingPortfolio Assessment	r	.710**	.930**	.845**	.254**	.804**
	p	1	0.000**	0.000**	0.000**	0.000**
Learner Autonomy	r	.710**	.539**	.496**	.259**	.503**
	p	0.000**	1	0.000**	0.000**	0.000**
Skill Development	r	.930**	.539**	.812**	.083	.731**
	p	0.000**	0.000**	1	0.000**	0.000**
Self Confidence	r	.845**	.496**	.812**	-.013	.736**
	p	0.000**	0.000**	0.000**	1	0.000**
Challenges	r	.254**	.259**	.083	-.013	.056
	p	0.013*	0.000**	0.159	.822	1
Self-efficacy	r	.804**	.503**	.731**	.736**	.056
	p	0.000**	0.000**	0.000**	0.000**	.343

**p<0.05

When the correlation coefficients in Table 8 were examined, it was determined that the sub-dimensions of the basic variables related to speaking portfolio assignments were significantly correlated at the level of significance of 0.05. In other words, the coefficients of correlation between the variables were found to be significant. (p<0,005). When the sub-dimensions of the basic variables related to speaking portfolio assignments were examined, there was no significant difference between the dimensions of the challenge dimension (p: 0,159> 0,005), self-confidence (p: 0,822> 0,005) and self-efficacy (p: 0,343> 0,005). There was a high positive correlation between the basic variables of speaking portfolio assignments and learner autonomy (r = 0,710), self-confidence (r = 0,845) and self-efficacy subscale (r = 0,804). There was a significant positive relationship between the basic variables of the portfolio projects and the skill development (r = 0,930) subscale, and a weak positive correlation with the challenge (r = 0,254) subscale. A positive moderate relationship was found between the skill development sub-dimension of the basic variables of speaking portfolio assignments and the learner autonomy sub-dimension (r = 539). The self-confidence subscale and the learner autonomy subscale (r = 0,496) were positively correlated on a low level. When we examined the relationship between the self-efficacy subscale and the learner autonomy subscale (r = 503), it appeared that there was a moderately positive relationship between the two dimensions. Finally, it was found that there was a strong positive correlation between skill development subscale and self-confidence, (r = 0,812) self-efficacy (r=0,731) and self-confidence subscale (r=0, 736).

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The present study has been conducted to investigate students' views on the use of speaking portfolios, an important component of dynamic assessment, at tertiary level. In the present study, speaking portfolios were investigated in terms of learner autonomy, their contribution to skill development, self-confidence, language learning challenges, and self-efficacy. In addition, the correlation between and among these variables was also examined.

In relation to learner autonomy variable, the study found that a moderate number of students believe in the use of speaking portfolios in developing learner autonomy. The participants thought that they believed that

they could do their best in speaking assignments. In addition, as the term progressed and students were exposed to several portfolio assignments, they started to think that while preparing their tasks, they learnt to organize their ideas better, and that they assumed more responsibility for their learning to some extent and admitted their mistakes about pronunciation.

The second dimension that was investigated in relation to speaking portfolios was skill development dimension. The results indicated that the participants are of the opinion that the speaking portfolio assignment contributed to skill development in language learning at a moderate level. A number of participants stated that speaking portfolios facilitated the improvement of speaking skills. Students vocabulary and grammar knowledge also developed, and portfolio tasks contributed to metacognitive skills as well as they learnt to organize their talk without teacher help.

When it comes to self-confidence dimensions, the results indicated that the participants have doubts about the contribution of speaking portfolios to self-confidence. This is attributed to the level of students because when the participants realized that they were able to speak, they became more self-confident and this motivated them to study more students' indecisiveness about the quantitative data may stem from the fact that they had not had any experience about the assessment of their speaking skills in high school. When the students were asked about presentations, they said that their lack of experience in high school caused them to be unconfident in speaking in English.

Another dimension was language learning challenges dimension. Similarly, the results indicated that speaking portfolios moderately contributed to overcoming challenges in language learning. The participant reported that group works in speaking portfolio assignments extended the preparation process and helped them overcome stress. The difficulties that intermediate level students had were similar to the ones of beginner level students. However, most of the students maintained that time limit was a big problem for them as most of the time they exceeded the time limit and preparation process lasted for a long time. They thought class presentations were more effective in assessing speaking skill though time limit or technical problems could be problems.

Finally, the last variable studied in relation to speaking portfolios was self-efficacy. Findings demonstrated that speaking portfolios contribute to self-efficacy development of students. The participants made particular progress in planning to take the necessary steps to overcome the deficiencies that they detected in their speaking. Therefore, it can be said that speaking portfolios contribute to learner autonomy, their contribution to skill development, self-confidence, language learning challenges, and self-efficacy at varying levels.

The findings of the present study corroborate with studies in literature. For example, Safari and Koosha (2016) found a strong relationship between students speaking skill development and speaking portfolio use. This study, similar to the present study, also found that speaking portfolios also contributed to learner autonomy and proficiency level in general. In the end, the authors concluded that speaking portfolios was a viable method for alternative assessment. In another study conducted in Turkish context, Erden Burnaz (2011) came up with promising results regarding portfolios. Erden Burnaz (2011) found that portfolios were preferred by students on the basis of the fact that they enable them to overcome time pressures and promote learner autonomy. Similar results were also reported by the participants in the present study.

Another aim of the study was to see the correlation among the variables. High positive correlation was observed among the variables. There was a high positive correlation between the basic variables of speaking portfolio assignments and learner autonomy, self-confidence, and self-efficacy. There was a significant positive relationship between the basic variables of the portfolio projects and the skill development, and a weak positive correlation with the challenge subscale. A positive moderate relationship was found between the skill development sub-dimension of the basic variables of speaking portfolio assignments and the learner autonomy sub-dimension. There was a moderately positive relationship between self-efficacy and learner

autonomy. Finally, it was found that there was a strong positive correlation between skill development and self-confidence, self-efficacy and self-confidence subscale. The high correlation of the dimensions of speaking portfolio questionnaire implies the effectiveness of speaking portfolios on students' learner autonomy, self-efficacy, self-confidence and skill development.

As is known, the fundamental idea underlying dynamic assessment is that a static evaluation of a child's existing knowledge may fail to unearth the potential of that student. Dynamic assessment requires the concurrent implementation of instruction and assessment so as to promote learners' development through continuous guidance (Lantolf & Poehner, 2004; Lidz & Gindis, 2003). Therefore, future studies can focus on longitudinal analysis of mediating prompts and assistance from the teacher (ZPD) can contribute to learners' development.

Another important point that merits attention as regards speaking is that speaking skill is inherently difficult to assess. And probable challenges in assessing speaking arise from the subjectivity of the assessment of anxiety on the part of learners. Such problems can be overcome through speaking portfolios.

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