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**THE APPLICATION OF E-PORTFOLIO IN SPEAKING
ASSESSMENT AND ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO STUDENTS'
ATTITUDES TOWARDS SPEAKING**

THESIS BY

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ÖZET

KONUŞMA DEĞERLENDİRİLMESİNDE ELEKTRONİK PORTFOLYONUN KULLANILMASI VE BUNUN ÖĞRENCİLERİN KONUŞMAYA KARŞI OLAN TUTUMLARINA KATKILARI

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Elektronik portfolyo yabancı dil öğretiminde ve değerlendirilmesinde özellikle yazma becerilerinin öğretimi ve değerlendirilmesinde kullanılmaktadır. Elektronik portfolyo, öğrencilerin kendi oluşturdukları ürünleri değerlendirmelerini, öğretmenlerden gelen geri dönüte göre tekrar düzeltmelerini, kişisel gelişimlerini takip etmelerini ve kendi öğrenmelerini organize etmelerini sağlayarak öğrencilerin yazma becerilerini geliştirir. Konuşma becerisi yapısal olarak yazma becerisinden farklı olsa da her iki beceride üretici beceriler olarak adlandırılmaktadır. Konuşma becerisi de yazma becerisi gibi değerlendirilebilir ve geliştirilebilir. Fakat elektronik portfolyo uygulaması daha çok yazma becerisinin değerlendirilmesinde kullanılırken konuşma becerisinin değerlendirilmesinde kullanılmamaktadır.

İşte belirtilen bu noktadan hareket ederek bu çalışmada elektronik portfolyonun konuşma becerisinin değerlendirilmesinde yazma becerisindeki gibi kullanılıp kullanılamayacağı, bu uygulamanın öğrencilerin konuşma becerisine karşı olan tutumlarına katkısının olup olmayacağı ve olacaksa ne gibi katkıları olacağı yanıtlanmaya çalışılmıştır. Çalışma, Zirve Üniversitesi İngilizce Hazırlık Bölümü, D Kurunda eğitim gören 17 öğrenci ile yürütülmüştür. Çalışma toplam 8 hafta sürmüştür. Veri toplama aracı olarak araştırmacı günlüğü, mülakat 1, mülakat 2, öz değerlendirme kağıdı 1, öz değerlendirme kağıdı 2 ve değerlendirme mektubu (cover letter) kullanılmıştır. Elde edilen verilerin analizinde içerik analizi kullanılmıştır. Çalışmanın sonucunda elektronik portfolyonun konuşma becerilerini de değerlendirme kullanılabileceği, öğrencilerin konuşma dersine karşı olan tutumlarını olumlu etkilediği ve konuşma becerilerini geliştirdiği belirlenmiştir. Yine çalışmanın sonucu öğrencilere

göre kendilerinin konuşmaları dil bilgisi, telaffuz ve kelime bilgisi olarak gelişmiş, konuşurken kendilerini daha güvende hissettikleri ve gergin olmadıkları ve video kaydetme ve düzenleme gibi teknoloji becerilerinin geliştiğini belirtmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Konuşma Değerlendirilmesi, Elektronik Portfolyo, Elektronik Portfolyo Değerlendirilmesi

ABSTRACT

THE APPLICATION OF E-PORTFOLIO IN SPEAKING ASSESSMENT AND ITS CONTRIBUTIONS TO STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS SPEAKING

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E-portfolio is used in foreign language teaching and assessment, especially in teaching and assessing writing. E-portfolio improves students' writing skills by enabling them to self-assess their own products, to improve their products according to the teacher's feedback, to follow their own progress, and to organize their own learning. Speaking and writing are productive skills though they are different in nature. Speaking can be assessed and improved like writing. However, e-portfolio is more often used to assess writing, not speaking.

As a result of this, the present study tries to answer the question of whether e-portfolio can be used to assess speaking as it is used in writing assessment, whether the application of e-portfolio has an effect on the students' attitudes towards speaking, and what kind of contributions e-portfolio can make to the students' speaking performance if it has an effect on the students' attitudes towards speaking. This study was carried out with 17 students studying in level D in the English Language Preparation Department of Zirve University. It lasted 8 weeks. To collect data, researcher's diary, interview 1, interview 2, self-assessment paper 1, self-assessment paper 2, and cover letters were used. The data was analyzed by using content analysis. The results of the study show that e-portfolio could be used in speaking assessment, it affected the students' attitudes towards speaking positively, and it could improve their speaking skills. Also, the results of the study indicate that according to the students, they improved their speaking in terms of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, they felt more self-confident and less anxious while speaking, and they improved their technology skills, such as recording and arranging video.

Keywords: Speaking Assessment, E-portfolio, E-portfolio Assessment

ABBREVIATIONS

EFL:	English as a Foreign Language
IEDC:	Interaction of English Dormitory and Class Teaching
MDAT:	Multimodal Discourse Analysis Theory
PBLT:	Philosophy-based Language Teaching

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CHAPTER 1

1. INTRODUCTION

With the developments and improvements in technology, language teaching has become more integrated with educational technologies in terms of their use in teaching and assessment. One of these technological implications used to teach and assess the language is e-portfolio. E-portfolio is also known as web-folio, net-folio, and digital portfolio. Depending on the assumption that writing can be assessed and improved by using e-portfolio, the present study tries to find answer to the following question “Can speaking be assessed by using e-portfolio like writing?”. Therefore, it aims to assess the speaking skills of Turkish EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students using e-portfolio and find out its effect on students’ attitudes towards speaking.

This chapter introduces the background of the study, aim of the study, importance of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, and operational terms used in the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

In language teaching and learning, skills are categorized as receptive skills and productive skills. It is important to know what receptive and productive skills are because this categorization may affect the assessment and testing of the four skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Receptive skills are “the ways in which people extract meaning from the discourse they see or hear” (Al-Jawi, n.d., p. 3). Reading and listening, therefore, are receptive skills because students or learners do not have to produce language, but extract meaning from what they read or hear. On the other hand, productive skills can be defined as the ways in which people produce language by using grammar and vocabulary in different contexts to communicate. Hence, speaking and writing are considered as productive skills (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2006). Knowing the difference between receptive and productive skills is necessary to decide which assessment technique can be used to assess each skill. While receptive skills can be assessed and tested on paper tests by using multiple-choice, true false, or comprehension questions, productive skills are assessed and

tested differently. For example, writing can be assessed and tested by using portfolio while interviews and making presentations can be used to assess speaking.

Productive skills require different types of assessment than receptive skills do. One of them is alternative assessment. In alternative assessment, several techniques such as portfolio and e-portfolio are used to assess language skills. Portfolio and e-portfolio are used to assess writing skills because portfolio and e-portfolio assessments can improve writing skills of language learners (Qinghua, 2010; Tabatabaei & Assefi, 2012; Erice, 2008).

A portfolio is a paper-based collection of learners' works that helps teachers follow their students' development and which helps learners find out their good and bad sides and improve their deficient sides. It is used in writing assessment in language teaching and learning and is believed to improve writing skills of language learners. Qinghua (2010) studies portfolio-based writing assessment to improve writing skills of Chinese EFL learners. In Qinghua' study, it is mentioned that portfolio-based writing assessment could improve writing skills of Chinese EFL learners in some dimensions including accuracy, complexity, fluency, and coherence. In another study, Tabatabaei and Assefi (2012) use portfolio assessment to improve the writing skills of Iranian EFL learners. According to them, portfolio assessment in writing classes could improve the writing skills of Iranian EFL learners, and also enabled them to improve sub-writing skills such as focus, elaboration, and organization. In addition to them, Caner (2010) focuses on the student views on using portfolio assessment in EFL writing courses and finds that students believe portfolio assessment is supportive and enriching to their learning process in writing courses and have positive attitudes towards the use of portfolio assignment in writing courses.

Like portfolio, e-portfolio can be used to assess writing skills in language teaching and learning (Erice, 2008). Unlike portfolio, an e-portfolio is "the product, created by the learner, a collection of digital artefacts articulating experiences, achievements and learning" (Gray, 2008, p. 6). In her study, Erice focused on the use of e-portfolio to improve Turkish EFL learners' writing skills and compared the use of portfolio assessment and the use of e-portfolio assessment in writing courses. She found out that e-portfolio required learners and teachers to focus on their ideas about learning and teaching. She added that e-portfolio is advantageous because it is "easy to carry, share, and save; instant access; immediate feedback; and readers and reviewer variety" (2008: p.149). In addition, e-portfolio could also develop skills like

communication, technology, and problem solving, and could be personalized because she said “it is an alternative way of assessment where students are also involved providing and receiving immediate feedback while forming evidence of their learning” (2008: p.150). E-portfolio enables learners to self-evaluate their writings and peer evaluate their friends’ works because e-portfolio is a safe place to store the works of learners online including their first works and last works. It also makes keeping track of learners’ developments followable (Erice, 2008; Abbaszad Tehrani 2010). Consequently, she found out that e-portfolio could improve writing skills of Turkish EFL learners. On the contrary to Erice’s finding that e-portfolio could improve writing skills, Abbaszad Tehrani (2010) finds out that net-folio has no effects on improving writing skills, but students’ attitudes towards the use of net-folio in writing courses are positive because net-folio requires them to re-write, focus on teacher-feedback, give and get peer-feedback, which in turn motivates them to write. Abbaszad Tehrani states that peer feedback can enable students to evaluate other people’s works, to find out their weaknesses and strengths, and to “develop a more critical eye for their friends’ performances through net-folio” (2010: p.91). The Critical approach that students use to evaluate their friends’ works can help them develop their self-confidence because they can learn new structures and new ways to overcome the weaknesses they find in their friends’ works, which may result in students’ improving their writing skills (Erice, 2008; Abbaszad Tehrani, 2010).

As productive skills, writing and speaking are different from each other in nature. Speaking is a real-time activity and occurs as a result of the interaction between the speaker and listener. This interaction requires the continuity of the communication between the speaker and listener, so speaking can occur spontaneously (Thornbury, 2006; Louma, 2009). Thus, spoken language is different from written language because writing allows more time to respond, but speaking occurs in a limited time period, so a more rapid response is required. Therefore, speaking is a less planned activity than writing. However, the assessment techniques used to assess writing and speaking may be similar.

1.2. Aim of the Study

Erice (2008) mentioned that Turkish EFL learners could improve their writing skills by using e-portfolio because e-portfolio can help the learners to self-assess their

own writings and peer-evaluate others' writing, be more engaged in their learning, and follow their progress during the e-portfolio preparation time. Also, it makes carrying and saving the writings easy, and enables the learners to provide and get immediate feedback, which forms the evidence of their learning. Like writing, speaking is a productive skill and can be improved because the learners see the improvement in their speaking skills after they are educated about how to speak in English. This makes the improvement in speaking followable. The learners can get feedback for their speaking performance as they do in writing, so they use the feedback to understand and overcome what they should improve. Depending on this similarity between speaking and writing, the first aim of the present study is to find out whether e-portfolio can be used to assess speaking skills of Turkish EFL students as it is used to assess writing skills of Turkish EFL students.

Abbaszad Tehrani (2010) deals with students' attitudes towards the use of net-folio in writing courses and assessment and states that students have positive attitudes towards the use of net-folio in writing courses and assessment. This is because students think that net-folio can improve their writings by peer evaluating others' writings and using their peer evaluation experience when they write. Though portfolio and e-portfolio are different in terms of the way they store students' works, they have some similarities such as being authentic (Goldsmith, 2007; Reese & Levy, 2009). One of these similarities is students' attitude towards portfolio and e-portfolio. In one study, Caner (2010) stresses that students have positive attitudes towards the use of portfolio assessment in writing classes and finds it supportive for their learning. Depending on these studies, it is seen that students had some attitudes towards the writing, and there was generally a positive change in those attitudes after e-portfolio was used to assess their writing. Like writing, students have some attitudes towards speaking which may affect their speaking ability negatively or positively. There are many studies about how to teach speaking in classes in which different teaching methods were used and which resulted in improvements in speaking skills (Atli & Bergil, 2012; Boonkit, 2010; Matsumoto, 2010; Hong, 2012; Cui-yun, 2007). Their studies have shared some common points: motivation, engagement, self-confidence, and anxiety. The methods used in their studies motivated the students and helped them build self-confidence, so the students overcame the anxiety problem and engaged in speaking activities more. As a result of this, there was a positive change in the students' attitudes towards speaking, which improved their speaking. Depending on this similarity between writing and

speaking, the second aim of the present study is to indicate what students' attitudes towards the use of e-portfolio in speaking classes are.

1.3. Importance of the Study

When the literature is reviewed, it is understood that although there are many studies about the use of e-portfolio in assessing writing, the use of e-portfolio in assessing speaking has not been studied a lot in Turkey. The present study is going to be a comprehensive analysis of alternative and authentic assessment in speaking assessment because it is going to make up a conceptual and practical framework for this context in Turkey. It can be understood that Turkish EFL students have difficulty in speaking and writing in English because they are afraid of making mistakes, and they are nervous. To overcome these problems, speaking e-portfolio can be used because learners are going to prepare themselves, rehearse their speeches, and record them, which may help them feel safe, but not nervous.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

Presentations, interviews, and question-answer method are used to assess and test speaking in Turkey. These techniques can be practical to test and assess speaking skills when the number of the students is more, but the focus is on product, not on process. Consequently, students can only learn their grades when these techniques are used in speaking assessment and testing. In accordance with this, students may not get enough feedback about their speaking performances, self-evaluate their speaking, and find out what they have done well and what they should do to improve their speaking. They may not also understand the difference between their speaking performance and others' performance because they do not watch or listen to others when they are assessed or tested. Therefore, they have difficulty in improving their speaking skills. In addition, most of the students' attitudes towards speaking are negative. It may be because they may be afraid of making mistakes, and this may make them nervous while they are speaking. As a result, the assessment system mentioned and the attitudes of students towards speaking are the problems that constitute the basis of the aims of the present study.

1.5. Research Questions

In the present study, the researcher is going to try to answer the following question:

1. How can speaking be assessed through e-portfolio?
2. What are the attitudes of students towards the use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment?
3. What are the students' thoughts about the contributions of e-portfolio to their speaking performance?

1.6. Operational definitions

E-portfolio: E-portfolio is 'the product, created by the learner, a collection of digital artefacts articulating experiences, achievements and learning' (Gray, 2008, p. 6).

E-portfolio assessment: E-portfolio assessment is a kind of assessment in which e-portfolio is used to assess different skills such as writing and speaking.

Self-assessment: Self-assessment is 'a process by which students 1) monitor and evaluate the quality of their thinking and behavior when learning and 2) identify strategies that improve their understanding, and skills' (McMillan & Hearn, 2008).

Reflection: Reflection is the process that enables learners to review their learning process and the way they have overcome difficulties, to apply to them when they have to do something similar, and to have their own learning outcomes (Pappas, 2010).

Self-reflection: Self-reflection is 'a way of constructing a sense of self vis-à-vis interactions with the environment' (Williams, 2006, p. 1).

1.7. Conclusion

The background of the study, aim of the study, importance of the study, and the statement of the problem were explained in detail. The research questions and operational definitions of the terms important to the present study were mentioned at the end of this chapter.

CHAPTER 2

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will focus on teaching speaking and educational use of technology in language testing and assessment. Then it will mention e-portfolio including definition of, benefits of, challenges of, and characteristics of e-portfolio and reflection. Afterwards, assessment with its definition and some kinds of assessment like alternative assessment will be explained in detail. Assessing speaking skill will conclude this part.

2.1. Teaching speaking skills

Second language learning is a process in which learners need to acquire four basic skills to communicate and interact by using the second language: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Listening and reading are receptive skills while writing and speaking are productive skills in which learners need to use their language knowledge including grammar, vocabulary and social knowledge in order to respond to the message given in an oral or written way. Consequently, the nature of speaking is necessary to understand the structure of speaking skills in second language learning.

... The first point to emphasize is that speech production takes place in real time and is therefore essentially linear. Words follow words, and phrases follow phrases. Likewise, at the level of utterance (that is to say, the spoken equivalent of sentences), speech is produced utterance-by-utterance, in response to the word-by-word and utterance-by-utterance productions of the person we are talking to (our interlocutor). This contingent nature of speech, whereby each utterance is dependent on a preceding one, accounts for its spontaneity. This is not to say that speech is unplanned, only that the planning time is severely limited (Thornbury, 2006, p. 2).

As Thornbury (2006) mentioned, speaking is a real-time activity and occurs as a result of the interaction between the speaker and listener. This interaction requires the continuity of the communication between the speaker and listener, so speaking can occur spontaneously (Thornbury, 2006; Louma, 2009). Therefore, spoken language is different from written language because writing requires more time to respond to what is written, while speaking occurs in a limited time period. Therefore, writing is a more

planned activity that speaking. As a result, the way that is used to teach speaking is different from the ones used to teach writing.

One of the ways to teach speaking is to use authentic material such as newspapers, online articles or books. In one of the studies carried out by Akdemir, Barin, and Demiroz (2012), it is claimed that newspapers can be used to teach speaking based on the idea that 'language should be taught by original materials and spoken language can best be acquired when it is obtained from authentic sources' (Akdemir et al., 2012, p. 3967). They indicate that teachers should use daily news to teach speaking by making students read it and discuss it in class, which creates an environment where students will be able to 'hear and pronounce English rather than grammar rules or cluster examples such as 'I am a student', 'She goes to cinema every day' etc.' (2012: p. 3971). Therefore, speaking can be taught effectively with newspapers because they enable students to become familiar with 'real' English instead of just grammar and to express their ideas about the news by using the structures in the news.

Another way is literature. It is an important part of language because it is a source in which learners can find the original use of language in different situations, improve their critical thinking and reading skills. Depending on this assumption, Keshavarzi (2012) stresses the importance of using literature in language teaching. He thinks literature enables teachers and students to be acquainted with language use and 'understand language as a social phenomenon, and not just as an exclusive branch of learning' (2012:556). Literature enables students to become effective readers, fluent speakers and writers because students have to read and listen deeply and carefully to understand the text and answer the teachers' questions. Answering the teachers' questions requires the verbalization of students' own ideas, which results in inducing the new words meaning from the context and using them in different contexts. He, therefore, thinks that literature can be used to teach English effectively and can help students become fluent speakers.

In addition to the authentic materials and literature, EFL communication strategies such as topic avoidance, message abandonment, and circumlocution can be used to teach speaking. Teng (2012) studies the effect of communication strategies on students' improvement of communication strategy use and communicative effectiveness. His results show that the students who are taught how to use communication strategies in speaking can communicate more effectively, can improve and vary the communication strategies that they use in different situations. For

example, nonverbal signals were commonly used before the participants were educated about other communication strategies, but after they were educated, they started to use strategies such as appeal for assistance and circumlocution (Teng, 2012).

Integrating speaking with listening and pronunciation is another way that is used to teach speaking. Atli and Bergil (2012) concentrate on teaching speaking by giving more importance to teach pronunciation. According to them, the students are aware of the sounds of English, and this awareness helps the students to produce these sounds correctly. Accordingly, this awareness makes them more self-confident in speaking classes and may contribute to their speaking proficiency in English. Tavil (2010) studies the teaching of listening and speaking together through information gaps and finds that practicing the skills in integration improves students' speaking skills more than practicing the skills separately. Practicing the skills in integration through information gap activities motivates and engages students since information gap activities create the connection between real life and classroom activities.

Like literature, authentic materials, communication strategies, integrating speaking with listening and pronunciation, speaking can be taught by tasks. Tasks can increase the confidence of students in speaking classes because students can prepare their speech, and this preparation makes them self-confident (Boonkit, 2010). Boonkit states that preparation decreases anxiety and increases speaking confidence. Tasks also enable students to listen to English more and to improve their speaking confidence. Boonkit defines the strengths and weaknesses of speaking performance in teaching speaking with tasks. Strengths are the variety of real world topics while weaknesses are pronunciation and grammar, which can be overcome by using feedback and comments (Boonkit, 2010).

Besides the ways mentioned, group work and pair work are also effective in teaching speaking because they create a positive learning atmosphere in classes that enhances speaking. Matsumoto (2010) carried out research with student nurses to improve their L2 speech by using group dynamics. Matsumoto studied inter-personal and intra-personal relations in groups and found that if group dynamics create positive inter- and intra-personal relations in the classroom, students' speaking ability can be enhanced because anxiety and fear are avoided.

Unlike the methods mentioned, different theories can be utilized to teach speaking. One of them is Philosophy-based Language Teaching. Gholamhosseina and Siamak (2010) use Philosophy-based Language Teaching (PBLT) to improve students'

speaking skills. PBLT makes students study a text, create philosophical questions about it, and discuss the chosen questions as a whole. During this process, teachers write the key points discussed by students and the important vocabulary used on the board. Then students are required to write a composition about the discussion in class. Philosophical questions enable students to refer to their own experiences and take part in classroom discussion effectively because philosophical questions do not have accurate answers (Gholamhosseina, & Siamak, 2010). Gholamhosseina and Siamak mention answering philosophical questions requires getting involved in thinking and reasoning, so this mental process may result in the development of students' speaking ability. They also add that PBLT makes students fluent in speaking, but students have problems in accuracy because PBLT does not focus on form, rather on meaning and fluency. Another method is Multimodal Discourse Analysis Theory (MDAT). Hong (2012) describes an MDAT class as follows:

- A) Preparation before class: Students do some reading about a topic and write a report about it before they come to class because it is believed that 'reading promotes speaking' (Hong, 2012, p. 320).
- B) In-class practice: Teachers use audio-visual materials to make students speak and make a presentation. After they finish the presentation, students are shown audio – visual materials again. Then students do some 'multimodal exercises, such as answering some questions, summarizing the main idea of the material...' (Hong, 2012, p. 321). Afterwards, teachers make students listen to an English song and do some exercises about the song. These activities are interactive and can be used to improve listening and speaking.
- C) After-class practice: Students have some listening activities as homework and are supposed to write an after-listening report and share it with other students in the course. Writing is important as it improves listening.

According to Hong, this theory motivates students intrinsically, helps them improve their practical ability to use English, and makes them more autonomous. Another method used in English language teaching is Interaction of English Dormitory and Class Teaching (IEDC), which necessitates the use of English in dormitories and classes through task-based activities (Cui-yun, 2007). She used IEDC in which she made students prepare the tasks for the speaking classes before they came to the class and do the speaking activities under the guidance of teachers. She added that IEDC could stimulate students' creativity, improve students' self-confidence, and help them

be more responsible for their learning. In another study, Dincer, Yesilyurt, and Takkac (2012) focus on self-determination theory and the use of it in teaching speaking skills. According to the self-determination theory, there are two kinds of learning context: 'autonomy-supportive climates' and 'controlled climates' (Dincer et al., 2012, p. 3890). They mention that autonomy-supportive climates are related to motivation and help students to self-identify themselves. As a result, they find out that autonomy-supportive climates enable students to take part in lesson planning, to be motivated, and to understand themselves, which results in those students feeling more confident about their speaking ability, and an increase in their engagement and achievement in speaking classes and tests. Consequently, if the learning environment is autonomy-supportive, students can be more autonomous and motivated so that they think they are 'competent in speaking courses' (Dincer et al., 2012, p. 3893).

Apart from the ways to teach speaking, some factors such as teachers' attitudes towards students, the quality of course books, or timing for activities are important because they have a direct effect on students' speaking ability (Khan & Ali, 2010). They claim that not giving enough time, not having various activities, teaching English as a subject, and scolding and discouraging comments by teachers affect students' speaking skills negatively. On the other hand, if teachers teach communication strategies to their students, give enough time for speaking activities, create a friendly environment, enable students to listen to media, students can be more motivated and engaged in speaking activities more so that they can improve their speaking skills.

In conclusion, speaking differentiates from writing because speaking occurs spontaneously and is a less planned activity. Also, authentic materials, literature, tasks, different theories, integration with listening and pronunciation, and group / pair work affect the speaking skills of the students positively because they motivate the students and make them more engaged in speaking. On the other hand, some factors such as teacher's attitudes towards students and timing for activities can affect the students' speaking skills negatively or positively.

2.2. Educational Use of Technology in Language Testing and Assessment

Technology is inexorable and inevitable (Bennett, 2002). According to Bennett, it is inexorable because every business has started to use technology in every aspect of their fields to do business, and it is inevitable because the future of each business

depends on the improvements in technology, so to get a job, it is necessary to have technological skills. As education is a kind of business, technology can be inexorable and inevitable for education and educational fields such as testing and assessment. Bennett also stated that technology affects what and how learners learn, so to document learners' achievement, the use of technology becomes necessary.

With technology, assessment can be richer, timelier, and more seamlessly interwoven with multiple aspects of curriculum and instruction. As discussed earlier, the most useful kinds of assessment for enhancing student learning emphasize knowledge integration and extended reasoning, support a process of individualized instruction, allow for student interaction, and collect rich diagnostic data, and provide timely feedback. The demands and complexity of these types of assessment can be quite substantial, but technology makes them feasible (Pellegrino & Quellmalz, 2010, p. 130).

Pellegrino and Quellmalz (2010) mention the importance of using technology in assessment and testing by pointing out that the integration of technology and assessment provide data about the process by which learners learn information, enable educators to collect data about the individual development of learners, and help educators be a passive part of learners' learning process and give feedback immediately to learners about the problems in their learning process. Clarke – Midura and Dede (2010) described 'the Assessment Triangle'. According to them, the Assessment Triangle is composed of cognition, observation, and interpretation. Cognition is the reflection of what a learner is expected to learn / acquire, observation is the collection of student's behaviors and statements, and interpretation is the process of analyzing the observation of learners and answering the question "to what extent has the observation matched the pre-determined model" (Clarke – Midura & Dede, 2010, p. 310). Pellegrino and Quellmalz (2010) emphasize these three components of the Assessment Triangle and the possible effects of technology on the triangle. They indicate that depending on the Assessment Triangle and the possible effects of the use of technology in assessment, technology can enhance cognitive development of learners. According to them, it can be done by providing data diagnostically which centers on how learners understand and develop information structures, and which enables educators to understand and analyze learners' performance. In addition, they state that technology can improve formative feature of learning by helping educators understand the weaknesses and strengths of learners' performance and give learners immediate feedback about their learning process accordingly.

According to *Transforming American Education - Learning Powered By Technology* prepared by Office of Educational Technology, U.S. Department of Education in 2010, there are some benefits of using technology in education such as understanding the aspects of cognitive side of learning, directly assessing problem-solving skills and complex reasoning tasks, and observing visible sequences of learners' actions (p. 27). When it comes to assessment, technology can be used summatively and formatively. Summative assessment focuses on to what extent learners have learned in terms of grade and accountability while formative assessment emphasizes the diagnosing and monitoring of learning and instruction ("*Transforming American Education*", 2010, p. 28). According to "*Transforming American Education*", the former kind of assessment is related to students' individual learning and helping learners correct what they have misunderstood. In the report, it is stated that technology also develops adaptive assessment whose focus is on the identification of the following kind of learning experience that will be more beneficial to each individual. The integration of technology with education enhances feedback by enabling broader involvement in the feedback process. Supporting assessment with technology leads to continuous improvement of education because educators can collect learners' data and use them to enhance learning outcomes and data ("*Transforming American Education*", 2010, p. 34).

The influence of technology can be said to be evident because it can ease the understanding of learners' performance and cognitive development, the analysis of what learners have learned and what they have misunderstood, and providing feedback about what learners have misunderstood. These processes are directly related to assessment. Technology can make these processes easier for educators to follow and use effectively in providing feedback, enhancing continuous education, and improving students' learning.

In language teaching and learning, technology can be used effectively to support instruction, to give individualized feedback, to enrich classroom activities, to continue education outside the class, and to assess and assign learners. To achieve these goals, web 2.0 tools such as blog, wiki, forum, and email can be used. In language testing and assessment, these technologies can be used to assess writing, reading, and speaking skills (Hsu, Wang, & Comac, 2008; Montero-Fleta & Perez-Sabater, 2010; Noytim, 2009; Wei, 2010).

Blog is used for assessment more than other web 2.0 tools (Hsu et al., 2008; Montero-Fleta & Perez-Sabater, 2010; Noytim, 2009; Wei, 2010). Hsu et al. (2008) used audioblog to assess learners' oral skills. In the system learners recorded their oral assignments via their cell-phones and uploaded their records to their individual audioblogs, and their instructor interacted them via their audioblogs and enhanced their records individually by giving feedback to them in accordance with their needs. As a result, according to them, audioblogs helped learners to develop their oral skills in English and to assist their language-learning process. They also explained that audioblogs enabled the instructor to evaluate learners' oral performance and give them oral feedback, which provides summative and formative feedback.

In another study which was carried out by Noytim (2010), it was found out that weblog is a good way to improve learners' writing, critical thinking, and reading skills because learners believe that they have the opportunity to express their own ideas when they have their own weblogs and that weblog encourages them to use their creative, analytical, and critical thinking skills to write because their readers are either local or universal. Therefore, weblog motivates learners to learn, develops their writing, and contributes to using some learning skills like creative thinking (Noytim, 2010).

In another study, Montero – Fleta and Perez – Sabater (2010) used blogs to enhance language skills and found out that blogs can be used to improve writing skills of learners because writing is done for an aim that motivates learners to write more fluently and accurately. Blogging is motivational and helps learners develop linguistic skills because they pay attention to the correct use of language when they write and blog for a specific aim (Montero-Fleta & Perez-Sabater, 2010).

To sum up, technology can contribute to the Assessment Triangle effectively in language testing and assessment because web 2.0 tools helps educators to understand what and how learners have learned, to observe their statements and behaviors such as learners' writings on their blogs, and to interpret and analyze the observation of learners' performance. Learners' productions are individual and evaluated formatively because they give information about what learners have understood correctly and incorrectly and also help educators to give immediate feedback to learners by diagnosing and monitoring learners' performance.

2.3. E-portfolio

This section will focus on the definitions of, benefits of, and challenges of e-portfolio in order. Then it will be concluded with the characteristics of e-portfolio derived from the explanations about it.

2.3.1. Definition of E-portfolio

We seem to be beginning a new wave of technology development in higher education. Freeing student work from paper and making it organized, searchable, and transportable opens enormous possibilities... In short, ePortfolios might be the biggest thing in technology innovation on campus. Electronic portfolios have a greater potential to alter higher education at its very core than any other technology application we've known thus far (Rhodes, 2011, p. 7).

As Rhodes states, the use of technology in higher education is getting more important. This can change the way students prepare their work. One of them is e-portfolio, which integrates technology and higher education. Also, it enables students to make their work digital, organized, searchable, and transportable as Rhodes mentions. As a result of this, the definitions of e-portfolio focus on these features. For instance, an e-portfolio is “a digitized collection of artifacts including demonstrations, resources, and accomplishments that represent an individual, group, or institution” (Lorenzo & Ittelson, 2005, p. 2). In another definition, Gray (2008) states an e-portfolio as “the product, created by the learner, a collection of digital artefacts articulating experiences, achievements and learning” (p. 6). Also, an e-portfolio is defined as “a purposeful aggregation of digital items – ideas, evidence, reflections, feedback, etc, which presents a selected audience with evidence of a person’s learning and/or ability” (Gray, 2008, p. 7). Besides, e-portfolios are “personalized, Web-based collections of work, responses to work, and reflections that are used to demonstrate key skills and accomplishment for a variety of contexts and time periods” (Lorenzo & Ittelson, 2005, p. 2). Depending on the definitions of e-portfolio, the main focuses of e-portfolio are on three common points: being digital, being learner-centered, and including the evidence of the students learning process.

Because e-portfolio is digital and learner-centered, it requires the use of technology and learner-centered assessment process to make learning personalized and

to keep track of the students learning process. This is because it is a collection of digital artefacts of learners work and present their experiences, achievements, and reflections (Gray, 2008; Lorenzo & Ittelson, 2005).

During the first decade of the 21st century, there has been increasing interest in the potential of e-learning tools and technologies to support more learner-centered and personalized forms of learning, prompted in part by national strategies for e-learning and initiatives in favour of lifelong and personalized learning (Gray, 2008, p. 5).

As Gray (2008) mentions, e-learning tools and technologies back up learner-centered and personalized learning. In accordance with this, e-portfolio is an important e-learning tool for learning and assessment. That is because it can make learning more learner-centered and enhance personalized learning. Also, it contributes to capturing, digitizing, and absorbing authentic performances of learners electronically (Goodson, 2007). In other words, it is a digital collection of student work, reflections, learning, and experience, which may be composed of “text-based, graphic, or multimedia elements archived on a Web site or on other electronic media such as a CD – Rom or DVD” (Lorenzo & Ittelson, 2005, p. 2). Consequently, it can make learning and assessment more authentic.

In short, an e-portfolio is the requirement of the 21st century education because it integrates technology and education and can make the use of technology in learning and assessment more effective and possible. In addition, it can enable educators to make learning and assessment more student-centered and help them to personalize, follow and monitor their own learning process.

2.3.2. Benefits of E-Portfolio

Goldsmith (2007) mentioned that e-portfolios are beneficial both for institutions and learners because institutions can assess “how well they are educating their students” and learners can assess “their educational experiences and achievements, and how these are linked to their personal goals” (p. 31). As e-portfolios allow learners’ connecting their work in courses to the outcomes of institutions, learners use their ability to “understand these connections as well as the connections between their own lives and their academic work” (Goldsmith, 2007, p. 37). In addition, this improves learners’ “understanding of the self and the curriculum” (Gray, 2008, p. 9).

One of the benefits of e-portfolios is to create a virtual environment for learners to share “goals, achievements, and insights with advisors and counselors” (Goldsmith, 2007, p. 31), so they can understand whether they have met their educational and career goals and can get a job by indicating their achievements and skills in their e-portfolios. That is, e-portfolios can enhance learners’ marketability, career planning and development because e-portfolios can display learners’ achievements, learning experiences, and skills to their future employers (Lin, 2008; Reese & Levy, 2009). E-portfolios can be used as tool in job search (Kocoglu, 2008; An & Wilder, n.d). This process blends learners’ “information literacy, technology fluency, and domain knowledge” (Reese & Levy, 2009, p. 3) because it requires technology skills such as uploading pictures and using Word, so e-portfolios can help learners to learn, review, and improve their technology skills (Lin, 2008).

Another benefit of e-portfolio is to enhance learning process and to assess learners authentically due to the requirements of portfolio assessment as Goldsmith mentioned. These requirements are to take the responsibility of their learning by making learners organize their material for a specific purpose, to self-evaluate their work and reflect what they have found out about their learning process, experiences, and skills in some ways such as highlighting specific elements of their learning. This can allow students to take the control of their own education and motivate themselves to study (Akçıl & Arap, 2009), can help to facilitate and document learners’ experiences authentically (Reese & Levy, 2009). That is, portfolio assessment makes reengagement of learners in the process necessary, so it can contribute to the enhancement of learning process and authentic assessment. As learners take the responsibility of their own e-portfolio process, it can enable them to individualize and personalize their learning via e-portfolio (Schmitz, Whitson, Heest, & Maddaus, 2010; Gray, 2008). Also, e-portfolios can save time and energy for both learners and teachers because it is easy to store the information, to find the necessary files, and to avoid problems resulting from time and place for the owners and the ones who view and review portfolios (Goldsmith, 2007).

Another benefit of e-portfolio is to make students more autonomous. Gonzalez (2009) states that the European Language Portfolio pays attention to the use of e-portfolio assessment in language education. Therefore, it enabled students to be aware of “language learning process and its implications” (Gonzalez, 2009, p. 373). This process made students autonomous owing to two reasons. First, this helped learners to

be the owner of their language learning and to recognize the learning occurring outside the classroom. Second, they could understand and “become aware of all the important invisible factors, procedures, and attitudes involved in language learning” (Gonzalez, 2009, p. 382).

One of the benefits of e-portfolios is related to motivation, communication, connectedness, and perception. Bolliger and Shepherd (2010) analyze the effects of e-portfolio integration in online courses on students’ learning in terms of student perceptions, communication, motivation, and connectedness which is defined as “a person’s belief that a relationship exists between him or her and at least one other individual” (Bolliger & Shepherd, 2010, p. 296). According to Bolliger and Shepherd, e-portfolio can make communication between peers and between students and instructors more effective and enable learners to understand program-level expectations in online courses, and so the integration of e-portfolio in online courses can motivate learners to learn, which can affect learners’ perceptions of e-portfolios in a positive way. Also, Lin (2008) mentions the effect of e-portfolios on pre-service teachers in terms of communication. Lin finds out that e-portfolios triggered communication, interaction, and collaboration between peers, which provided them with peer feedback to complete and improve their e-portfolios. Besides, this can help learners to work collaboratively (Kocoglu, 2008).

Feedback and reflection, especially self-reflection are other benefits of e-portfolio. E-portfolios are digital collections of learner artefacts including their lore goals, experiences, achievements, ideas, and so on, and require learners to self-reflect their learning processes, so they assess learners’ own products as well as individual achievement and effectiveness of courses, programs, departments, or institutions (Goldsmith, 2007; Reese & Levy, 2009). Reflection is an important requirement of e-portfolios because it helps learners to understand their learning and provides them with “evidence of their capacity for critical thinking, analytic reasoning, and integrative learning” (Rhodes, 2011, p. 5). For example, Lin (2008) shows that reflection enabled learners to revisit their learning experiences and changed the way they viewed their learning in a more different way than its original version. As Lin states, reflection could help learners develop a sense of purpose and focus because while reflecting, learners compared their artifacts with the standards in order to decide whether their artifacts met the standards or not, and how and why they met the standards if so. Also, reflection can play a formative role in terms of evaluation of learner learning and a

summative role in terms of the assessment of learner progress and achievement (Rhodes, 2011). In addition, reflection can enable learners to take an active role in the presentation and representation of their learning, which motivates learners to do their best as Rhodes mentions. In addition, e-portfolios can be used to give feedback to learners individually about their learning, experiences, achievements, and also to institutions about their effectiveness besides their strengths and weaknesses (Goldsmith, 2007). Consequently, learners can improve their learning through self-reflection and feedback, which provides permanent learning (Akçıl & Arap, 2009) and allow learners to be more willing to overcome problems (Gray, 2008).

Another benefit is that e-portfolios allow academic advising or supervision (Reese & Levy, 2009) because self-reflection and feedback provide the continuous flow of information about learners' own learning process by tracking learners' progress via requirements of the e-portfolios. Thus, e-portfolios help advisors to better understand their advisees (Bashook, Gelula, Joshi, & Sandlow, 2008). Bashook et al. mention other contributions of e-portfolio assessment to the communication between advisors and advisees. For example, as Bashook et al. emphasizes, e-portfolios can help advisors to make insights about learners' attitudes, beliefs, and potential problems, to improve their relationship between themselves and learners and make it more meaningful.

Motivating students through the e-portfolio program is another benefit of e-portfolios. Garrett (2011) mentions the influences of e-portfolios on learners in terms of internal design of e-portfolio software and finds out that e-portfolios can allow learners to control their e-portfolio preparation process, to improve their learning through social interaction and learning, and to motivate them to do better in class (Gray, 2008). According to Garrett (2011), a user-friendly e-portfolio software enables learners to control their e-portfolios because they can easily customize the contents of their e-portfolios, to communicate and interact with other people about their works in order to get feedback and improve their portfolios because e-portfolio software has social learning aspects, and to try to do better in class and develop stranger relationships with their peers.

In brief, e-portfolio can be used effectively and efficiently in teaching, learning, and assessment because it is directly related to learners and includes individual artefacts of them. It can enable learners to be responsible for their learning by allowing them to organize and control the content of their e-portfolios, to self-reflect and self-

assess their learning, to individualize and personalize their e-portfolios. Also, learners can get prompt and authentic feedback from their educators, communicate and interact with their peers to improve their learning, and use their e-portfolios to get a job in the future. Thus, e-portfolios can be used for lifelong learning because Gray (2008) stated:

E-portfolios are particularly important in lifelong learning, since, in the presentational sense, they provide evidence of learners' progress over time, and in the developmental sense, they engage learners in ongoing self-evaluation through:

- reflecting on personal strengths and weaknesses
- recognizing gaps in existing knowledge and competences,
- celebrating achievements,
- evaluating how to move forward,
- entering into dialogue with others (p. 28).

2.3.3. Challenges of E-portfolio

Though e-portfolios have some benefits, they may bring some challenges for both teachers and students. For example, according to Goldsmith (2007), lack of experience of institutions and educators with the e-portfolio process can cause problems for the implementation of an e-portfolio system, so implementations of e-portfolios require learning how to use the software for e-portfolio platform and understanding “the assumptions on which an e-portfolio was built” (Goldsmith, 2007, p. 38; Gray, 2008). The integration of e-portfolio into present institutional systems may be difficult because it requires financing, staff time, and information technology services for its implication and integration (Dalton, 2007; Dawn, Smith, Peterson, Cone, Slazar, Bond, & Godwin, 2011; Gray, 2008). As a result, the requirement for investment may “outweigh the gains” (Reese & Levy, 2009, p. 7). Also, Reese and Levy (2009) stresses the problems that may result from “lacking a shared definition of e-portfolios and a coordinated implementation/support strategy” (p. 9) because it may avoid coordination and needed support for the implementation of e-portfolios.

Another challenge is the way students evaluate the technology may affect e-portfolio process negatively. According to Dalton (2007) students' understanding of technology is important in the implementation of e-portfolio. This is because some students may be very familiar with technology, so they may easily decide what is useful or not for them depending on their familiarity with technology. Consequently, if

students do not find an e-portfolio system useful, the efficiency and effectiveness of e-portfolio can be lessened (Dawn et al., 2011). In addition, the features of the e-portfolio system may affect students' understanding of technology. As Dalton pointed out, if an e-portfolio system is not flexible, it might affect the learning process negatively because flexibility makes e-portfolio more engaging and gives learners more control, so they can be active participants of the process.

Other challenges are the lack of self-assessment, reflection, and meta-cognitive skills in student's educational background as well as students' deficient computer skills. These elements may lessen the effectiveness of e-portfolio and may cause learners to be "overwhelmed by the course management system, the portal, and the e-portfolio" (Goldsmith, 2007, p. 39). Gray (2008) mentions that learners at any age might lack experience and competence with information communication technologies. To avoid problems that may stem from this, Dawn et al. (2011) emphasizes the importance and necessity of introducing learners to e-portfolio slowly with repeated explanations, clear instructions, and guidance.

All in all, challenges of e-portfolios are generally related to deficient experience of learners, educators, and institutions with the use and implementation of e-portfolio, learners' lack of self-assessment, reflection, technology, and meta-cognitive skills required for the use of e-portfolio, and learners' being savvy about technology. To overcome these challenges, all of the participants should be educated about the implementation and use of e-portfolios, learners should be educated in order to acquire skills such as technology that are required in the use of e-portfolio and e-portfolio assessment, and e-portfolio system should be chosen according to the attitudes of learners towards e-portfolio platform or system.

2.3.4. Characteristics of E-portfolio

Benefits of e-portfolios can indicate and help to define the characteristics of e-portfolios because there is a direct relationship between them, so e-portfolios are:

1. *authentic* because learners are responsible for their own learning in this process, and e-portfolios require learners to organize their e-portfolios, to self-reflect their learning process, to reflect about what they have found out in self-reflection, and to improve their learning depending on their self-reflections (Goldsmith, 2007; Reese & Levy, 2009);

2. *controllable* because learners are responsible for the organization of their e-portfolios, reflecting on their own learning process, assessing it, and improving their learning according to their self-reflections (Goldsmith, 2007);
3. *communicative* and *interactive* because e-portfolios provide meaningful communication and interaction between peers and between learners and their advisors, which can help learners to improve their learning (Bolliger & Shepherd, 2010; Lin, 2008);
4. *dynamic* because there is an ongoing development of structure in the e-portfolio process including organization of content, collecting and selecting artifacts, self-assessing and self-reflecting on the learning process, and improving what is found problematic during the process;
5. *individualized* or *personalized* because learners organize and decide the content of their e-portfolios, take control of the whole process, self-reflect on what they have done, and improve their own learning depending on their self-reflections (Goldsmith, 2007; Schmitz et al., 2010; Gray, 2008);
6. *integrative* because e-portfolios allow learners to connect their work in courses to the outcome of the institution, learners use their ability to “understand these connections as well as the connections between their own lives and their academic work” (Goldsmith, 2007, p. 37);
7. *multipurposed* because e-portfolios can be used to assess learners’ learning performances, to assess institutions’ education programs in terms of how well they are educating their students (Goldsmith, 2007), and to get a job in the future (Goldsmith, 2007; Lin, 2008; Reese & Levy, 2009; Kocoglu, 2008);
8. *multi-sourced* because e-portfolios can allow learners to get prompt feedback and self-reflect on their own learning process, and this can help learners to assess their learning processes while it providing educators with the opportunity to assess learners’ performances and providing institutions with the opportunity to assess their programs, courses, or departments by using learners’ e-portfolios which include different learners’ self-assessment and self-evaluation of their own learning processes (Goldsmith, 2007);
9. *motivational* because self-reflection, feedback, being the owner of their e-portfolios, and improving their learning motivates learners to engage, study, and do their best (Akçıl & Arap, 2009; Bolliger & Shepherd, 2010; Rhodes, 2011);

10. *reflective* because reflection, especially self-reflection is an important component of e-portfolios and enables learners to self-reflect and assess their learning processes (Goldsmith, 2007; Reese & Levy, 2009; Lin, 2008).

2.4. Reflection

Reflection involves not only thinking about a learning experience, but also questioning parts of the experience. Reflection is thinking about what you know from the learning experience, what you might do differently the next time. Reflection is wondering about new questions you have as a result of the learning experience. Reflection is thinking about how your new knowledge has changed your perspective on the topic (Pappas, 2010, p. 5).

According to Pappas, reflection is the process that enables students to review their learning process in terms of what they do well and whether they have difficulty or not. It helps students find solutions to the difficulties they have and to utilize them when they have similar difficulties. As a result, they can have their own learning outcomes. Reflection also, “incorporates experiences into an existing framework of knowledge, while taking into consideration a learner’s life experience as well as present observations” (Dyment & O’Connell, 2011, p. 81). Reflection is directly related to the learners’ experience and requires learners to use their experience to overcome problems. Therefore, reflection is necessary for “thinking, inference, diagnosis, and learning” (Chou & Chang, 2011, p. 101).

Due to reflection’s effects on students’ learning, it is also conducive to teacher education. Shandomo (n.d) carried out a study in which he used critical reflection with his student teachers in methods classes in order to close the gap resulting from the different backgrounds of teacher and students. Shandomo (n.d) found out that critical reflection helped student teachers get a deep understanding of their teaching styles, to challenge “traditional mode of education” (p. 112), and to reveal their growth as teachers. In another study, Yesilbursa (2011) conducts a research to identify the characteristics of Turkish pre-service English teachers’ reflective writing. According to Yesilbursa, reflection can enable learners to imagine possible future experiences depending on their previous experiences, so it may cause some changes in Turkish pre-service English teachers and also create opportunities for learners to make new discoveries about themselves. Besides Yesilbursa’s study, Chou and Chang (2011)

study the effects of reflection category and reflection quality on learning outcomes including achievement tests, work, and attitudes. They discover that reflection categories do not affect learning outcomes while reflection category affects learning outcomes, especially achievement tests. Therefore, the better a reflection is the better learners achieve on the tests.

In short, reflection is the analysis of learning process and experiences and the use of them for future experiences. The analysis of learning process and experiences assists students to find out their own learning strategies, what they have learned best, and what they have misunderstood, and how they have been able to correct the misunderstandings, so when they reflect what they have analyzed on their learning process, they can change “their perspective on a topic” (Pappas, 2010, p. 5) and avoid similar problems that they have encountered during previous experiences. As it is understood, reflection is generally an individual activity, and its influences may lead to a change or some changes in individuals’ learning process. Therefore, self-reflection becomes important.

Self-reflection serves a way of constructing a sense of self vis-à-vis interactions with the environment. Various self-regulatory processes are activated in learning situation: A person enters a learning situation with goals, agency, and a sense of self-efficacy. Agency and self-efficacy initiate learning strategies that affect performance, and self-reflection triggers both self-evaluation and integration (Williams, 2006, p. 1).

William defines self-regulation as the process in which, “mental activities are associated with learning” (p. 1) and that, “develops meaningful interpretations of learning experiences” (p. 2). A new learning situation starts with some goals and requires students to have some learning strategies to achieve the learning situation. In this learning situation, they evaluate their learning, find out what they have done correctly and what they have done incorrectly, and apply to some different learning strategies to overcome the difficulties. Consequently, they self-reflect and interpret their learning experiences in this learning situation.

There are some studies about the importance of self-reflection on education. In one of them, Williams (2006) studied the relationship between self-reflection and academic performance and concluded that self-reflection has a direct effect on academic performance because if a person spends more time reflecting on their learning process, he/she can be more successful. In another study, Gün (2010) stresses

the importance of education teachers to reflect on their teaching and used self-assessment as a tool for English teachers to educate themselves how to reflect. According to Gün, feedback coming from their self-reflections is more effective for teachers than feedback coming from different sources such as colleagues and learners. This results from the fact that their self-reflection enabled them to discover their strengths and weaknesses, and to develop strategies individually or together with their colleagues so that they could improve their weaknesses as Gün finds out. It helped teachers to be autonomous teachers. In addition, Xu (2011) focuses on the relationship between self-reflection and various language tasks like vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension, working memory, and sentence-sensibility judgment. Xu finds out there is a negative correlation between need-for-self-reflection and vocabulary knowledge. That is, if the need-for-self-reflection increases, learners' achievement in vocabulary knowledge decreases. Need for assessment does not affect sentence-sensibility judgment processes as well as reading comprehension (Xu, 2011). Another study carried about by Monet and Etkina (2008) indicates that reasoning is a key factor of self-assessment because it enabled teachers to understand a concept better, and have the highest learning gains.

To summarize, self-reflection assists students and teachers to make new discoveries about themselves in a learning situation. In this learning situation, they start with their goals and aims, monitor and evaluate their own learning process on their own. Thus, they can find out their own learning strategies that they can apply when they encounter any problem, and so they can make meaningful interpretations of their own learning experiences.

2.5. Assessment

This section will first mention the definition of assessment. Then it will go on to explain different kinds of assessment including alternative assessment, formative assessment, self-assessment, and e-portfolio assessment. It is important to know alternative, formative, and self-assessment to understand the features of e-portfolio because it is an alternative assessment tool in which teachers can give formative feedback, and students can self-assess their own learning.

2.5.1. Definition of Assessment

Assessment can be defined as “a process which aims to understand and improve learners’ learning” (Durak Üğüten, 2009, p.26). As it is understood from the definition, one of the aims of assessment is to help find out what students have learned and what they have misunderstood. Another aim is to enable students to find out how these misunderstandings can be corrected. As a result, assessment is an important part of teaching and education process.

Assessment is necessary for effective teaching and learning because assessment enables educators to collect data about the learning processes of students and to understand to what extent students have learned depending on the aims and goals of the curriculum by analyzing the data. As a result, they can find out what students have misunderstood and help students correct the misunderstandings by giving them feedback about their learning process. Therefore, both educators and students have a chance to improve their learning, which makes teaching more effective.

2.5.2. Different Kinds of Assessment

Alternative assessment, formative assessment, self-assessment, and e-portfolio assessment will be explained in order in this section.

2.5.2.1. Alternative Assessment

Hamayan (1995) defines alternative assessment as, “procedures and techniques which can be used within the context of instruction and can be easily incorporated into daily activities of the school or classroom” (p. 213). Also, it is defined as, “any non-testing assessment methods which both demonstrate what students can do and inform future instruction” (Bagley, 2010, p. 86). Alternative assessment is not like classical and standard testing which is composed of multiple-choice, fill – in – the- blank, or true-false questions, but it is about what learners can do by using their skills and what they have learned in a creative way to produce. Portfolios, e-portfolios, narrative evaluations, rubrics, an end-of-year presentations are some methods of alternative assessment (Bagley, 2010). Depending on given examples of alternative assessment methods, it can be easily understood that alternative assessment is used to assess what

learners know and what kind of skills they have to carry out the study, which helps learners to construct knowledge (Buluş Kırıkkaya & Vurkaya, 2011).

In order to understand what alternative assessment is, the characteristics of it should be known. In one study, Hamayan (1995) mentioned the characteristics of alternative assessment. According to Hamayan, alternative assessment:

1. provides learners with an environment in which they can use real language in authentic situations which they may encounter in their daily lives;
2. requires the use of both language skills, like reading and listening, and various aspects of language, like pronunciation and grammar, which is not based on grammatical structure, but on the creative use of all skills and aspects of language in a context;
3. deals with learners' skills and abilities which may affect language learning proficiency;
4. enables educators to prepare assessments that are appropriate to learners' lives and experiences because educators can create assessments that can meet learners' needs;
5. enables educators to evaluate learners' performance by using plenty of sources obtained from alternative assessment.

In another study, Janisch, Liu, and Akrofi (2007) defined the characteristics of alternative assessment. According to Janisch et al., alternative assessment

1. enables learners to be the constructors of their knowledge because they are an active participant of their own learning;
2. makes assessment dynamic and ongoing because learners' learning processes are recorded, so both learners and educators have a chance to view how learners learn;
3. empowers learners because learners are responsible for their own learning, the goals are relevant to their needs, and their own learning processes are evaluated individually;
4. is authentic and integrated with activities within class because it is a part of instruction, and contributes to teachers' evaluation and adjustment of their teaching by using feedback taken from assessment.

Alternative assessment leads to an environment in which students can use their language proficiency in authentic situations to produce speaking and writing by using a combination of language skills, various aspects of language, and their skills/abilities.

Moreover, it leads to an actual evaluation of students' learning because alternative assessment enables educators to prepare relevant assessments to students' lives and experiences and collect data from a variety of sources. Also, it makes students' responsible for their own learning, and it empowers them. Furthermore, it provides educators with a dynamic and continuous assessment of learners, so they can adjust their teaching and give immediate feedback to their learners. Therefore, alternative assessment is different from conventional or traditional evaluation of learners' performance (Buluş Kırıkkaya & Vurkaya, 2011). They discover that there is a direct relationship between students' motivation, attitudes and academic achievement because of the characteristics of alternative assessment. As they mention, alternative assessment contributes to learners' forming a positive attitude towards many subjects motivates learners to complete their performance, influences their academic achievement levels, and has a positive effect on it.

In conclusion, alternative assessment differs from traditional or conventional assessment that tests and compares the results of students by using paper-and-pencil tests. Traditional or conventional tests do not take into consideration the authentic use of language, students' language skills and knowledge. On the other hand, alternative assessment allows students to use their language proficiency in authentic situations, so educators can evaluate students' real performance through data collected from a variety of sources.

2.5.2.2. Formative Assessment

Summative assessment refers to summary assessments of student performance – including tests and examinations and end-of-year marks. Summative assessment of individual students may be used for promotion, certification or admission to higher levels of education. Formative assessment, by contrast, draws on information gathered in the assessment process to identify learning needs and adjust teaching. Summative assessment is sometimes referred to as assessment of learning, and formative assessment, as assessment for learning (Looney, 2011, p. 7).

Looney (2011) makes the difference between summative and alternative assessment clear. Summative assessment can be used for assessment of learning while formative assessment can be used for assessment for learning. Summative assessment is product-based and does not take into consideration the process in which students have prepared

their products. On the other hand, formative assessment is process – based and examines the process in order to give feedback about it to students. As a result, students can realize the incorrect parts in their learning and adjust their learning according to what they have learned from formative assessment (Hobson, 2010). Consequently, alternative assessment has some benefits.

Two of the benefits of alternative assessment are long term, meaningful learning, and motivation. According to Hobson, formative assessment leads to long term and meaningful learning because it creates opportunities for students to practice and get feedback about their learning. Formative assessment helps students be active in their learning and requires them to use their critical thinking skills, as Hobson mentions. Formative assessment also increases the motivation of students to study and contributes to students' awareness of what they have learned and where they need to adjust their learning, so it is considered as a tool for learning process and product (Weurlander, Söderberg, Scheja, Hult, & Wernerson, 2011).

Another benefit of it is academic achievement with real time feedback. Looney (2011) reports that formative assessment can help lower achieving students to raise their academic achievement because real-time or immediate feedback is one of the goals of formative assessment, and feedback assists them to close learning gaps. Formative assessment can be modified and adjusted during the learning process depending on the data collected from students' performance to find out the parts that need to be adjusted as Looney explains. Thus, formative assessment is considered as flexible, so it can meet the needs of students', motivate them to take risks, and teach them to make mistakes while studying in the classroom (Looney, 2011; Weurlander et al., 2011). Consequently, students self-assess and self-evaluate their own learning process, and so they are able to find out what they have learned and what they have not learned. For students' self-assessment and self-evaluation, feedback is necessary because feedback guides and informs them about their mistakes and shows how they can overcome them. Feedback can be given individually and timely in formative assessment because formative assessment focuses on students' own learning processes and creates a variety of sources for educators to evaluate students' learning processes and to give feedback depending on their evaluation (Looney, 2011; Hobson, 2010; Weurlander et al., 2011).

To summarize, formative assessment is integrated with teaching and learning because educators can monitor, view, and evaluate students' performance and learning

process individually. They can understand what students have learned and have not learned and question the way they assess students, as well. Thus, they can improve the way of finding out if anything is wrong. On the other hand, students are motivated to take part in their learning actively, and are encouraged to self-assess and self-evaluate their learning, so they can reveal what they do well and what they need to improve. As a result, formative assessment is necessary for effective teaching.

2.5.2.3. Self-Assessment

Self-assessment is more accurately defined as a process by which students 1) monitor and evaluate the quality of their thinking and behavior when learning and 2) identify strategies that improve their understanding, and skills. That is, self-assessment occurs when students judge their own work to improve performance as they identify discrepancies between current and desired performance (McMillan & Hearn, 2008).

Self-assessment relies on the idea that students evaluate their own work on their own. As McMillan and Hearn (2008) mentions, students judge their own work, find and identify their misunderstandings and mistakes. Then they can improve their learning by making corrections during the evaluation process. When students self-assess, they also become responsible for their own learning, have the control over their learning, and become autonomous. According to McMillan and Hearn, there is a self-assessment cycle that is made up of three components: self-monitoring, self-judgment, and identification and implementation of instructional correctives. Self-monitoring makes students focus on what they are doing. Self-judgment requires students to know their progress in comparison to target performance defined and determined before, so they can reveal what they have learned and what they still have to learn. Identification and implementation of instructional correctives enables students to find out their own learning strategies, so they can utilize their learning strategies to correct their mistakes and misunderstandings, and improve and extend their learning. As a result, it can be discovered that self-assessment improves students like what Kayler and Weller (2007) found out in their research. They indicated that self-assessment empowers students by enabling them to take control of their learning and decide the direction of their learning. According to them, self-assessment, therefore, enables students to identify their strengths and weaknesses, to improve their learning by using feedback they give themselves, so they can reflect what they have learned on their learning.

In summary, self-assessment is the process through which students explore themselves and find out their strengths and weaknesses when self-assessing their products. Depending on the self-assessment cycle, students pay attention to what they are doing, compare their performance with the targeted performance, identify what they have learned and have not learned, use their strategies to correct their misunderstandings, and implement them in their own learning processes. Accordingly, self-assessment can be motivating and encouraging for students to explore their own learning processes and reflect what they have learned from their self-assessment on their learning.

2.5.2.4. E-portfolio Assessment

E-portfolio assessment is similar to portfolio assessment though each one requires different collection tools to collect students' works. This similarity results from the fact that both portfolio and e-portfolio assessment can be used to assess writing skills and improve language learners' writing skills in language teaching and learning (Qinghua, 2010; Tabatabaei & Assefi, 2012; Caner, 2010; Erice, 2008). In Qinghua's study (2010), it is stated that Chinese EFL learners could improve their writing skills in some dimensions including accuracy, complexity, fluency, and coherence through portfolio-based writing assessment. According to Tabatabaei and Assefi (2012), Iranian EFL learners could improve their writing skills in English and some sub-writing skills such as focus, elaboration, and organization. In another study by Caner (2010), portfolio assessment was found to be supportive and conducive to the students' their learning process in writing courses, and their attitudes towards the use of portfolio assignment in writing courses are positive. The main focus of Erice (2008) was on the use of e-portfolio to improve Turkish EFL learners' writing skills and the comparison of the use of portfolio assessment and the use of e-portfolio assessment in writing courses. She found out that e-portfolio could improve learners' writing skills in English by improving their self-evaluation skills, technology skills, and enabling them to keep the track of their own learning. In contrast to what Erice found out about the use of e-portfolio assessment in writing, Abbaszad Tehrani (2010) states that net-folio has no effects on improving writing skills, but mentions that students' attitudes towards the use of net-folio in writing classes are positive. What's more, net-folio motivates and helps students, "develop a more critical eye for their friends' performance ..."

(Abbaszad Tehrani, 2010, p.91). Therefore, students can learn new ways to improve their writing skills. Depending on the results of the studies that were mentioned above and which are about the use of portfolio and e-portfolio to assess writing, both portfolio assessment and e-portfolio assessment can improve learners' writing skills in language teaching and learning.

In addition to the contributions of e-portfolio assessment to students' writing skills, there are some other contributions (Chang, 2008). Chang categorizes the contributions of e-portfolio assessment as follows:

1. An e-portfolio is organized and developed by learners.
2. It demonstrates and reflects learners' learning process and achievements.
3. It helps learners to develop self-learning and self-evaluation.
4. It develops students' self-assessment and self-reflection skills.
5. It encourages teacher-learner interaction and reader evaluation.
6. It enables learners to take part in assessing actively.
7. It enables learners to choose portfolio content and method of presentations and set learning objectives (Chang, 2008, p.1757). In other words, students are encouraged to participate in the decision-making process actively.
8. It develops the interaction between peers and peer assessment.
9. It promotes learning outcomes in the long run.
10. It makes learners responsible for their own learning by enabling them to plan their learning actively.
11. It makes learners creative.
12. It motivates learners to learn and evaluate themselves by using their self-confidence.
13. It improves learners' technological skills.

Consequently, e-portfolio assessment focuses on learner's individual learning process and aims to keep the track of learners' own learning, to give individual

feedback, and to enable them to improve their own learning. Therefore, e-portfolio assessment is authentic and realistic. It can be used to assess and improve writing skills of language learners.

2.6. Assessing Speaking Skills

Assessing speaking skills requires knowledge of the features of spoken language versus written language because knowing the features of speaking is necessary to decide the kind of speaking that is needed to be assessed in a special assessment context depending on social and situational needs (Louma, 2009).

- 1) The grammar of speech is composed of idea units that are short phrases and clauses used with conjunctions such as and, but, so and are not full sentences as Louma mentions. They occur at the time of speaking because the communication and interaction are between speakers and listeners, and speaking occurs as a result of this relationship, and are simpler than the sentences used in writing. It is because writing includes complex sentences composed of subordinate and main clauses. Writers have more time to produce and think about what they are going to write while speakers have to produce sentences / responses under time pressure (because listening and speaking are intertwined) (Louma, 2009).
- 2) Speaking is a social activity because it provides communication between two or more people, so they can share information and construct their relations. Depending on the aim, there are two kinds of talk: listener-related talk (chat) and information-related talk (Louma, 2009). According to Louma, listener-related talk focuses on making and maintaining social contact, so it is “a large part of anyone’s social life” (p. 22), while information-related talk’s main concentration is on transferring information on a particular topic. Talking to chat and talking to inform are some forms of language use.
- 3) Speaking occurs in social situations that are composed of eight categories involving “situation, participants, ends, act sequence, key, instrumentalities, norms, and genre” (Louma, 2009, p. 24).
 - a. *Situation* is the physical setting and the nature of speaking.
 - b. *Participants* are speakers, hearers, and audience.
 - c. *Ends* are the conventional outcomes of the event.

- d. *Act sequence* is the content of what is said and the way it is said.
 - e. *Key* is tone, manner, and the spirit of the act.
 - f. *Instrumentalities* are channels such as spoken and the forms of speech such as dialects.
 - g. *Norms* are of interpretation and interaction such as right to initiate topics.
 - h. *Genres* are categories like storytelling, a joke, or presentation.
- 4) Speaking also assigns people different roles and creates communication depending on the relationships between people, as Louma emphasizes.

Communicative tasks are used to assess speaking skills in language teaching, so in order to form the construct of the tasks, it is important to decide “what speakers will be asked to *do* with the language” (Louma, 2009, p. 31). Therefore, the kind of talk is the focus of speaking tasks. According to Louma, there are some kinds of talk: factually oriented talk and evaluative talk. Louma mentions that factually oriented talk includes description, narration, instruction, and comparison while explanation, justification, prediction, and decision are kinds of evaluative talk. The kinds of talk are communicative functions. There are macro functions and micro functions in communication according to the Common European Framework of Reference (Louma, 2009). Macro functions are similar to the kinds of factually oriented and evaluative talks. Louma (2009) mentions the six categories of microfunctions including “giving and asking for factual information, expressing and asking about attitudes, suasion, socializing, structuring discourse, and communication repair” (p. 33-34). The kind of talk or communicative function also determines the type of activity/activities in the task. For example, students are going to make a comparison and talk about it if the kind of talk assessed is comparison.

According to Louma, speaking assessment can be construct-based or task-based. In construct-based speaking assessment, only the speaking skill is assessed, and the effects of other skills such as reading and listening are not taken into consideration (Louma, 2009). On the other hand, task-based speaking assessment focuses on language-use context and requires using the target language in real-life conditions (Louma, 2009). In assessing speaking skills, tasks are used generally. As Louma mentions, tasks can be pedagogic or real-life simulation. According to Louma, pedagogic tasks are language-focused and created specifically for certain types of language use while real-life simulation tasks such as role-play are used to simulate

language use outside the classroom. Tasks can be stand-alone or integrated (Louma, 2009). Louma states that in stand-alone tasks, spoken interaction and communication are assessed, but the effects of other skills are avoided while integrated tasks deal with target language-use in real-life situations and take into consideration effects of other skills (listening, reading, and writing), so integrated tasks make speaking assessment authentic. In speaking assessments, interaction and communication can be one-directional or two directional (Louma, 2009). Louma explains that the tasks whose communication and interaction are one-directional are tape-based tasks in which learners listen and respond to the audio while in tasks in which communication and interaction are two-directional, communication and interaction occur at least between two people.

According to Louma, communicative speaking tasks are either open-ended or structured. Open-ended tasks aim “to get the examinees to do something with language as an indication of their skills” (Louma, 2009, p. 48), and include description, narration, instruction, comparison, role-play, explanation, justification, prediction, decision, and reacting in situations. Structured speaking tasks are like multiple-choice tasks in writing and reading, and the main focus of this kind of task is on one-narrow aspect of speaking, as Louma mentions. Read aloud, sentence repetition, sentence completion, factual short-answer questions, and reacting to phrases are examples of structured tasks in which students just focus on one aspect of speaking like pronunciation, and by which their speaking skills are assessed (Louma, 2009).

In sum, assessing speaking skills may be a very complicated process because of the inner structure of speaking such as spoken grammar which is composed of idea units that are short phrases and sometimes are not full sentences, and social aspects of speaking which forms communicative or language functions in speaking like describing, narrating, or comparing something by using language. These communicative / language functions determine the construct of speaking assessment because these functions can help to understand what learners can do with language. For example, if the main aim of speaking assessment is to assess learners’ describing speaking skills, pictures can be used as an assessment activity. Tasks are generally used to assess speaking skills and have different features such as stand-alone, integrated, live, tape-based, open-ended, structured, pedagogic, and real-life simulation. Tasks can be used to assess speaking by avoiding the effects of other skills or by taking into consideration the effects of other skills on speaking.

CHAPTER 3

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter will give detailed information about research design, participants, data collection procedure, data collection instruments, and data collection environment. It will end with the weekly explanation of the process.

3.1. Research Design

This study is a small scale qualitative one in that the data was collected through teacher's diary, self-reflection papers, cover letters, and interviews about the e-portfolio process. It focuses on a problem about speaking assessment detected by the researcher's own experience as a tester who has taken part in testing and assessment of English in an English Language Program at a university in Turkey for almost three years and as a listening & speaking teacher. To collect data, teacher's diary, e-portfolio, self-assessment papers, cover letters, and interviews were used. The findings were analyzed by using content analysis.

3.2. Participants

The participants of this study are the English language students studying at Zirve University, School of Foreign Languages, English Language Program at the upper-intermediate level. The number of the participants is 17. Their level of proficiency was determined by a proficiency and placement test done by the administration at the beginning of the semester.

3.3. Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected at Zirve University, School of Foreign Languages, English Language Program in Gaziantep by evaluating students' e-portfolios qualitatively, conducting interviews, and making students write self-assessment papers and cover letters.

This study lasted eight weeks. The eight weeks was designed and organized as follows:

- 1. The first four weeks:** The first four weeks were for the first assignment about fashion. In the first week, interview 1 was carried out with the students. 17 interview papers were given to the students, but only 9 returned to the researcher. The students were informed about the e-portfolio process and the expectations of speaking e-portfolio. They were trained on how they could record and create their own videos or audio by using IPhoto and submit their assignments to lore.com, which is the online speaking e-portfolio platform in this project. Also, the researcher formed two blog pages for the students which explained how to make an email account, record video or audio, upload their recordings to youtube.com, and submit their projects to lore.com. The first assignment was an individual study. After the students were given their first assignments, they prepared and submitted their first projects to lore.com in the second week. As they had some problems with recording and uploading, the researcher did another training session with the students. Students' projects were evaluated by the researcher and given feedback. Depending on the feedback given to the students, they prepared their projects again and submitted them in the third week. In the fourth week, the students self-assessed their projects. After the self-assessment process finished, the researcher evaluated their re-uploaded projects.
- 2. The second four weeks:** The students were given their second assignment about games in the fifth week. In the second assignment, the students were allowed to prepare their projects individually, in pairs or groups. After they prepared and submitted their projects, the researcher evaluated their projects and gave feedback for each project in the sixth week. In the seventh week, the students organized and prepared their projects again according to the feedback given to them. Afterwards, they self-assessed their projects. In the eighth week, the researcher evaluated the students' projects. The students wrote cover letters about the process. They were given 17 cover letters, but 12 returned to the researcher. In addition, interview 2 was conducted with the students. 17 interview papers were given to the students, but only 8 returned to the researcher.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

The study used several instruments to collect data qualitatively. When the term started, a structured interview (interview 1) was conducted with the students by the researcher. During the project, students wrote two self-assessment papers about each assignment after they completed them. When the term finished, students wrote individual cover letters about their experiences using e-portfolio in their speaking classes. At the same time, the second structured interview (interview 2) was conducted with the students by the researcher. In addition, the researcher kept a diary about the whole process and his experiences. The researcher used triangulation to measure and determine the reliability and validity of the data collection instruments.

3.4.1. Cover Letter

Cover letters were used in order for each student to self-evaluate his/her own learning process during the project and self-reflect on what they have done to overcome the deficiencies they discovered during the project. Cover letters were prepared in Turkish and English because there were 16 Turkish students and 1 Tajik student in the class.

There were 9 items in the cover letters. They are *students' ideas, what they have learned, how they felt, whether e-portfolio could contribute to their speaking skills or not, what they did while they were preparing their e-portfolios, what they did to improve their e-portfolios, whether e-portfolio could help them identify their strengths when they spoke, whether e-portfolio could help them identify the weaknesses which they thought they could improve, and what they did to overcome their weaknesses.*

3.4.2. Interviews 1 and 2

Interview 1, which was structured and prepared in Turkish and English, was conducted with the students at the beginning of the project. The aim of it was to identify students' attitudes towards speaking and the use of the Internet, their ideas about e-portfolio, their problems in speaking classes if they had any, and their ideas about recording themselves and evaluating their own speech. There were 8 items in the

interview 1. They were *which skill(s) can be learned easily, whether speaking can be learned easily or not, whether they have difficulties in speaking classes and, if so why, whether they have evaluated their own speaking performances before or not, whether they have evaluated other students' speaking performances or not, whether they have recorded their own speaking performance and watched them, what they know about e-portfolio, what the Internet is and whether it can be used as an educational tool, and whether they think watching their own speech may help them improve their speaking skills when they watch them in an online safe platform.*

Interview 2, which was structured and prepared in Turkish and English was carried out with the students by the researcher. The aim of it was to reveal whether speaking e-portfolio could help learners to improve their speaking skills, technology skills, motivation, and self-confidence, and to identify their strength and weaknesses while they were speaking, and what they thought about whether e-portfolio should be used or not. It had six items including *whether speaking e-portfolio could affect students' speaking skills or not, whether the use of e-portfolio in speaking classes could improve their technology skills, whether it could increase their motivation, whether it could affect their self-confidence, whether it could help them find out their strengths and weaknesses while they were speaking, and whether e-portfolio should be used in speaking classes or not.*

3.4.3. The Researcher's Diary

The researcher kept a diary about the whole process. He mentioned *the preparation of the project, what kind of problems he faced during the project, how he could overcome those problems, his observations about students' attitudes towards e-portfolio, his reflections about each assignment and e-portfolio, and his meetings with the students about problems with the online platform (lore.com) and with recording audio or video, feedback about their e-portfolios, and brainstorming about each assignment.*

3.4.4. Self-Assessment Papers

Self-assessment papers were prepared in English and were used after each assignment was completed. The aim of them was to help students focus on their performance during each assignment and evaluate it. They had two items *including what they did well and what they should improve in each assignment*.

3.5. Data Collection Environment: Lore

Lore (<http://www.lore.com>) is an online e-learning and course management tool which teachers and students can use to communicate with each other through chat or posting messages and whose basic features were based on the main features of social media websites like Facebook. For example, Lore looks like Facebook because students have their own profile pages, can customize their own profile pages, can post messages, can share videos (they can not upload, but copy the link of a video on a video-sharing website like YouTube), can make comments on their friends' videos or status messages. Also, Lore can be used to form online courses to assign students and store their assignments, to inform them about the course requirements, and to announce what will be in the actual classroom. It is free to use.

Lore is a user-friendly online platform for both teachers and students. Lore is the education version of Facebook because they share some features such as forming users' own profile pages, sharing status message, sharing videos, making comments for user's video(s) and user's friends' videos, and using "Like" button to like user's friends' status or video(s). It has a discussion board on which everybody registered to the course can see what has happened or is going on and another function which enables users to follow what other users have done on their profile pages. These features allow the instructors to share assignments, make announcements about the course, communicate with the students registered in the course, follow the students' projects, and give feedback individually to each student about the assignments as Figure 1 indicates. Students, therefore, can get feedback individually on their own projects, can check and compare their projects with others' to understand how they can improve their weaknesses. Also, instructors can give information about the syllabus of the course, share supplementary files or links for the assignments and course, and inform students about the assignment and exam. Another advantage of Lore is that

both students and instructors get an e-mail automatically sent by Lore when a person shares something, writes a comment, or likes something.

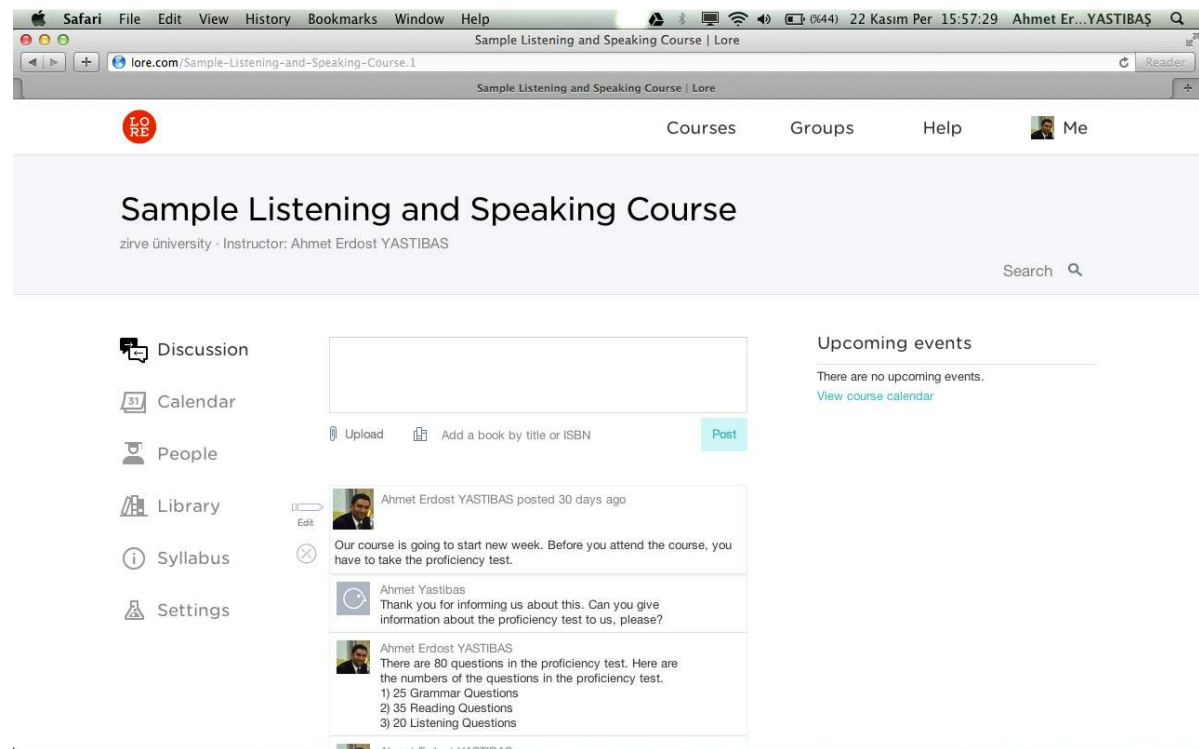


Figure 1: A sample announcement and the communication occurring between the lecturer and student about the announcement on Lore

When you click on www.lore.com, you can see there are two views: one is for instructors and the other one for students as seen in Figure 2. If you are an instructor and want to create an online course, you should click on the part prepared for the instructor. To create an online course, click on the link “Create a course”. There are seven steps to complete creating an online course. First, fill in the form that includes different sections for email address, full name, and password. After clicking on “Get started”, continue to fill in the forms in which you have to write the name of the course, the name of your institution, the content of your course, the schedule for the course, the start and finish time of the course, and your choice about the course privacy. After completing each of these forms, click on “Create my course”. After creating your course, you can add and register your students manually to your online by using their e-mail addresses or give the code formed by Lore only for your course to your students to register.

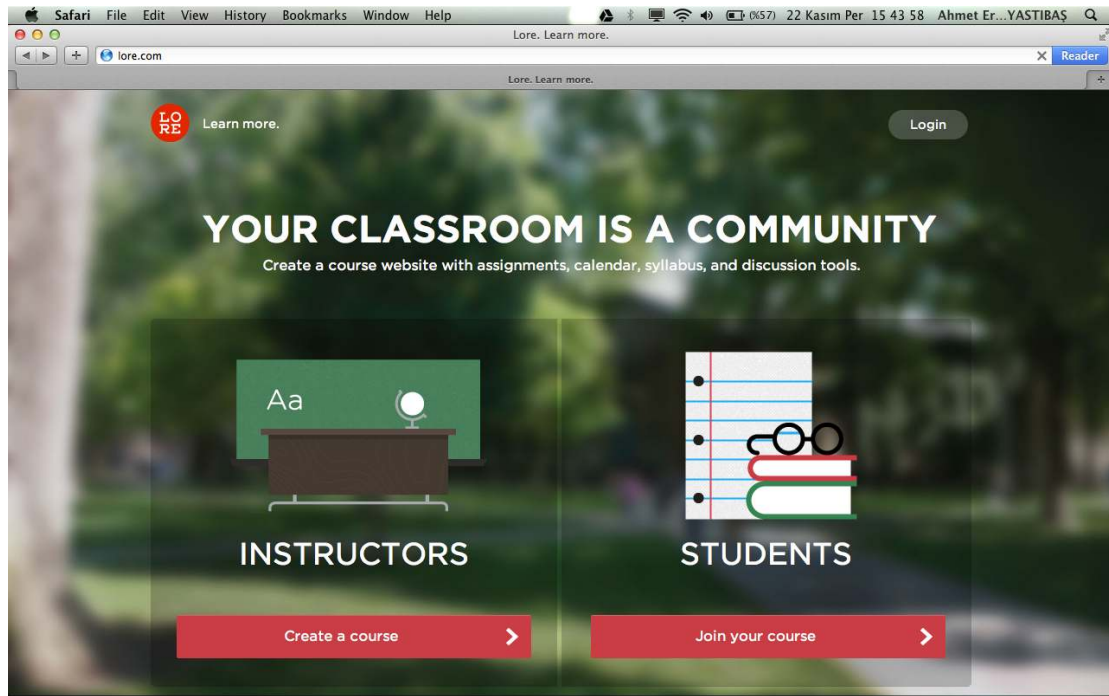


Figure 2: The main interface of Lore

3.5.1. The Features of Lore

The menu on the course page has 6 features: discussion, calendar, people, library, syllabus, and settings in order as Figure 3 shows.

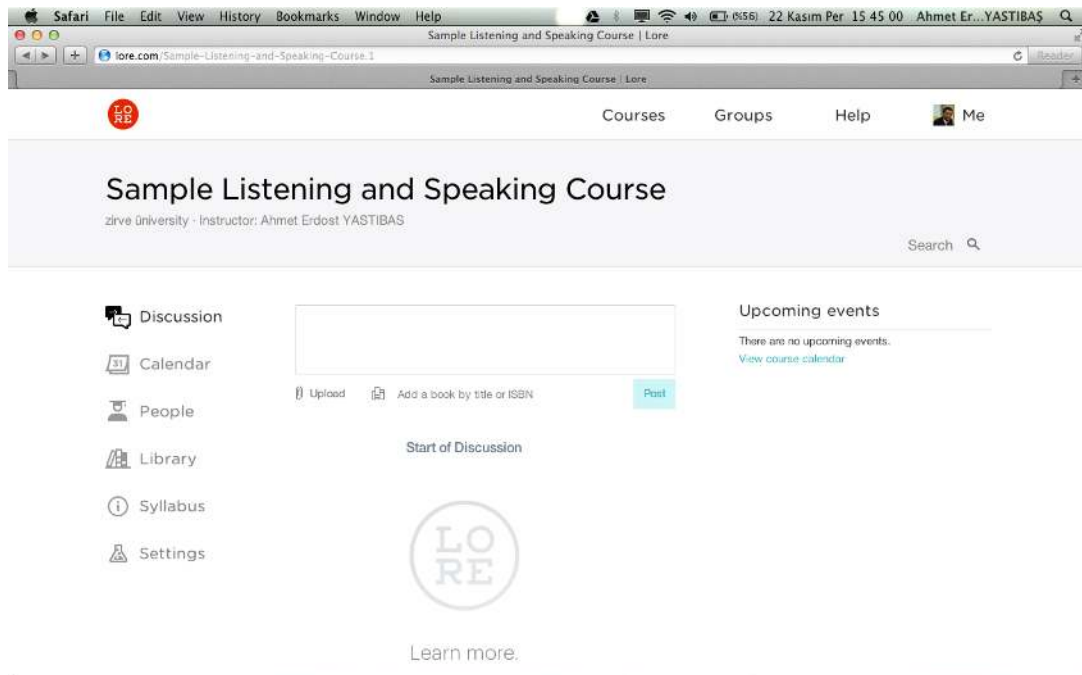


Figure 3: The interface for sections of Lore

1. **Discussion:** This section enables the instructor to inform his/her students about the course, make announcements, share activities, and communicate with students. Students can use this section to watch their friends' videos, make comments about them, post messages about the course, and post their assignments.
2. **Calendar:** The instructor can use 'Calendar' to create and announce assignments, exams, and new events about the course. He / She can determine the due date for exams, assignments, and new events, so he / she can control the process.
3. **People:** The instructor can add students to register the course and assign other instructors to control and monitor the course. In addition, he / she can check the members of the course, visit the members' personal pages, and check what they have shared, written, and posted.
4. **Library:** The instructor can upload and share supplementary materials for the course by using 'Library'. He / She can copy the link of a video, audio, or presentation that can be used to provide students with extra materials and post it there.
5. **Syllabus:** The instructor can describe the content of the course, write the topics that will be covered during the course, and mention the syllabus of the course there, so students can follow what they are going to study and learn what the course is about.
6. **Settings:** The instructor can change the settings of the course related to the course name, institution, course dates, and privacy of the course.

3.5.2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Lore

Lore is a free and online course management tool that has six basic features: discussion, calendar, people, library, syllabus, and settings. Lore looks like Facebook because discussion on Lore serves as news feed on Facebook where a user can follow what others have shared and posted while people on Lore is like friends on Facebook where users can add and delete friend(s). Besides, it has a chat function like Facebook where students can chat with each other or their instructors, and has a message function where the instructor can message to students individually. The Facebook-like design of

Lore makes the use of this online classroom management tool user-friendly. Therefore, an instructor can get accustomed to use this system.

Lore enables the instructor to create and make announcement(s) about the course, to watch students' posts about the assignments online, and to give feedback about them to students. For students, they can get feedback about their projects individually from their instructor, watch their friends' posts, read the feedback about their friends' projects, and so can understand how they can improve their own projects. Lore stores students' projects with the feedback given to them on students' personal pages, so the instructor can follow what they have done and observe whether students can improve themselves or not. The instructor can create new assignments, events, and exams with students. He / She can also upload and share supplementary materials about the course with the students.

Although students and instructors can upload word or pdf documents to Lore, it does not support video or audio upload. This may cause problem(s) when it is used as an e-portfolio platform in speaking classes, but this situation can be avoided by uploading video or audio to video sharing websites such as YouTube or Daily Motion. Another problem with the system is that it is sometimes updated, so this may cause some problems such as not being able to connect the website when it is updated.

3.6. Data Collection Process

The project was carried out during the first quarter of fall term when the academic year started on the 1st of October in 2012. The project continued 8 weeks, and the details from each week are explained below.

Week 1

The researcher prepared two blog pages which indicate the students how to make an email account, to record video or audio by using IPhoto program, to upload their projects to youtube.com, to log in lore.com, and to submit their projects and which were prepared in Turkish and English as it is seen in Figure 4 and 5 which informs the students about how to log in and submit projects on Lore in Turkish and English in order. The web address of the blog page prepared in Turkish is

<http://speakingportfolio.blogcu.com>, and the other address for the blog page prepared in English <http://speakingportfolioeng.overblog.com>.

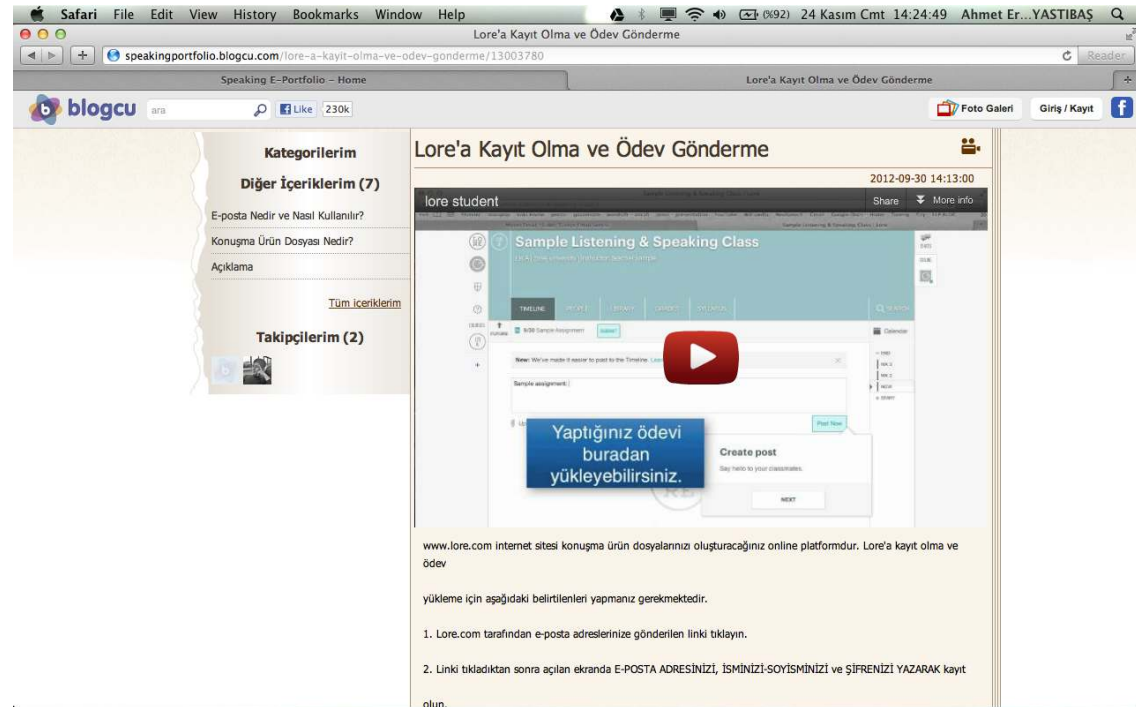


Figure 4: The Turkish blog page prepared to indicate how to log in lore.com and to submit projects

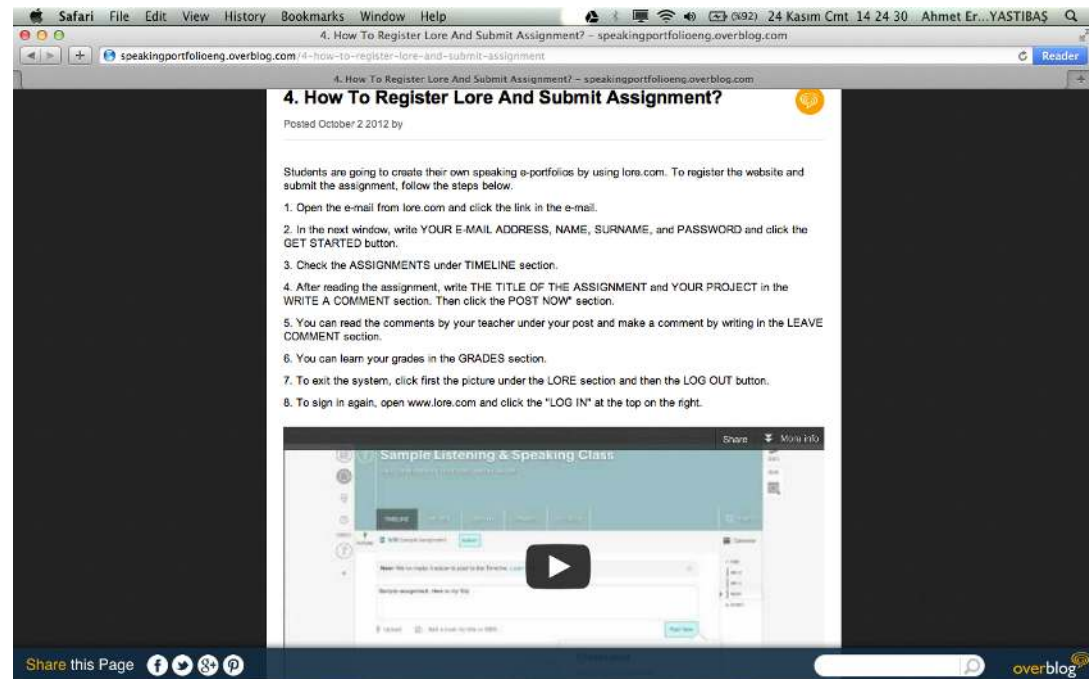


Figure 5: The English blog page prepared to indicate how to log in lore.com and submit projects

The students were informed about the expectations and requirements of speaking e-portfolio process. They were told that they could record their video or audio by using

different programs such as iMovie, or their cell-phones. As iPhoto, which is a free video program provided by Apple, is easy to use, the researcher trained the students about how they could record their video or audio by using iPhoto. Also, the students were trained about how they could upload their projects to youtube.com, and to log in and submit their projects to lore.com. The students were required to upload their videos to youtube.com since lore.com does not allow its users to upload videos. Some of the students did not want to record their own videos owing to some personal reasons so that they were allowed to record their video or audio for their projects. The students were required to prepare individual projects about the first assignment. After the training session, interview 1 was carried out with the students. Then they were given their first assignment, and it was about fashion. The researcher and students brainstormed what kind of projects students could prepare. The students were allowed to use one of the ideas they came out with while brainstorming in the class, or their own ideas.

Week 2

The students prepared their individual projects, but there were some problems with their projects. The first problem was that some of them recorded their audio and video, but could not upload it to youtube.com, so the researcher did another training session about uploading video to youtube.com. For the ones who recorded their audio, the researcher showed how they could prepare videos by using iMovie, which is a free moviemaker program by Apple. The second problem was that some of them could not log in to lore.com while some could log in but not submit their projects. Consequently, the researcher showed and explained the login and project submit process to lore.com to them. The students' individual projects were evaluated and given feedback by the researcher.

Week 3

The researcher organized a feedback session to the students about their first videos, brainstormed, and talked with them how they could improve their projects. Then they prepared and uploaded their second videos about the assignment 1 according to the feedback given to their first videos by the researcher.

Week 4

The researcher gave a short training session about how the students could self-assess their first assignments by using a sample video taken from youtube.com and assessing it using the questions prepared by himself. The students self-assessed their first assignments. When the self-assessment process was completed, the researcher evaluated their second videos about the first assignment and gave them feedback.

Week 5

The students were given their second assignments about games. The researcher and students brainstormed and talked about possible projects that they could use to prepare their videos about the second assignment. They were permitted to prepare their videos individually, in pairs, or in groups.

Week 6

The students prepared and uploaded their third videos about the second assignment. The researcher evaluated and gave feedback about their third videos to them. The researcher also organized a general feedback session about the third videos related to the second assignment and talked with the students about how to enhance their video projects.

Week 7

The students organized, prepared, and submitted their forth video about the second assignment according to the feedback given to their third videos by the researcher. The researcher organized a short training session again for the students to self-assess the third and forth videos about the second assignment. After self-assessment process, the researcher evaluated the forth videos and gave feedback about them to the students.

Week 8

The researcher distributed cover letters to the students in which each student was supposed to self-evaluate and self-reflect their learning process related to the speaking e-portfolio project. Then the researcher carried out interview 2 with the students.

3.7. Conclusion

The research design, participants, data collection procedure, and data collection instruments were told in detail in this chapter. Also, the data collection environment, lore was described mentioning the features, advantages, and disadvantages of lore, and the chapter was concluded with the detailed weekly explanation of the data collection process.

CHAPTER 4

4. FINDINGS

This chapter will focus on the analysis of the data gathered by the cover letters, interviews, self-assessment papers, and researcher's diary in an order determined by the research questions. The analysis of each data collection tool will be mentioned in different sections supported by the excerpts taken from the data collection tools. In the end the results of the findings will be discussed.

4.1. Assessing Speaking Through E-portfolio

To answer the first research question, the researcher's diary was analyzed. As it is mentioned in and understood from Chapter 3, assessing speaking skills through e-portfolio requires a careful planning and organization because the use of technology, the participants, their feelings and attitudes towards speaking and technology, the tasks, feedback, and the e-portfolio platform may affect the e-portfolio process negatively if the e-portfolio process is not planned and organized carefully.

The researcher decided to use Lore as the speaking e-portfolio platform because it is a free classroom management tool whose inner structure looks like Facebook and is composed of six sections. Each of this section is designed for different functions. For example, discussion section helps make announcements and share activities with the classroom. It also allows each user to have their own personal pages where the students' assignments are. The speaking e-portfolio was based on the videos prepared by student's recording themselves or their voices, but Lore does not allow users to upload and share videos. It only allows copying and pasting the link of videos from websites like YouTube. Meanwhile, each student had to record their video or audio to prepare their own speaking e-portfolios. Therefore, the researcher prepared two different blog pages in Turkish and English which are mentioned in Chapter 3 and in which how to make a Gmail account, to record audio or video by using IPhoto, to upload video to YouTube, and to register and submit video to Lore are explained and supported by videos prepared by the researcher. The researcher decided to use YouTube because it enables users to adjust the privacy settings of their videos when they upload a video. The researcher decided to use 'unlisted' as privacy settings

because unlisted allows people who have the link of video to watch the video, so the students' worries about being watched by everybody could be stopped. The students had to make a Gmail account to upload their videos to YouTube because YouTube is a service provided by Google and only works with a Gmail account. Then the researcher prepared two tasks depending on the listening & speaking course book.

The project lasted 8 weeks. When the project started, the researcher informed the students about the e-portfolio and did a training session about how to record video or audio, to upload a video to YouTube, and to register and submit their projects on Lore. Then the students were given their first task that was about fashion. The researcher and students brainstormed about the possible projects for the first task. In the second week, the researcher made another training session about the technological part of the speaking e-portfolio and introduced another program iMovie to the students. Then he evaluated the students' first video. In the third week, he organized a feedback session and discussed how the students could improve their deficient sides in their e-portfolios with them. In the fourth week, the students uploaded their second videos about the first task and self-assessed their learning process during the first task after they were trained about how to self-assess their speaking e-portfolios. In the second four weeks, the same procedure was followed. The students were given their second task that was about the games, they prepared their first videos by using their own ideas or the ones brainstormed in the class, got feedback, prepared their second videos, and self-assessed their learning during the second task.

There are some problems with the use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment. These problems can be categorized as follow:

- 1. Problems resulting from the students:** Some students did not have enough computer skills, so they had some problems when they tried to record their video or audio, to upload their videos to YouTube, and to submit their projects to Lore. The second problem was about punctuality. Some students did not submit their projects on time, and this caused some problems such as evaluating the students' videos later than the planned time.
- 2. Problems resulting from Lore:** Although Lore is a user-friendly classroom management tool, not uploading video to it directly may cause some problems. Also, it is sometimes updated, but this update may affect the whole system negatively.

3. Problems resulting from the task: The choice of subjects to task is important because if subjects are not motivating and interesting, the students may not want to do it and find it demotivating. The first task was about fashion, but some students did not like it, and their dislike affected their attitudes towards the first task negatively while they found the second task more enjoyable and interesting.

To solve the problems mentioned above, the researcher developed his methods. He organized two training sessions and prepared two blog pages in Turkish and English to help the students whose technology skills were not improved a lot. He held individual meetings with the students who did not submit their projects on time and tried to persuade the students to submit their projects on time by mentioning the possible benefits of the use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment. Video upload problem to Lore was solved by making the students upload their videos to YouTube and submit their projects on Lore by copying and pasting the links of their videos on YouTube.

During the eight weeks, the researcher found out that the students could improve their speaking in terms of the use of language (vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation), self-assessment, and self-confidence by evaluating the feedback he gave to students' videos, students' self-assessment papers, and making some talks with the students about the e-portfolio assessment in speaking in class time. Consequently, when the things that the researcher has mentioned are taken into consideration, it is understood that speaking can be assessed through e-portfolio.

4.2. The Attitudes of Students Towards the Use of E-portfolio in Speaking Assessment

To answer this question, cover letters, interview 1, interview 2, and self-assessment papers were analyzed. The analysis of each data collection tool was given in different parts and in a chronological order determined by the date when each of them was carried out. The attitudes of students towards the use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment were explained by using the assumptions acquired through the analysis of each data collection tool.

4.2.1. Interview 1

There are 8 questions in interview 1 in order to find out what students thought about speaking, what kind of difficulties they had while speaking, what their ideas were about portfolio, self-assessing their speaking, and what they thought about whether recording, watching or listening to their speech on an online safe platform could improve their speaking. 17 students were given interview questions, but only 9 returned to the researcher. To start with what they thought about speaking, six of nine students thought that speaking is an easy skill to learn and improve because practicing can improve their speaking skills. Following are some example excerpts from students' interviews.

Student 1: Speaking is not difficult to learn, but it should be improved. It can be improved by practicing a lot.

Student 2: Easy because it can be improved by speaking.

Student 3: Easy because we constantly speak English in class and make practice. This improves speaking.

As it is mentioned in the first paragraph, most of the students thought that speaking can be learned and improved easily as long as they practice speaking. On the other hand, two of them thought that it is difficult to learn because of lack of practice and anxiety while one thought it is either difficult or easy depending on the practice. This can be understood from the excerpts of student 8 and 9.

Student 8: Speaking is the most difficult skill for me. I am very anxious while speaking. While everybody knows the truth, that I speak incorrectly makes me anxious.

Student 9: It is a difficult skill because I have never tried to speak.

It can be said that the students' ideas about speaking are shaped mainly by practice and partly by feelings.

When the students were asked whether they had difficulty in speaking and what they were if so, eight of nine students wrote that they had difficulties while they were speaking while one of them mentioned that he did not have any difficulty in speaking. The difficulties of the students can be categorized as academic and affective difficulties that were determined by the researcher depending on the students' responses to the question 3 in interview 1. Academic difficulties are generally related to grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation while affective ones are related to anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation. The example excerpts from the students' responses to the question three show this categorization clearly.

Student 1: Yes, I have. I cannot form sentences while I am speaking...

Student 2: Of course! Pronunciation is very bad and difficult. Some words are fossilized, I cannot change them.

Student 3: Yes! I cannot explain myself if there is an unknown word for me.

Student 5: I have some difficulties because I can forget even easy words as I do not speak a lot, and I am very excited while I am speaking.

Student 8: ... I am very anxious while speaking. While everybody knows the truth, that I speak incorrectly makes me anxious.

Student 9: Because I am not self-confident and do not practice enough, I have difficulties.

As it is understood from the excerpts, not forming sentences, pronunciation, and unknown words (which are categorized as academic difficulties by the researcher) may create difficulties to the students. Being nervous, excited, and not being self-confident (which are categorized as affective difficulties by the researcher) may cause difficulties in speaking, as well.

The question 4 focuses on the students' self-assessment of their own speech. They were asked whether they self-assessed their own speech before or not, what their ideas were about the effect(s) of this experience on their speaking if they did it before,

and how it would affect their speaking performance if they had to do it for the first time. Depending on the answers given to this question, seven students did not self-assess their speaking before while two of them did it. Although seven students did not self-assess their speech before, four of them believed that self-assessment could improve their speaking. The following excerpts of student 1 and 2 show that although they did not self-assess themselves before, they think it could improve themselves.

Student 1: Such an evaluation will improve my speaking skills because more practice means more skills.

Student 2: No, I did not evaluate. It can improve.

While these two show that the students have some positive ideas about self-assessment, the excerpt below taken from student 4's response to the question shows that self-assessment can enable students to find out their deficient sides and try to improve them.

Student 4: I self-assessed slightly and saw I had some deficient sides in some topics. For example, my vocabulary level was deficient. I tried to speak more fluently by trying to improve it. I mean it had a positive effect.

Only three of nine students responded to the question 6 about what they knew about portfolio. The excerpts indicate what they knew about portfolio.

Student 2: A file where many unnecessary papers come together.

Student 3: Make a summary of the studies we did and file them.

Student 8: The combination of the activities we did.

Although student 2's opinion about portfolio is negative, the three excerpts reveal that students know portfolio is a file that is the combination of their works.

The last question in the interview is about whether the students' recording, watching or listening to their speech on an online safe platform can improve their

speaking. Nine of the students thought that this activity could improve their speaking because it may help them to be self-confident and improve their self-assessment skills as it can be understood the excerpts below.

Student 3: Yes, it can improve. I can correct my mistakes by watching my mistakes.

Student 5: It may! We will be more self-confident and it can improve our speaking.

4.2.2. Self-Assessment Paper 1

Self-assessment paper 1 was given to the students after the first task was completed. It allowed the students to self-assess their learning process. They were required to self-assess their own projects and mention what they did well and should improve in their projects.

In self-assessment paper 1, the number of the students who self-assessed their project is 15. Ten of the fifteen students thought that they prepared their first tasks well. The reasons for this evaluation are generally related to the organizations and designs of the videos. Here are some example excerpts from the students' responses in self-assessment paper 1.

Student 7: When I did my project, it was good and the design was better. I put the main picture in the video and write about Tajik national beauty contest.

Student 14: I think the organization of my first assignment is very good.

The excerpts showed that the students' understanding of organization and design in the projects were effective on their evaluation of their own learning process. On the other hand, the others thought that their first projects were not good because lack of computer skills such as recording a video or audio and the students' feelings about the topic of the task. As a result, these two reasons may affect the students' understanding of evaluation negatively. Students 1, 12, and 13's explanations about it indicate the

negative effects of lack of computer skills and the students' feelings about the topic of the task.

Student 1: Our theme is not attractive so I think it was bad...

Student 12: My first assignment wasn't good. Because I couldn't prepare a successful video. I couldn't upload photos about my speech.

Student 13: I don't think my first assignment was good. Because I didn't know how to use the i-movie in that video and I could not have put good pictures...

As it is seen, not knowing how to use a program and how to upload pictures, and not finding the theme attractive have affected the students' self-assessments of their first projects.

In self-assessment paper 1, the students were required to explain what they should improve according to them. The areas that the students thought that they should improve are related to preparing a video, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. The example excerpts reveal the problematical areas that the students thought they should improve.

Student 2: I should learn how to use my computer and I can make a good video.

Student 6: I think I should improve my pronunciation and grammar.

Student 10: At my old assignment (first video) I did some grammar mistakes but when I record second I think I fixed them.

Student 13: ... I didn't have any good experience for making video...

4.2.3. Self-Assessment Paper 2

Self-assessment paper 2 was given when the students completed their second task that is about games. Like in self-assessment paper 1, the students assessed their

own learning process in terms of what they did well and what they should improve in the second task.

Sixteen students self-assessed their projects for the second task, and fifteen students thought that their second projects were good because of the improvements they had in terms of grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, organization, video, and self-confidence and because of the topic of the second task. Eight of them thought that they improved themselves in different aspects such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, organization, and computer skills while one of them thought that he improved his self-confidence. Here are some example excerpts from students' ideas about what they did well in their second task.

Student 3: In my second assignment I make my video well, and used my own words. I maked as well as I can. I put pictures to my video...

Student 9: I think that my pronunciation is better than old one in the second assignment.

Student 10: I use new words and 2nd assignment help me improve myself because I talked without preparing anything and it improve my self-confidence.

Student 12: It was an group work and we organized really good.

Student 14: I improved my pronunciation, grammar, and speed of speak in my second assignment. I was wise to my mistake. I tried to correct.

It can be understood from the examples that self-assessment could help the students understand and see their improvements in speaking in different aspects such as grammar, and in computer skills.

In the second task, the students were allowed to prepare their second projects individually, in pairs, or in groups. Only four of the students prepared their second project as a group. The group work could motivate group members to prepare their video, help them be more creative, and make their projects more authentic. The examples from the group members given below show the effect(s) of group work on students' motivation and creativeness.

Student 2: I think we went go kart and this is very good for our assignment. Our assignment topic compare real and artificial game. It is very good.

Student 5: I think our idea is creative so it is good...

Student 10: ... Also we enjoyed a lot while we were driving go kart.

Student 12: It was an group work and we organized really good.

Students' responses indicate that group work can influence the students' motivation, understanding of organization and of creativeness.

The second part of self-assessment paper 2 is about what the students think they should improve in their second tasks. Ten of the sixteen students thought that they should improve mainly pronunciation, grammar, and organization of the videos while four of them thought that they should improve mainly their computer skills such as using a moviemaker program and video recording. The following examples are about the areas where students thought they should improve.

Student 7: I think my second assignment about games was good for me. However, there can some problems about grammar. I should improve my pronunciation and grammar.

Student 9: I think, for improve my second assignment, I must more care about my grammar.

While the example excerpts of student 7 and 9 focus on grammar and punctuation, the student 16's answer concentrates on the organization of the video in terms of the relationship between photos and text.

Student 16: I should improve the relationships between photos and text.

As it was mentioned before, four students formed a group and did their second projects together. Three of the group members were aware of the fact that they had some technical problems with their video. To give an example:

Student 2: I think our voice system is very bad and our moviemaker is very bad.

Student 5: We can volume up our voice...

As it is seen in the examples, group members could find out that they had a problem with their voice in the video. Therefore, students' self-assessment of their own learning can involve their computer skills, and this can help them figure out what they did well and should improve in terms of technology.

4.2.4. Cover Letters

The aim of cover letters is to enable the students to self-evaluate their own learning process during the e-portfolio process and self-reflect these evaluations. They were given to the students after they completed their second task and did their self-assessment of their learning process in the second task. Although seventeen cover letters were given to the students, only twelve returned to the researcher.

The attitudes of the students towards the use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment are determined and shaped by their gains. That is, what the students thought that e-portfolio could enable them to improve shaped their attitudes towards the use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment. The researcher developed three categories which are dependent on the students' responses about what they improved after he finished coding cover letters. These categories are academic, affective, and technological improvements.

4.2.4.1. Academic Improvements

Academic improvements involve improvements in grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and in other skills like writing. It seems that e-portfolio process could improve the students' self-assessment skills, so they could find the problematical parts in their videos and try to improve them. To give an example:

Student 1: When I watch my projects for the first and second tasks, I can see the difference between my first project for task 1 and my second project for the second task. I think my second project is better than the first one in terms of appearance and I spoke better in the second project.

The ideas of the student 1 mentioned in the excerpt show that the student could observe her improvement by watching her videos in her speaking e-portfolio. Also, self-assessment enabled the students to realize their mistakes they made while they were speaking. Here are some examples.

Student 4: I did not record my voice while speaking before. Thanks to e-portfolio I could realize the mistakes, especially pronunciation... During this process, I understood that I made some grammar mistakes and incorrect use of some basic words. I could try to use the structures that I learned in the next assignment.

Student 6: ... I realized that if I want, I can speak easily. Besides this, I think that I should improve my vocabulary because my vocabulary level is not good.

Student 7: ... I paid attention to my pronunciation. I searched how to pronounce the words that I used, and read my writings to find out my grammar mistakes again and again.

Student 8: ... I tried to improve my pronunciation by rehearsing in front of the mirror.

The excerpts indicate that the students could be aware of their grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary mistakes they made while speaking. They tried to overcome these mistakes. As a result, they self-evaluated their own learning, recognized their good and deficient sides, and tried to improve them. This process could improve their grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary.

Student 7: ... I think it (speaking e-portfolio) is beneficial for me. It improved my vocabulary and writing. While I was translating the sentences I wrote to English, I learned some new words.

Student 8: ... To be honest, it (preparing the videos) was very boring and exhausting, but it contributed to the improvement in my writing.

Depending on the excerpts taken from students 7 and 8, the use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment can improve not only the students' use of language in terms of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, but also their writing skills.

4.2.4.2. Affective Improvements

The use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment could improve the students affectively in terms of anxiety, responsibility, and self-confidence. E-portfolio could reduce the students' anxiety, so they could speak easily. To illustrate:

Student 2: ...I was very excited while I was preparing the video, but I learned how to overcome my excitement while speaking...

Student 4: ...I am very anxious while speaking; but I could not encounter such a problem during the speaking e-portfolio process...

In addition to reduce in the level of anxiety, students could become more self-confident while they were speaking in their videos in that they could overcome their anxiety, so they could speak easily. This could contribute to the students' self-confidence.

Student 3: E-portfolio assignment in speaking classes improved our sense of responsibility.

The main focus of the example is on the relationship between e-portfolio and responsibility. E-portfolio required the students to organize the content, pictures, and setting of their own videos, and to self-assess their own learning process, so this requirement could make the students more responsible for their own e-portfolios.

4.2.4.3. Technological Improvements

The use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment requires some basic computer skills such as recording a video or audio, uploading a video to the Internet, and using a website to submit homework. As it is mentioned in self-assessment papers 1 and 2, some of the students had problem(s) because they did not know how to record a video or audio, to organize the content of a video, and to upload a video to YouTube. When the research ended, the students mentioned that they improved their computer skills during the project. Here are some examples that indicate the students' comments about the improvements in their computer skills.

Student 7: During the preparation process, I had some difficulties because I did not know how to use I-Movie very well. I had to look for pictures for the second video and made the video again and again. I did not experience any difficulties in the third video.

Student 9: ...I learned how to use some computer programs...

Student 11: ...I learned how to make a video...

To sum up, the academic, affective, and technological improvements could have affected the students' feelings about the e-portfolio tasks positively. It may be because the students could understand that they could improve their own learning in speaking classes through the use of e-portfolio assessment. To exemplify:

Student 2: ...In video recordings, comical conversations and events happened. It was very enjoyable.

Student 7: Doing these tasks were very enjoyable...

Student 8: For me, the e-portfolio used in the class was very useful for us...

Student 9: The portfolio assignments that we did were very useful for us...

Student 10: The e-portfolio method used in the class is relaxing and educational.

The adjectives used in the examples are enjoyable, useful, relaxing, and educational. They are used to describe the e-portfolio assignments and the use of e-portfolio as a method in speaking assessment.

4.2.5. Interview 2

There are six items in interview 2, and they are about the effects of e-portfolio on speaking, technology skills, motivations, self-confidence, self-assessment, and whether e-portfolio should be used in speaking or not. 17 students were given interviews questions, but only 8 returned. In order to understand the students' attitudes towards the use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment, the items of interview 2 were analyzed in order.

4.2.5.1. The Effects of E-portfolio on Students' Speaking Skills

All of the students who returned to interview 2 papers to the researcher thought that e-portfolio affected their speaking in a positive way. One of the reasons why they thought so is related to self-assessment because they thought that e-portfolio could improve their self-assessment skills, so they could recognize their good and deficient sides in their projects, and could improve their deficient sides. The following examples illustrate this:

Student 5: Of course, I think it affected because I did it for the first time and after I watched, I recognized the mistakes especially pronunciation I did.

Student 8: I think it affected. I realized my mistakes when I watched it after I recorded it.

Self-assessment could help the students to find out what they should improve as it did for student 5. Depending on the self-assessment, it is understood that pronunciation is

one of the areas in which the students had problems and which they thought e-portfolio helped them improve. Examples below show this assumption:

Student 1: I think it affected to some extent. Because while recording audio, I think it improved my pronunciation. So it must have affected my speaking in class.

Student 3: I think it affected. I find the word that I mispronounced while watching and correct their pronunciation.

E-portfolio could affect the students' speaking skills affectively, and this could contribute to the improvement in the students' speaking skills as seen in the following excerpt.

Student 7: Because speaking myself is more relaxing, I think e-portfolio has a positive effect on me. I can say my speaking ability has improved.

4.2.5.2. Technology Skills

All of the students thought that e-portfolio could improve their technology skills especially video recording and video upload. It may be because technology is the key point of preparing an e-portfolio, and the students were required to record a video or audio and upload it to YouTube in order to submit. These obligations could lead to the improvement in technology skills. The excerpts below exemplify the improvements in technology skills.

Student 1: It affected certainly. Because I did not upload any video to the Internet. Also, I learned how to use I-movie.

Student 7: Normally I am good at computer, but I did not know anything about making a video. Thanks to this implementation, I learned many things about making a video.

4.2.5.3. Motivation

Three of the eight students thought that e-portfolio could motivate them while the rest did not think so. Therefore, it can be said that e-portfolio did not motivate the students a lot, but to some extent. E-portfolio could decrease anxiety, so this could motivate the students to speak without being anxious. Also, e-portfolio could affect the students' sense of responsibility. To illustrate:

Student 2: Yes, it increased my motivation. It increased my sense of responsibility for doing homework.

Student 4: It did not affect negatively. Instead, it motivated me to speak more. In the beginning, I was anxious when I spoke, but I could decrease my anxiety to some extent thanks to e-portfolio.

Although e-portfolio could motivate the students to some extent, most of the students thought that it did not motivate them to speak. One of the reasons for this is the difference between recording and speaking in public as seen in the example below:

Student 1: I do not think that it affected a lot because recording an audio was different from speaking in public.

The second reason may be personal because a person's lack of self-confidence may avoid speaking well. The example below indicates it:

Student 5: No, it did not affect. It did not affect because of lack of self-confidence resulting from me.

Another reason may be the students' self-motivation as it is seen in the excerpt taken from student 6's interview 2.

Student 6: It did not affect. My motivation was high.

4.2.5.4. Self-confidence

Five students thought that e-portfolio made them more self-confident in speaking while the rest did not think that e-portfolio led to improvement in their self-confidence. E-portfolio could improve the students' self-confidence to some extent, so they started to feel more eager to speak and could speak easily as understood from the excerpts below.

Student 2: Yes! It improved my self-confidence in speaking. I became more eager to speak. Because nobody looks at you while speaking, and I can delete the video if I do not want.

Student 3: I think it affected. I can speak in a more relaxing way.

Personality traits and the nature of speaking might cause the students not to improve their self-confidence during the e-portfolio implementation in speaking assessment. Here are two examples:

Student 1: I did not think it affected because speaking in public is different from speaking while recording a video or audio.

Student 5: Unfortunately no! I have lack of self-confidence resulting from me. Therefore, I could overcome this by using neither video nor another tool.

4.2.5.5. Self-assessment

Seven of the eight students thought that e-portfolio could enable them to find out their good sides and deficient sides which they think should be improved while the rest did not agree that e-portfolio could help him do so. The students stated that they generally realized their mistakes in grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, so they tried to improve their mistakes, which resulted in the improvements in their speaking. The following examples are about this relationship:

Student 5: Yes, it did. For example, I understood that I made pronunciation mistakes. Video assignments enabled me to make grammatically correct sentences...

Student 8: Listening to my video helped me to find out my pronunciation mistakes.

4.2.5.6. Should E-portfolio Be Used in Speaking Classes or Not?

All of the students who returned their interview 2 papers thought that e-portfolio should be used in speaking classes because they thought that e-portfolio could improve their speaking skills, self-assessment skills, technology skills, could force the students to make some research about the topic, and e-portfolio is enjoyable and educational. Here are some example excerpts:

Student 1: It should be used because I think it improves speaking skills.

Student 3: I think it should be used because we can improve ourselves in many ways. We can learn how to make and record a video. Also, we can improve our mistakes after we watch our videos.

Student 5: It should be used because I think it is both enjoyable and educational...

To sum up, interview 1 indicates that most of the students thought that speaking is an easy skill to learn while most of them had difficulties while speaking. Their difficulties are generally related to grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, lack of confidence, and anxiety. Also, they knew that a portfolio is the combination of one's works and thought self-assessment might help them improve their speaking. All of them believed that recording a video or audio and watching/listening to it again on the Internet might help them to improve their speaking skills. In self-assessment papers 1 and 2, the students had the same problems that they mentioned in interview 1, but they could improve themselves to some extent. In addition, they mentioned they had other problems related to technology and organization of the videos. Their problems were

that they could not record and upload a video to the Internet. During the time between the first task and second task, there was an improvement in the students' computer skills because fewer students continued mentioning the same problem in self-assessment paper 2. In cover letters, the students mentioned about the effects of e-portfolio on their speaking skills. They thought they could improve their grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and their computer skills. They were less anxious and while speaking and became more self-confident while speaking. As a result, they defined e-portfolio and e-portfolio assignments 'enjoyable, useful, relaxing, and educational'. Like the results of cover letters, the results of interview 2 show that the students believed that e-portfolio improved their speaking skills in terms of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Besides, e-portfolio had an important effect on their technology skills and made them more self-confident. All of them thought that e-portfolio should be used in speaking classes. The main reason for how they could understand what they improved is self-assessment because the effects of self-assessment can be seen in each data collection tool. Therefore, the attitudes of the students towards the use of speaking e-portfolio in speaking assessment are positive.

4.3. The Students' Thoughts About the Contributions of E-portfolio to Their Speaking Performance

To answer this research question, interview 2 and cover letters were used because both were carried at the end of the study. As a result, they could give information about what the students thought about the contributions of e-portfolio to their speaking performance. The content analyses of interview 2 and cover letters having been done separately for the research question 2 show that according to the students e-portfolio has contributed to their speaking performance in terms of the use of language (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary) and of anxiety, self-confidence, and motivation to some extent. Depending on this, the researcher categorized what the students think portfolio has improved in their speaking as academic improvements and affective improvements.

4.3.1. Academic Improvements

Speaking e-portfolio enables the students to develop their self-assessment skills because one of the requirements of e-portfolio is to self-evaluate one's own learning in order to understand what s/he has done well and what s/he should improve. In accordance with this, the students found out that they had problems with grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary while they were speaking. This forced them to try to find some solutions to improve the problems they found out themselves in their speaking. The examples below illustrate the situation:

Student 4: I did not record my voice while speaking before. Thanks to e-portfolio I could realize the mistakes, especially pronunciation... During this process, I understood that I made some grammar mistakes and incorrect use of some basic words. I could try to use the structures that I learned in the next assignment.

Cover Letters

Student 7: ... I paid attention to my pronunciation. I searched how to pronounce the words that I used, and read my writings to find out my grammar mistakes again and again.

Cover Letter

Student 5: Yes, it did. For example, I understood that I made pronunciation mistakes. Video assignments enabled me to make grammatically correct sentences...

Interview 2

Student 8: Listening to my video helped me to find out my pronunciation mistakes.

Interview 2

As it is seen in the sample excerpts from interview 2 and cover letters, self-assessment helped the students to find out what they did well and what they thought they should improve. Then it caused them to look for solutions to overcome the problems they discovered. Consequently, this circulation (watching the video – finding out the

problems – looking for solutions – applying the solutions – recording the video again) could result in some improvements in the students' speaking performances. The examples below indicate this:

Student 5: Yes, it did. For example, I understood that I made pronunciation mistakes. Video assignments enabled me to make grammatically correct sentences...

Interview 2

Student 1: I think it affected to some extent. Because while recording audio, I think it improved my pronunciation.

Interview 2

Student 7: ... I think it (speaking e-portfolio) is beneficial for me. It improved my vocabulary and writing. While I was translating the sentences I wrote to English, I learned some new words.

Cover Letters

4.3.2. Affective Improvements

Anxiety and lack of self-confidence may cause some problems in speaking as seen in the examples taken from the interview 1.

Student 8: ... I am very anxious while speaking. While everybody knows the truth, that I speak incorrectly makes me anxious.

Interview 1

Student 9: Because I am not self-confident and do not practice enough, I have difficulties.

Interview 1

The examples show that both anxiety and lack of self-confidence cause some problems in speaking. On the other hand, the students thought that e-portfolio could help

overcome these problems because it reduced anxiety and improved self-confidence. To exemplify these improvements:

Student 2: ...I was very excited while I was preparing the video, but I learned how to overcome my excitement while speaking...

Cover Letters

Student 4: ...I am very anxious while speaking; but I could not encounter such a problem during the speaking e-portfolio process...

Cover Letters

Student 7: Because speaking myself is more relaxing, I think e-portfolio has a positive effect on me. I can say my speaking ability has improved.

Interview 2

Student 2: Yes! It improved my self-confidence in speaking. I became more eager to speak. Because nobody looks at you while speaking, and I can delete the video if I do not want.

Interview 2

Though the analysis of interview 2 in terms of motivation shows that most of the students returning their interview 2 papers to the researcher thought that e-portfolio did not improve their motivation while speaking, e-portfolio could improve the students' motivation to some extent. It is because lack of self-confidence and being anxious may decrease the students' motivation, as it is understood from the examples of interview 1. On the other hand, student 2 in interview 2 used the word 'eager' to show that he wanted to speak, and student 2 in cover letter said he learned to overcome anxiety to some extent thanks to e-portfolio. These two comments show that e-portfolio helped the students to overcome anxiety and lack of self-confidence to some extent, so it could motivate them.

CHAPTER 5

5. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter will focus on the findings and discuss them in detail. Then the whole study will be summarized. The limitation of the study and implications for the future studies will be mentioned.

5.1. Discussion

The findings of the present study will be discussed in an order determined by the research questions.

5.1.1. Assessing Speaking Through E-portfolio

First of all, the present study tried to find out how speaking can be assessed through e-portfolio. The idea that constitutes the basis of this question is that writing is a productive skill and e-portfolio is believed to improve the students' writing skills when it is used to assess writing in language teaching and learning (Erice, 2008). Although writing and speaking are different skills in nature (Thornbury, 2006), they are considered as productive skills (Mihaljević Djigunović, 2006). As a result, if the use of e-portfolio in writing assessment can improve the students' writing skills, the use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment can have a similar effect on the students' speaking skills. The findings of the research show that the students could improve their speaking skills in terms of grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, motivation, and self-confidence. Also, the researcher's diary indicates that though there were some problems resulting from lack of technology skills and Lore, speaking could be assessed through e-portfolio with careful planning. Consequently, like writing e-portfolio, speaking e-portfolio can help the students to improve their speaking skills.

5.1.2. The Attitudes of Students Towards the Use of E-portfolio in Speaking Assessment

This study tried to answer what the students' attitudes towards the use of speaking e-portfolio in speaking assessment are. To understand this, the researcher categorized the improvements mentioned in the first paragraph as academic, affective, and technological improvements. These improvements are determined according to the data collection tools in which data were gathered depending on the students' self-assessment of their own learning during the e-portfolio process. Therefore, it is understood that self-assessment is the key predictor because it enables the students to judge their own learning, to find and identify their misunderstandings and mistakes, and to improve their learning by correcting during the evaluation process (McMillian & Hearn, 2008).

5.1.2.1. Academic Improvements

Self-assessment makes the students be aware of their good sides and bad sides which they have identified by self-assessing their own learning processes. Thus, self-assessment affects self-awareness. Accordingly, the students self-assessed their own speaking performance in speaking assessment and found out that they had some problems with pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary in terms of the use of language. When the self-assessment papers, cover letters, and interview 2 were analyzed, it was seen that when each of them self-assessed their videos and understood that they had some problems with the use of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, they generally focused on the solutions to these problems and tried to solve them, which resulted in the improvements in their speaking skills academically. On the other hand, the feedback given by the researcher may have an effect on the students' self-assessment of their own videos because it may be thought and questioned how the students who participated in the study had very improved self-assessment skills. The researcher's feedback showed the students the parts they should improve in their videos, but did not give the students specific explanation for those parts and indicate them how they could overcome those parts as seen in the example feedback which was given to a video prepared for the second task below.

But there are some problems with the use of language. You should focus on pronunciation and grammar because it is difficult to understand you in some parts.

The researcher feedback

Consequently, the feedback given by the researcher helped the students to understand which part of their speech they had problems, to focus on them during the process, and to try to find solutions to those problems by themselves. This process helped the students to improve their self-assessment skills, so they could understand what they did well and what they should improve, and could try to overcome them, which stems in improvements in their speaking skills in terms of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary.

In the project, the students were required to make some research about the task given, to prepare a script or take notes to speak while recording their video or audio, to record a video or audio by using their preparations, and to submit it to the researcher. This preparation process could help them improve some other skills like writing and listening, as it is understood from the excerpts below:

Student 7: ... I think it (speaking e-portfolio) is beneficial for me. It improved my vocabulary and writing. While I was translating the sentences I wrote to English, I learned some new words.

Cover Letters

Student 7 stated that she translated some sentences to English and could improve her writing and vocabulary by translating in the cover letter.

Student 8: I think it affected. I realized my mistakes when I watched it after I recorded it.

Interview 2

Student 8 listened to and watched the video and realized the problems in the video. Consequently, the students need to integrate other skills like writing and listening with speaking because they have to make some research, take some notes, and organize their notes by writing. In addition, they have to check their videos in order to understand whether they prepared it well or not, and have to listen to and watch the video again in order to understand the feedback given by the researcher. Thus, they can

check whether they could overcome the parts that they think they should improve. In accordance with this, the students can improve their writing, listening, reading, and speaking through skills as Keshavarzi (2012) mentions in his study about literature. He states that literature enables students to become effective readers, fluent speakers, and writers because students have to read and listen deeply and carefully to understand the text and answer the questions. The connection between literature and e-portfolio is that they both require the students to use different skills in order to improve themselves.

5.1.2.2. Affective Improvements

Although Atli and Bergil (2012), Boonkit (2010), Matsumoto (2010), Hong (2012), Cui-yun (2007) have studied different ways to teach speaking in their studies, there are some common points that their studies have shared: motivation, engagement, self-confidence, and anxiety. Their studies show that if the students are motivated and have self-confidence, their anxiety reduces and the students engage in speaking more. The result of this engagement is improvement in speaking skills. The present study has a similar effect on the students. The findings show that e-portfolio reduces the students' anxiety and helps them speak in a more relaxing way. Also, they indicate that e-portfolio makes the students more self-confident. Reducing anxiety and being more self-confident can make the students more motivated to speak though the part about motivation in interview 2 shows the opposite. This may be because the students have a chance to make some preparations and to rehearse their speaking. While they are practicing their speaking, nobody watches them, which decreases anxiety and increases self-confidence. As a result of this, e-portfolio can improve the students' speaking skills by reducing their anxiety and increasing their self-confidence.

E-portfolio is a product created by a student that shows his/her own learning process (Gray, 2008), so it requires a student to be responsible for the preparation, organization, and presentation of his/her own e-portfolio. Therefore, each student was responsible for preparing their own e-portfolios, organizing, and creating the content of their own videos in speaking e-portfolio. They had to check the feedback given to their videos, find out the parts that they thought should be improved, try to overcome them, and to prepare their videos again if necessary. As it is seen, the students were responsible for their own learning in speaking e-portfolio. In addition, the students were required to self-assess their own learning, so it made them responsible for their

learning again as self-assessment enables the students to take the control of their learning and decide the direction of their learning (Kayler & Weller, 2007). Therefore, the students' sense of responsibility can be improved in speaking classes by e-portfolio.

As Gonzalez (2009) mentions, e-portfolio makes students be aware of their own learning and its implications. Therefore, they become more autonomous. In speaking e-portfolio, students were responsible for their own learning because they were allowed and required to organize their own videos, decide the content of them, watch their own learning progress, evaluate their learning, and improve the parts that they thought should be improved. This process requires the active participation of the students in the learning process. Consequently, the students can become more autonomous in speaking classes when e-portfolio is used to assess speaking.

5.1.2.3. Technological Improvements

E-portfolio is the digital collection of a person's studies (Lorenzo & Ittelson, 2005; Gray, 2008; Rhodes, 2011), so knowing how to use technology is necessary to create an e-portfolio. Therefore, if a student does not know how to use technology or has unimproved technology skills, it may cause some problems such as lessening the effectiveness and efficiency of e-portfolio (Dalton, 2007; Dawn et al., 2011). For the speaking e-portfolio project, knowing how to record a video or audio, to upload a video to YouTube, and to submit the assignment online was required, but some of the students participating in the study did not know how to do them. Therefore, some problems occurred at the beginning of the project. With the help of training sessions, blog pages prepared for the study, and students' being familiarized with the procedure, the problems were solved to some extent, and students could improve their technology skills such as recording a video, arranging a video by using a moviemaker program, and uploading a video to the Internet. Therefore, speaking e-portfolio could enable the students to improve their technology skills as writing e-portfolio does (Erice, 2008).

To sum up, the attitudes towards the use of e-portfolio and portfolio in writing assessment are positive because they believe that they can improve their writing skills when e-portfolio is used (Erice, 2008; Caner, 2010). The students have the same attitudes towards the use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment because they think that e-portfolio has affected their speaking positively in two ways. The first way is that they

evaluated their own learning and tried to solve the problems related to grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary, which leads to improvements in their use of language. The second is that they could reduce their anxiety and increase their self-confidence by making some preparations, having a chance to listen to their speech in the video, correcting and changing the parts they thought had some problems. As a consequence of this, the students have positive attitudes towards the use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment.

5.1.3. The Contributions of E-portfolio to the Students' Speaking Performance

The study focused on the students' thoughts about the contributions of e-portfolio to their speaking performance. As it is explained in 5.1.2, the students thought they improved themselves in terms of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation through speaking e-portfolio. Also, e-portfolio helped them become less anxious and more self-confident while they were speaking, which motivates them to some extent and improves their speaking skills.

5.2. Conclusion

E-portfolio can be used to assess speaking as it is used to assess writing. It can help the students learn how to self-assess their own projects and improve their speaking skills because self-assessment makes the students take the control of their learning, evaluate it, identify good and bad sides of it, and try to solve them. Thus, this process results in improvements in the use of language (grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary), in technology skills, and in reducing anxiety, and building self-confidence. Therefore, the attitudes of the students towards the use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment are positive.

5.3. Limitations of the Study

The present study has the following limitations.

1. It is not easy to keep the track of the students' developments in speaking because their class was changed after eight weeks. It is because the English Language Program of the school has four levels which last eight weeks.

2. As the researcher was assigned to teach only one listening and speaking class, he could not have a control and experimental group to see whether e-portfolio would cause any change in the students' speaking performance.

5.4. Implications for Future Research

The present study was carried out with two tasks in 8 weeks. As a research topic for future research, the same study will be carried out with more than two tasks in a longer time to see the speaking process of the students.

Another possible topic may be the use of e-portfolio in speaking assessment with a control and experimental group in order to see whether e-portfolio may cause difference on speaking performance of each group.

Learner autonomy is one of the important gains of e-portfolio, so whether speaking e-portfolio can affect learner autonomy or not and if so how it can affect learner autonomy can be studied.

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7. APPENDIXES

7.1. Appendix 1: Cover Letter in Turkish

İsim-Soyisim: _____

Konuşma Dersi Portfolyo Değerlendirmesi

Derste kullanılan portfolyo ile ilgili

A. düşüncelerinizi,

B. neler öğrendiklerinizi,

C. neler hissettiğinizi,

D. size olan katkılarını (ya da katkısı olup olmadığını),

E. hazırlama sürecinde yaşadıklarınızı,

F. portfolyonuzu daha iyi hale getirmek için yaptıklarınızı,

G. kendi kendinize tespit ettiğiniz olumlu yönlerinizi,

H. kendi kendinize tespit ettiğiniz ve geliştirilmesi gerektiğini düşündüğünüz yönlerinizi,

I. bu eksiklikleri gidermek için yaptığınız çalışmaları, samimi bir şekilde yazmanızı istiyorum.

7.2. Appendix 2: Cover Letter in English

Name-Surname: _____

The Evaluation of Speaking Portfolio

I want you to write a composition about the following items:

- A.** your ideas about the speaking e-portfolio,
- B.** what you learned from the speaking e-portfolio,
- C.** your feelings about the speaking e-portfolio,
- D.** the benefits of the speaking e-portfolio to you,
- E.** your experience when you prepared the speaking e-portfolio (what you did),
- F.** what you did to make your speaking e-portfolio better,
- G.** The things that you did best,
- H.** Things that you should improve and what you did to improve them.

7.3. Appendix 3: Interview 1 Questions in Turkish

1. Speaking, sizin için öğrenilmesi ve geliştirilmesi kolay mı yoksa zor bir beceri midir? Neden?
2. Speaking derslerinde zorluklarla karşılaşılıyor musunuz? Eğer karşılaşıyorsanız, karşılaştığınız zorluklar nelerdir? Sizce neden değiştiğiniz nokta veya noktalarda zorluklar yaşamaktasınız?
3. Daha önce kendi speaking performansınızı hiç değerlendirdiniz mi? Değerlendirdiyseniz bu değerlendirmenin konuşmanıza nasıl etki ettiğini düşünüyorsunuz? Eğer değerlendirmediyse, böyle bir değerlendirme yapma sizce konuşma becerilerinizi geliştirir mi yoksa geliştirmez mi? Neden?
4. Daha önce arkadaşlarınızın speaking performanslarını izleyip değerlendirdiniz mi? Böyle bir değerlendirme yaptıysanız, bunun sizin ya da arkadaşınızın konuşma becerilerini nasıl etkilediğini düşünüyorsunuz? Eğer değerlendirmediyse, böyle bir değerlendirme yapma sizce sizin konuşma becerilerinizi ve arkadaşlarınızın konuşma becerilerini geliştirir mi yoksa geliştirmez mi? Neden?
5. Daha önce hiç konuşmanızı kaydedip izlediniz mi?
6. Ürün dosyayı denildiğinde aklınıza ne/neler gelmektedir
7. Sizce internet nedir? Eğitim aracı olarak kullanılabilir mi?
8. İnternette güvenli bir platformda kendi konuşmanızı kaydedip tekrar izlemek sizin konuşmanıza katkı sağlar mı?

7.4. Appendix 4: Interview 1 Questions in English

- 1.** Is speaking an easy skill to learn and improve for you or not? Why?
- 2.** Do you have any difficulty in speaking classes? If you do, what are they? Why do you think you have difficult or difficulties in the points you have mentioned?
- 3.** Have you self-evaluated your speaking performance before? If you have done, how do you think this evaluation has affected your speaking? If you have not done, do you think this kind of evaluation can improve your speaking or not? Why?
- 4.** Have you watched and evaluated your friends' speaking performance before? If you have done, how do you think this evaluation has affected your speaking or your friend's speaking? If you have not done, do you think this kind of evaluation can improve your and your friend's speaking or not? Why?
- 5.** Have you ever recorded your speaking and watched it?
- 6.** What do you know about portfolio?
- 7.** What is the Internet for you? Can it be used for education?
- 8.** Can recording and watching your speaking on a safe platform on the Internet contribute to your speaking?

7.5. Appendix 5: Interview 2 Questions in Turkish

1. Konuşma dersinde ürün dosyası uygulaması konuşma becerilerinizi etkiledi mi?

A) Etkilediğini düşünüyorsanız nasıl etkilediğini açıklayınız.

B) Etkilemediğini düşünüyorsanız nedenini açıklayınız.

2. Konuşma dersinde ürün dosyası uygulaması sizin teknoloji kullanma becerilerinizi etkiledi mi?

A) Etkilediğini düşünüyorsanız nasıl etkilediğini açıklayınız.

B) Etkilemediğini düşünüyorsanız neden etkilemediğini açıklayınız.

3. Konuşma dersinde ürün dosyası kullanımı motivasyonuzu etkiledi mi?

A) Etkilediğini düşünüyorsanız nasıl etkilediğini açıklayınız.

B) Etkilemediğini düşünüyorsanız neden etkilemediğini açıklayınız.

4. Konuşma dersinde kullanılan ürün dosyası konuşma dersi için sizin özgüveninizi etkiledi mi?

A) Etkilediğini düşünüyorsanız nasıl etkilediğini açıklayınız.

B) Etkilemediğini düşünüyorsanız neden etkilemediğini açıklayınız.

5. Konuşma dersinde kullanılan ürün dosyası sizin konuşma becerilerinizdeki kuvvetli olduğunuzu ve geliştirilmesi gerektiğini düşündüğünüz yönlerinizi bulmanızı sağladı mı?

A) Bulmanızı sağladığını düşünüyorsanız bunu sizin konuşma performansınızı nasıl etkilediğini açıklayınız.

B) Bulmanızı sağladığını düşünmüyorsanız nedenini açıklayınız.

6. Sizce konuşma dersinde ürün dosyası kullanılmalı mı yoksa kullanılmamalı mı? Cevabınızı nedenleri ile açıklayınız.

7.6. Appendix 6: Interview 2 Questions in English

1. Did the e-portfolio affect your speaking abilities in speaking class?

A) If you think so, explain how it affected.

B) If you do not think it affected, explain the reason(s).

2. Did the application of e-portfolio in speaking class affect your technology skills?

A) If you think so, explain how it affected.

B) If you do not think it affected, explain the reason(s).

3. Did the e-portfolio in speaking class affect your motivation?

A) If you think so, explain how it affected.

B) If you do not think it affected, explain the reason(s).

4. Did the e-portfolio in speaking class affect your self-confidence?

A) If you think so, explain how it affected.

B) If you do not think it affected, explain the reason(s).

5. Did the e-portfolio in speaking class enable you to find out what your good speaking skills were and what you thought you should improve?

A) If you think so, explain how it affected your speaking performance.

B) If you do not think so, explain the reason(s).

6. Do you think e-portfolio should be used in speaking class or not? Explain your answer with the reason(s).

7.7. Appendix 7: Self-assessment Papers 1 and 2

Self-assessment Paper 1

Name-Surname: _____

Answer the questions about the first assignment below.

1. What do you think you did well in the first assignment?

2. What do you think you should improve in the first assignment?

Self-assessment Paper 2

Name-Surname: _____

Answer the questions about the second assignment below.

1. What do you think you did well in the second assignment?

2. What do you think you should improve in the second assignment?