DIFFERENCES AND CHALLENGES INVOLVED IN THE ASSESSMENT OF
SPEAKING SKILL: THE CASE OF THREE UNIVERSITIES IN ANKARA

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ABSTRACT

DIFFERENCES AND CHALLENGES INVOLVED IN THE ASSESSMENT OF SPEAKING SKILL: THE CASE OF THREE UNIVERSITIES IN ANKARA

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It is a well-known fact among the foreign language teachers that the assessment of speaking is one of the most challenging tasks in the teaching methodology. The reason for that is the lack of proper concepts of the notion 'good speaking skills' and the assessment tasks that would evaluate the learner's ability to communicate efficiently in the real context. The purpose of this study is to investigate the teachers' and learners' perceptions and challenges they face when dealing with speaking skills. Data were gathered via four stages – open-ended and Likert scale questionnaires and two semi-structured interviews that were offered to the academics and the students of Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi University. Another aim is to develop a speaking rubric which would generalize the criteria academics and their students consider to be the most important while evaluating oral performance. Both qualitative and quantitative data was analyzed. The Microsoft Excel program was used for analyzing learners' perceptions about the assessment of speaking in the form of the questionnaire, while content analysis was used in order to analyze the data elicited from

the teachers and students through open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview.

Keywords: assessment, speaking, rating scale, rubric

ÖZET

KONUŞMA BECERİSİNİN ÖLÇÜLMESİNDEKİ FARKLAR VE ZORLUKLAR:
ANKARA İLİNDEKİ ÜÇ ÖRNEK ÜNİVERSİTE

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Öğretim yöntembiliminde konuşma değerlendirmesi yabancı dil öğretmenleri arasında en zorlu görevlerden biri olduğu çok iyi bilinen bir gerçektir. Bunun sebebi uygun "iyi konuşma yeteneği" kavramı fikrinin ve gerçek ortamda konuşmacının iletişim yeteneğini verimli bir şekilde değerlendirebilecek etkinliklerin eksikliğidir. Bu çalışmanın amacı öğretmenlerin ve öğrenenlerin algılama kabiliyetlerini ve konuşma beceriyle ilgili karşılaştıkları zorlukları araştırmaktır. Veriler Orta Doğu Teknik Üniversitesi, Hacettepe Üniversitesi ve Gazi Üniversitesi 'n deki akademisyen ve öğrencilere yöneltilmek üzere ikişer adet açık uçlu ve Likert ölçek soru listeleri ve ikişer adet yarı yapılandırılmış mülakat sonuçları üzerinden elde edilmiştir. Diğer bir amaç ise akademisyenlerin ve öğrencilerinin, sözlü performansları değerlendirirken önemli buldukları kriterleri standartlaştıracak bir konuşma yönergesi geliştirmektir. Bu çalışma tasarımına göre hem nitel hem de nicel verilerin analizler yapılmıştır. Microsoft Excel Programı öğrenenlerin soru listesi formundaki konuşma değerlendirmesi hakkındaki yeteneklerini analiz etmekte ve aynı zamanda içerik analizi için yarı yapılandırılmış mülakat yoluyla öğretmenlerden ve öğrencilerden elde edilen verilerin analizleri için kullanıldı.

Anahtar Kelimeler: konuşma, yöntemi, değerlendirme ölçeği, yönergesi

To my two dearest people,

my mother Svetlana Lozovska and my husband Murat Güneş,

whose love, care and support

helped me to finish this piece of work

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACTFL – American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages

CAL – Centre for Applied Linguistics

ELT – English Language Teaching

ETS – Educational Testing Service

ESOL –English for Speakers of Other Languages

FCE – First Certificate in English

FSI – Foreign Service Institute

IELTS – International English Language Testing System

TOEFL – Test of English as a Foreign Language

TOEIC –Test of English for International Communication

TSE – Test of Spoken English

UCAS - Universities & Colleges Admissions Service

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"The ability to speak a foreign language is without doubt the most highly prized language skill and rightly so…Yet testing the ability to speak a foreign language is perhaps the least developed and the least practiced in the language testing field".

(Lado, 1961, p. 239).

1.0 Presentation

In this chapter background to this study will be given. Then, the research questions will be presented. After that, purpose, scope and significance of this study will be introduced. Finally, the basic terms concerning this research will be defined.

1.1 Background to the Study

The assessment of speaking is known as one of the most challenging, highly demanding tasks in the English language teaching methodology. Consequently, it still remains very hard for teachers not only to find the most advantageous way for eliciting learners' speaking but also to evaluate their oral proficiency objectively. In order to describe the present picture with the problematic issues in speaking assessment nowadays and to check which problems appeared long ago, which have not been solved till present time and which have appeared in this field, it seems necessary to introduce the historical background of oral proficiency assessment.

It is widely known that the practice of second language testing is one of the youngest fields in the language testing. Having first appeared in 1920s, it did not receive enough attention till the time of the Second World War, when many researchers and practitioners admitted that the area of second language assessment needs to be revised and innovated (Fulcher, 1997).

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The main reason why the topic mentioned above was not researched was the strong belief in the inconsistency of the speaking tests in the United States, where at that time (1920s) the assessment of the speaking tests was an area of interest. It was considered impossible to receive the reliable score on the speaking tests, as the assessment was believed to be a subjective process depending on raters' attitudes, mood etc (Fulcher, 2003). It is important to note that the first speaking tests did not actually require the examinee to speak, he was expected to write the transcription of the words that were pronounced by the rater. The example for a similar test may be one introduced by Spolsky: In 1913 the Association of Modern Language Teachers established the university admission tests in French, German and Spanish. For a definite period of time it was considered to be a reliable test that was said to measure the speaking ability of the candidates properly. However, soon the test of speaking did not prove the ability to be reliable as there was no real speaking part in it (Splolsky, 1995).

The first speaking test which tested oral proficiency was a part of the College Board's English Competence Examination for foreign students applying the universities in the United States of America. The College Board was aware of students' communicative skill importance. Thus, its format was the following:

Reading I (four short passages);
Reading II (One longer passage on a critical or theoretical topic);
Dictation;
Speaking (the examinee had to be prepared to speak on ten topics);

The speaking performance was assessed according to the following criteria: fluency, responsiveness, rapidity, articulation, enunciation, command of construction, use of connectives, vocabulary and idiom.

Unfortunately, there is not much evidence of the results of this test. Nevertheless, it was the first evidence for the requirement for the students of North American university – to be able to speak the language in the academic context (Fulcher, 2003).

The research on testing speaking has renewed partly due to the Second World War outbreak. Many soldiers did not have enough speaking skills in order to do their professional duties properly. Therefore, in 1943 the Army Specialized Training Program (ASTP) was established. Finally, pen-and-pencil tests were admitted to be useless for oral proficiency exams and the criteria for success was 'communicative ability' (Barnwell, 1996, p. 86 – 7).

As for the rating scale development, in 1958 the first step towards multiple trait rating was made with five factor rating establishment. They were accent, comprehension, fluency, grammar and vocabulary (Adams, 1980). Although the rating procedure was considered as quite an accurate system of measuring speaking skills, there occurred the problem that still can be applied to the present rating scales – it was admitted that this rating procedure was unable to measure 'effective communication' (Sollenberger, 1978, pp. 7 – 8). Therefore, the following conclusion can be made: The challenges that teachers face nowadays 'accompanied' field of speaking assessment throughout its relatively short history.

Also, as Harold S. Madsen states, "the nature of speaking skill itself is not usually well defined" (Madsen, 1983, p.147). He states that the criteria most often mentioned by the teachers are grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, less often listening comprehension, correct tone and reasoning ability. So, the conclusion can be made that if every teacher has his/her own view of the way to evaluate their students' oral proficiency then the speaking proficiency can't be objective – what are excellent speaking skills for one may be just mediocre for other. This is the question that many researchers find not so easy to give answer to nowadays. This problem creates numerous

questions for the research some of which will be listed in the following part of this chapter.

1.2 Research questions

1. What is that teachers do when they assess the speaking skills?

1.1. What criteria do teachers pay attention to while assessing speaking skills?

1.2. Which of the criteria do teachers pay more attention to while assessing speaking skills?

1.3. What are teachers' attitudes towards the speaking tasks used for assessment of speaking skills?

1.4. What are teachers' attitudes towards the rating scales used for assessment of speaking skills?

1.5. What are teachers' attitudes towards the teacher (interlocutor) – student interaction?

1.6. What are teachers' attitudes towards the rater reliability in the assessment of speaking skills?

1.7. Are teachers satisfied with the materials, namely text books for developing students' speaking skills?

2. What challenges do the teachers face while assessing students' speaking skills and how do they prefer to deal with these problems?

3. Do teachers believe there exists the solution for problems in speaking assessment?

4. What are students' attitudes towards the speaking test methods?

4.1. What are students' attitudes towards speaking English?

4.2. What are students' attitudes towards being tested with role-play, oral presentation, individual interview, class discussion, paired interview?

4.3. What are the problems students face when their speaking skills are assessed?

4.4. What are students' attitudes towards the score they receive for their speaking performance?

4.5. What are factors that influence students' anxiety while speaking English in the classroom?

4.6. What avoidance strategies do students use when they are speaking in English?

4.7. What are the usual tasks and activities students are engaged in class?

4.8. What are students' likes and dislikes concerning oral proficiency classes?

5. What is the common rubric for the academics who are engaged in teaching speaking in Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi University?

1.3 Purpose and Scope of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the current practices in the assessment of speaking field focusing on the challenges teachers face while evaluating oral performance and to examine the students' attitudes towards being tested through the elicitation techniques teachers use.

First of all, the aim of the study is to find out what teachers do when they assess speaking skills. For this, an open-ended questionnaire was constructed with the questions focusing on the problematic issues in testing speaking for the academics of Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi University. Then the semi-structured interview was conducted with the sixteen volunteers from the participants. They were asked questions about their practices and problems in testing speaking, with their answers being recorded and analyzed in order to confirm the results from the open-ended questionnaire. Another aim of the study is to find out students' preferences and attitudes towards some problematic issues in testing speaking. Similar

procedure to the one mentioned above was conducted with the students. First, the structured questionnaire was offered to the first year students of Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi University who have taken a speaking course during their first semester. Then, the semi-structured interview was constructed and implemented with those students who volunteered to participate. The final aim of the study is to develop a speaking rubric on the basis of both teachers and students' perceptions.

The following steps, presented in a figure, will be made while conducting the study:
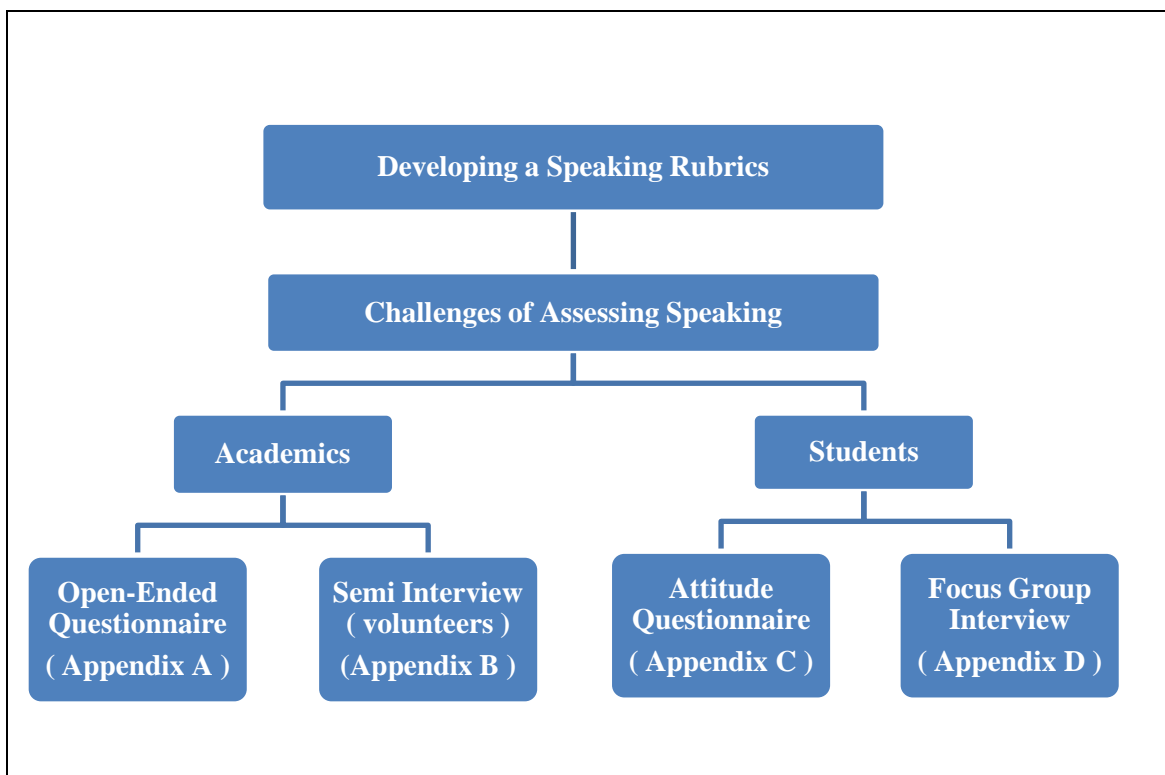
Figure 1: Design of the Study

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study on teachers' current practices and problems in assessment of speaking and students' attitudes towards these practices is significant for four reasons.

First of all, many educators admit that despite the numerous studies conducted speaking assessment still remains one of the most problematic areas in foreign language teaching methodology. Therefore, there is increasing interest to investigate the problems that teachers and students encounter. Locally speaking, English Language teaching is the area in which a lot of research has been made in many countries. However, as far as Turkey is concerned, the procedures of speaking assessment have not been investigated in many studies. Therefore, it seems necessary to obtain more data about the testing of speaking in Turkey.

Secondly, the investigation of problems the teacher and students face in testing of speaking, made in this study may become the first step for finding the way to overcome them, which is one of the primary goals in testing speaking.

One more significance is that students, who participated in this study, will pay more attention to the ways their oral proficiency is tested. Therefore, they will tend to improve their speaking skills. Many scientists, including Watkins, Dahlin and Ekholm (2005), who emphasize that "an effective way to change student learning is to change the form of assessment" (p. 283). It is known as the backwash effect of assessment, understanding of which, according to the above mentioned authors, has become a critical point for improving the teachers' views of the assessment.

Finally, the speaking assessment procedure developed based on the data elicited from the participants, can be a practical guide for other teachers who will test the oral proficiency of their students.

1.5   Definition of Terms

1.5.1. Assessment of Oral Performance

According to McNamara (1996), the assessment based on performance includes the following elements: "the candidate performing elicitation tasks from the instrument, being observed, and then judged using an agreed upon set of rating scale criteria". As for the assessment of speaking, its parts are "the task as a vehicle of performance", the raters with the rating scales and criteria, and different contextual factors (McNamara, 1996, p. 24). Chalhoub-Deville (1995) mentions raters and tasks as the most important parts of the speaking assessment procedure.

1.5.2. Speaking Tests

According to Underhill (1987), speaking test can be defined as "a repeatable procedure in which a learner speaks, and is assessed on the basis of what he says" (p.7). In defining the test task,
Fulcher (2003) refers to Bachman and Palmer (1996) who provide the following definition of this notion: "An activity that involves individuals in using language for the purpose of achieving a particular goal or objective in a particular situation" (Bachman and Palmer, 1996, p. 44).

As Hughes (1989) states, "We use tests to obtain information" (p.9). Following his logic, it is possible to define the purpose of the speaking test as obtaining information about the oral proficiency level. Also, according to Heaton (1975), speaking tests are used in order to "reinforce learning and to motivate the student" (p.1). The notion of good speaking test is quite relative as most of its advantages and disadvantages depend on the context (Underhill, 1987). It is claimed to be undesirable to separate speaking tests from listening ones as in speech situations these skills are interdependent (Heaton, 1975).

1.5.3. Communicative Competence

McNamara (1996) states that the main reason why difficulties in the assessment of second language performance occur is the vagueness of the notion of communicative ability, which has been changed a lot as the English teaching methodology was developing. Skehan (1998) refers to Chomsky who first claimed that the communicative competence mainly includes grammatical knowledge of language. Later, an appropriate language use was added to this construct (McGregor, 2007). Canale and Swain (1980) added to it the discourse and strategic dimensions. Bachman further developed the Communicative Language Ability model, consisting of three elements: language knowledge or competence, strategic competence, and psychophysiological mechanisms. According to him, competence encompasses both knowledge of the language and the ability to use it in the appropriate context (Bachman, 1990).

Finally, Alptekin declares that communicative competence entails four parts, which are grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence (Alptekin, 2000). The native-speaker norms of communicative competence have proven to be a myth, which has been changed into "the competence of the bilingual native speaker" (Kramsch, 1995, p.10).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.0 Presentation

In this chapter, firstly, the current situation in the speaking assessment field will be described. Secondly, the overview of the ways speaking skills are assessed nowadays will be given. Thirdly, the problems in this field will be presented.

2.1 Current Practices in the Assessment of Speaking

According to Weir (1990), while assessing oral performance, a teacher should be aware of several criteria, namely, the procedure should be designed according to the purpose of speaking, it should be motivating for students, supported theoretically, allow interaction as a key element, presuppose "intersubjectivity among participants" (p. 73), and should be as close as possible to real context.

Fradd and Larringa-McGee (1994) state the advantages of the speaking assessment process, which can provide a teacher with the information about the student's way of thinking and his/her performance. However, Luoma (2004) calls the process of assessing speaking "a process with many stages" (p. 4), and it makes it quite challenging as there is no common view on the proficiency in foreign language and the scores given for oral performance lack objectivity.

2.1.1. Types of Speaking Tasks

As Henning (1987) points out, the main purpose of language tests is "to pinpoint strengths and weaknesses in the learned abilities of the student" (p. 1). Fulcher (2003) further adds that it is a significant problem in designing tasks to find the appropriate way to elicit enough speech to be rated.

According to Harris (1969) most tasks for oral performance belong to one of three categories. The first one is interviews with quite vague structure, which though are rated according to the strict scale. The second category is highly structured speech samples, applying which the speech is usually recorded. Also, paper-and pencil tasks usually evaluate pronunciation and test speaking ability indirectly.

Luoma (2004) makes her own division of speaking tasks, according to which there are two basic categories: "open-ended" (p.48) and "structured" speaking tasks (p. 50). Interview and role-play are the basic types of open-ended tasks.

As for the interview, according to Weir (1990), it is one of the most popular ways of testing as it allows face-to-face communication. Underhill defines it as "direct face-to-face exchange between learner and interviewer" (p. 54). Moreover, Madsen (1983) states the main advantage of the oral interview – it "can provide genuine sense of communication" (p. 162). However, Lado expresses an opposite view of interview's "naturalness":

"I do not agree that interview is more natural than some of the other forms of tests, because if I'm being interviewed and I know that my salary and my promotion depend on it, no matter how charming the interviewer and his assistants are, this couldn't be any more unnatural" (Jones and Spolsky, 1975, p.14).

As far as the role-play is concerned, Underhill (1987) describes the procedure of the role-play as a situation when the learner has to imagine him/herself in a certain role and converse with an interviewer (or interlocutor) according to the instructions he/she is given. Luoma (2004) defines the purpose of the role-plays as "to stimulate reality" (p. 49). The abilities that can be tested with the help of the role-play depend on the purpose of language learning: in professional context its purpose is to check if the learner can cope with the tasks that his/her job demands. In social role-plays, the examinee's ability to react to the unpredictable situations is assessed.

Many extra-linguistic factors are involved in the role-play procedure, though there has not been much research on the oral skills through group discussion (Heaton, 1975).

Also, the structured tasks elicit expected short answers. In such tasks the outcome depends on the income and if the answer is not what has been expected, it is considered to be wrong (Fulcher, 2003). Reading aloud, sentence repetition, reacting to phrases has this characteristic. Luoma (2004) further mentions more free subgroup of structured tasks – an oral presentation or talking about the topic. However, according to Hughes (1989) the later and the reading aloud technique are not recommended to use as in the case with oral presentation, it must be stressful for a leaner to stay alone while getting ready for it. Also, he adds that even if this task was carried out in learner's native language, most probably there would be too many differences among the performances of different learners. As for the reading aloud tasks, it has one more drawback that Hughes (1989) mentions – reading skills may interfere while just speaking skills are supposed to be evaluated. Nevertheless, Underhill (1987) considers reading aloud to be a task which has also numerous advantages. For example, it is possible to elicit the language that is necessary for evaluation. He also mentions greater comparability and reliability of the scores for this task in addition to being easier to administer for a teacher and easier to understand the instructions for a learner. Heaton (1989) lists further advantages of this technique, for example, he calls it a useful way to test pronunciation. Nevertheless, it is recommended to choose the texts for reading aloud carefully, selecting more authentic ones.

As for the oral presentation task, when the student is asked to prepare a talk on the given topic in a few minute or a few day period, or "short talk" (p. 97), as Heaton (1975) calls it, this is the type of the task which is considered the most difficult even for a native speakers. Therefore, it is recommended that the teacher sometimes improves it by asking questions based on the student's talk, giving him/her the opportunity to demonstrate the reciprocal speech and avoiding the risk of the student's learning the pieces of his/her speech by heart.

2.1.2. Rating Scales

Fulcher (2003) refers back to Davies et al. (1999) in definition of rating scales, which can also be called 'scoring rubric' or 'proficiency scale':

"A scale for the description of language proficiency consisting of a series of constructed levels against which a language learner's performance is judged. Like a rest, proficiency rating scale provides an operational definition of a linguistic construct such as proficiency. Typically such scales range from zero mastery to an end point representing the "well-educated native speaker" (p. 153 – 4).

Furthermore, rating scales can be used for different purposes and they may have different orientation. Rater-oriented scales are designed for raters to facilitate the process of evaluating; examinee-oriented scales inform learners about the strong and weak points in their speech; administrator-oriented scales summarize the information available both for raters and learners. Every speaking scale of official examinations, for example, The Finnish National Certificate rating scale, have three versions, the main difference among which is terminology and the number of details in the explanation of what the examinee should do (Luoma, 2004).

There are two traditional types of rating scales which offer different procedures for oral performance assessment – holistic and analytic (Madsen, 1983; Hughes, 1989; Fulcher, 2003; Luoma, 2004). Holistic scoring constitutes a rater's overall impression of examinee's speaking skills. This rating scale is more appropriate for highly experienced raters, who tend to evaluate different criteria of a speaker's speech simultaneously (Madsen, 1983). Among the advantages of this type of scale is its practicality for the raters in decision-making as there are not many criteria to remember. As for its drawbacks, it may be insufficient in defining the strong and weak points of speaker's speech, moreover, there are usually a number of terms, like *many, a few,* which are hard to define (Luoma, 2004). The ACTFL rating scale may serve as an example of the

holistic scale. It has ten levels, described in details which makes it quite long and complicated (ACTFL, 1999, see Appendix A).

As for the analytic rating scales, they require a separate score for each of the criteria. Their advantage is that they provide more detailed information about strengths and weaknesses of the speaker's speech; moreover, they guide the raters in the process of evaluation (Luoma, 2004). The example of this type of the rating scale is TSE scale which in a way combines both types of scales (Fulcher, 2003, see Appendix B). According to Hughes (1989), the choice between holistic or analytic scoring depends both on the purpose and circumstances of testing. If testing is conducted by the heterogeneous group of raters in the centers which are located in different areas (e.g. British Council IELTS test), analytic scoring is desirable. If it is possible, multiple scoring is the most reliable variant, when both ways are used in any order (Hughes, 1989).

Underhill (1987) mentions two main problems in the area of scoring, he also offers the solutions for them. The first one is that the rating scales give a description 'on the basis of the typical learner' (p. 99), but in practice, just a few learner's abilities may suit it. The solution offered is to design a rating scale with several mark categories. Another problem mentioned is how many details should be given about each level of proficiency. The solution, according to Underhill (1987), is to develop the scales 'by trial and error' (p. 99). Further problems, mentioned by Luoma (2004) are the number of levels in scales, the number of criteria to use and the content of the level definitions.

As for the first concern, the more the levels are, the more precise the assessment is; however, teachers should be able to distinguish between levels. She offers to use from four to six levels in order to receive the reliable scores. As for the criteria, Madsen (1983) introduces an international survey of speaking tests in which among 74 exams being evaluated '81 % measured grammar, 71 % measured fluency, 67 % vocabulary, 66 % pronunciation, 63 % appropriateness, and 37 % other matters) (Madsen, 1983,

p.147). In order to make the level descriptors concrete and precise, it is necessary to listen to the learners' speeches and to define what characteristics define their level (Luoma, 2004).

2.1.3. Rater and Interlocutor Training

The role of the interlocutor is considered much more important than merely a passive listener. Both the rater and the interlocutor's roles are of validating, reacting to (positively or negatively), ignoring, etc. the speaker's speech.

While Weir and Roberts (1994) considered rater training an area where not much research has been conducted, other scientists consider this area to have one of the longest histories (Fulcher and Davidson, 2007).

In rater (interlocutor) - examinee interaction there is high possibility that the score is affected by the rater (interlocutor) or the character of interaction. Moreover, after speaking test being conducted the raters may not be in complete agreement on the scores they give for the oral performance. Rater reliability is concerned with the degree to which raters may agree with each other in scoring of one and the same speaking sample. The desirable situation concerned rater reliability is that it should not matter for the final score who is rating the performance. There is also a notion 'inter-rater reliability' which is the possibility that the same rater will give the same score to the same speaker in the second time when he evaluated his/her performance (Fulcher, 2003).

While the high possibility of lack of rater reliability is considered to be the main drawback of the speaking assessment and rater training is offered as a solution, there is an opinion that the situation when all the raters give the same scores to one and the same speaker in different situations is extremely unrealistic (Thompson, 1995). According to the study on the Inter-rater reliability of the ACTFL Oral Proficiency Interview in Five European Languages, the only solution for this problem is changing the common attitude towards rater reliability:

"Eliminate the major-minor border distinction and require instead that trainer's and trainee's ratings be no more than one step apart…establish a tolerance standard for disagreements between trainee and trainer" (Thompson, 1995, p. 414).

Fulcher (2003) further describes the typical procedure of rater training course that is common in most training agencies. Firstly, the typical speech samples are collected from the piloting of a new speaking test. Secondly, parts of these samples are used in regular rater seminars in order to discuss weak and strong points demonstrated by the speakers. The other part of the samples is used in certification when 80 percent of the scores given by the raters should coincide with those given by the test developers.

Weir (1990) calls the procedure of rater training 'standardization' and adds: "The purpose of standardization procedures is to bring examiners into line, so that candidates' marks are affected as little as possible by the particular examiner who assesses them" (p. 82).

The criteria for the tests are discussed in detail, the marking schemes are examined properly in order for the raters not to have any misunderstandings, some recorded samples of different levels are assessed. The assessment procedures the raters apply are compared to the standard assessments in order to investigate if the principles understood are correct (Weir, 1990).

Interlocutor training is an aspect of rater training that has not been studied much though interlocutor behavior has a crucial influence on the speaker's performance. However, the most recent study conducted by Davis opposes this view (Davis, 2009). In his research the influence of interlocutor proficiency level on speaker's performance was investigated. The results indicated that the influence of the interlocutor's level on the speaking performance is not significant: upper level students are not harmed working in

pair with the student of lower level, whereas later even benefit from it (Thompson, 1995).

Nevertheless, Brown (2003) would disagree with the results of the above mentioned research stating that unstructured format of interview that is quite advantageous concerning authenticity of the conversation, may though decrease the test reliability. The interlocutor, not having strict regulations as for his/her conversation, may influence the behavior of the test-taker.

There is not a clear idea in what way the interlocutor training should proceed, but British Council VOTE Oral Testing (1983) provides an appropriate example of this procedure. The interlocutors are advised not to correct test-takers while they are speaking, not to cover their mouths, whisper to maintain eye contact with speakers. However, the video of the interview with one of British Council trained interlocutor clearly demonstrates lack of training (see Appendix C). It is obvious that the additional attention in the form of research is necessary in this area.

2.2 Recent Developments in the Speaking Assessment of four large-scale tests of ESOL ability

The aim of this part is to give an overview of the recent developments in the assessment of speaking of four major international ESOL examinations: the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), the First Certificate in English (FCE), and the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC). According to Stoynoff (2009), about half a million test takers registered for each of the above mentioned tests and the inferences made from their procedures are valid in the most prestigious universities of the world. Thus, the overview of these exams, the designs and procedures of which differ from each other greatly, "reflects current practice and facilitates consideration of important aspects of the tests" (p.1).

2.2.1. TOEFL

Having been introduced in 1964 as a solution for many teachers, language testing specialists and researchers' concerns, TOEFL exam has undergone great modifications including introduction of three sections instead of five, modification of speaking performance test, invention of Internet-based version (iBT Test) etc (Stoynoff, 2009).

As ETS (Educational Testing Service, 2006) informs, speaking task of TOEFL iBT (see Appendix D) includes both independent and integrated tasks. In the former, test-takers have to answer the questions about their life, tastes etc., that are also connected to their academic life, in the latter, the communicative skills are combined with reading and listening: first, test-takers listen and read the passages and then speak about their interrelation.

According to Butler et al. (2000), who have conducted the 2000 TOEFL project for ETS, Test of Spoken English (TSE) was revised in 1995 and it is currently based on communicative language ability construct. The program has certain goals which are hoped to be fulfilled in future, for instance, the introduction of the appropriate framework that would take into consideration the models of communicative competence and would be supported by the research results, providing the information of examinees' needs and demands from TOEFL iBT. It is also intended to change the single score given for the oral proficiency into the descriptive characteristics of test-takers' speaking.

Though it is clear that the use of computer for the assessment of speaking has its limitations and the real-life situations involve monologues as well as dialogues, the technological level nowadays is not sufficient to create situations mentioned above during the test (Butler et al. 2000). Semi-direct assessment has become the result of these considerations. It gives the opportunity for the test-takers to demonstrate the speaking skills necessary in the academic context (Stoynoff, 2009).

Generally, numerous studies conducted by the researchers prove that the speaking skills necessary to gain a high score are approximately the same as those necessary for the

academic success. For example, Sawaki, Sticker & Oranje (2008), having conducted a pilot study and elicited the empirical data from the group of iBT test takers have proved the speaking test and all its parts measure what they are supposed to measure. In addition, Biber et al. (2004) have conducted a research where vocabulary, mostly used in the academic context, was collected and the tool, with the help of which it is possible to define "the linguistic characteristics of a particular text", has been developed. Comparing the vocabulary elicited from the books etc., used in the academic context with the vocabulary used in speaking and writing TOEFL tests, they came to the conclusion that the test functions as intended (Biber et al. p. 7).

2.2.2. IELTS

According to the IELTS official site information, it provides the assessment of four language skills – Listening, Reading, Writing and Speaking. As for the speaking part (see Appendix E and F), it consists of three-part face-to-face interview which is considered to be the closest to the real-life situation. IELTS is recognized by more than 6000 organizations as a valid proof of the competence in English.

The examiners for the Speaking and Writing tests are trained according to the single standard, moreover, in addition to their constant control, the raters are required to demonstrate their marking every two years to provide the equality of evaluation. The following criteria are taken into consideration by the raters while evaluating the speaking performance of the candidates: fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range, accuracy and pronunciation. Each of the criteria has the same weigh (Cambridge ESOL, not dated).

The study, carried out on the Interviewer style and candidate performance in the IELTS oral interview, conducted by Brown and Hill (2007), indicates that "despite training, interviewers' behavior varies considerably in terms of the amount of support they give candidates […] and the extent to which they follow the instructions in terms of the type of discourse elicited from candidates" (p.37).

Though the oral interview procedures try to follow the same format, the test-takers' performance is influenced greatly by the personality and behavior of the rater. According to some authors, certain measures should be taken in order to ensure that all the candidates are in equal conditions while they are taking the test. The above mentioned research showed that while some raters tend to change topics more often and ask less complex questions, others use some tactics in order to make the interview more complicated for the test-taker (Brown and Hill, 2007).

2.2.3. FCE

According to Stoynoff, FCE was created not as a new examination, but rather as an improved version of the Lower Certificate in English. However, the procedures of assessment in FCE were renewed again in December 2008 as a part of C-ESOL research and development program (Stoynoff, 2009).

As a result of the research, the speaking part of the FCE examination was modified, though slighter than it had been expected. The main change offered was the introduction of the new type of task – written-prompts. As a part of the written-prompts task the candidate is supposed to answer the question using the prompts offered. The example of this task is given below:

> "It's difficult to keep fit and healthy nowadays. Do you agree?
> • eating healthy food
> • getting exercise
> • getting enough sleep" (Cambridge ESOL, 2007, p. 26).

Though written-prompt task proved to be quite useful in elicitation valid data, it was decided that picture task should be left as a part of FCE. The main reason for it is that the picture task involves the elements which are considered to be basis of testing – comparing, describing etc. Written-prompts are not so effective for this purpose.

Candidates' performance in the speaking part of the test (see Appendix G) is scored according to the following criteria: vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, pronunciation, knowledge of discourse, pragmatic awareness. The face-to-face interview was chosen as a method to elicit the oral performance (University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, 2007).

2.2.4. TOEIC

Established in 1979, TOEIC included exclusively Reading and Listening parts till 2006, when Speaking and Writing tests were introduced. As ETS (Educational Testing Service, 2009) informs, "The TOEIC Speaking Test is designed to measure a person's ability to communicate in spoken English in the context of daily life and the global workplace" (p. 2).

There are eleven tasks in the test, the difficulty of which is increasing from the first one to the eleventh one (see Appendix H). The time necessary to fulfill them is approximately twenty minutes (Educational Testing Service, 2009).

There are eight proficiency levels for the Speaking test (see Appendix I). The basic criteria for the speaking performance evaluation are the following: pronunciation, intonation and stress (on lower level), grammar, vocabulary, cohesion (added on medium level), relevance of content, completeness of content (added on upper level).

As Fulcher (2003) states, the fact that the speaking test involves computer decreases its reliability as the authenticity of the conversation decreases. He further mentions the importance of the face-to-face communication with the co-construction of discourse (Fulcher, 2003).

As a response to Fulcher's comment, it is necessary to introduce the 10-step process to ensure reliability, mentioned by ETS. The parts of the process are the following: trained and experienced raters, development of scoring rubrics and careful descriptions of the levels, supervising raters' performance etc. (Educational Testing Service, 2009).

According to Stoynoff, there has not been much research on the TOEIC Speaking component as it has not been long since it was established. Nevertheless, speaking about the validity of the test, Stoynoff mentions its limitations comparing to TOEFL, but at the same time he expresses hope for improvements in future (Stoynoff, 2009).

2.3 The Problems in the Assessment of Speaking

In 1969 David P. Harris in his book "Testing English as a Second Language" wrote:

"No language skill is so difficult to assess with precision as speaking ability…All that we can offer … is a brief summary of the present state of a very imperfect art. Let us hope that future research may yet transform it [assessment of speaking] into a reasonably exact science" (pp. 81, 83).

Yet, according to Robert E. Robison (1992), despite the fact that much attention has been paid to oral testing, the problems that practitioners encountered years ago are still up-to-date. He mentioned that the ways of assessment created by the test writers were 'neither realistic nor cost-effective in terms of money, time expended or training required to administer the test' (p. 487). The fact that the author writes this paper thirty years after David P. Harris did, provides an evidence that there is still a gap between theoretical studies and implementation of the theoretical issues.

2.3.1. Validity Problems

Traditionally in literature the notion of validity is defined as 'a capacity of a test to measure of what it is purposed to measure' (Henning, 1987).

One of the primary problems in the validation of the tests is the very concept of 'validity' that was constantly re-defined. The present views on the validity are the result of the changes made throughout the development of the language testing. Thus, validity

involves 'evaluation of the plausibility of…use of test scores', 'evaluation of the consequences of test uses' and 'evaluation of the interpretation' (Kane, 2001, p. 328-9).

Researchers have developed a new understanding of validity as a changeable notion, as Anastasi (1986) mentions:

"Test validity is a living thing; it is not dead and embalmed when the test is released. Obviously, this does not mean that the test is not ready for use until all possible data bearing on its validity are in. Construct validation is indeed a never-ending process" (p. 4).

However, in the early definition of validity, it was defined as a notion that does not develop, that either present in the test or not (Goodwin and Leech, 2003).

According to numerous researchers, if the items of the test are designed not according to the objectives of the test, the thread to content validity occurs. One of the ways to avoid them is for the test developers to provide the precise information about the materials used for making the test and the skills it is intended to test (Harris, 1969; Henning, 1987).

In addition to the above mentioned validity problem, the designed test may not look right to the test developer or the learners may not be satisfied with it for any reason, but being highly involved in the process, the test maker is not able to see the obvious drawbacks. If this problem, which is a thread to face validity, occurs, the solution offered by Heaton (1975) and Underhill (1987) is to show the test to other professionals.

Bachman (1990) mentions the intention of many researchers to give the precise definition of the language ability. It would help developing the 'common metric scale' (p. 5) and add to the construct validity of the language test. She further mentions the measurement problem as a primary concern of language testing. The problem is that it is

not possible for a teacher to be completely sure that with the measurement system developed he/she is able to measure what is intended to measure – oral ability of a test taker. It introduces a considerable thread to construct validity of a test (Bachman, 1990; Hughes, 1989).

Among other threats to the validity, invalid applications of the test, inappropriate selection of content, imperfect cooperation of the examinee (response validity), poor criterion selection may be listed (Henning, 1987).

2.3.2. Reliability Problems

The importance of the test reliability is emphasized by most authors, whose books are related to the language testing. For example, Heaton (1975) defines it in the following way:

"Reliability is a necessary characteristic of any good test: for it to be valid at all, the test must first be reliable as a measuring instrument. If the test is administered to the same candidates on different occasions (with no language practice work between these occasions), then, to the extent that it produces different results, it is not reliable" (p. 155).

There are two basic problems connected with the reliability of the language test – either the test itself may not be consistent enough or the score of one and the same test may not be stable among the raters. The former is influenced by many factors, like 'adequacy of the sampling of tasks' (p. 14). The solution for this is in the following principle: the more learners will take the test, the stronger reliability is has. Other factors affecting the reliability of the score are the conditions under which the test is implemented, poor student motivation and student's personal factors (like illness etc.) which in most cases are out of teacher's hand (Harris, 1969).

The later one is rater reliability which is about the consistency among raters. The main question to be asked about the test in terms of rater reliability is whether student's mark depends on how he/she performs or on who tests him/her? (Walker, 1990).

There are certain methods mentioned by many researchers that help to measure the reliability of the test, thus solving the problem of the hesitation in test inconsistency. In order to make sure that the test designed is reliable enough to implement it in the classroom, Fulcher and Davidson (2007) recommend the following ways: test-retest, parallel forms and split halves. The first solution is to administer the test twice, calculating the correlation between the scores. The second method is to use two forms of the same method (which should have the same construct, means and variances), calculating the correlation between both forms. The only limitation of this way is that the forms may still be different in an undefined way. The split halves is the use of a single form of the test, which is divided into halves, implemented in the classroom with two scores obtained for each individual. The scores for each of the halves are correlated and the reliability is defined (Fulcher and Davidson, 2007).

Among studies on the rater reliability topic, there is the recent one conducted by Youn-Hee Kim (2009), who investigated the rater reliability of native English-speaking and non-native English-speaking raters. The results of the study indicated that the reliability of these two groups is similar, thus, non-native English-speakers are as reliable as native English-speakers. However, as the author mentions, there was noticed that native English-speakers tend to interact with the examinees more than others. This finding suggests that they hesitate more about the score than non-native English raters do.

The practical solutions are offered by Thompson (1995) on the basis on his research. One of them is that raters should finally mark the oral performance of a speaker after listening to it after. Also, he recommends that each interviewer has the second rater, though admitting that though it provides high level of reliability, it may be time and finance consuming. Underhill (1987) agrees with Thompson (1995) in this matter,

discussing the problem of rater reliability. The last suggestion is to videotape the interviews instead of just audiotaping them. This would provide a more precise image of the interview.

As for the examples of the reliable large-scale tests, introduced in the previous chapters, Stoynoff (2009), being quite optimistic about the reliability of TOEFL examination, on the basis of the numerous researches provided, states the following about IELTS examination:

"All the reliability correlations reported here for the IELTS meet the minimum thresholds generally advocated by the measurement community, although, in some instances, the reliability data presented in *Research Notes* may not include enough detail to make judgments about the design or results of the investigations" (p. 20).

 Likewise, the research investigating the speaking part of the FCE examination, revealed its low reliability. Orr (2002), in his study on FCE rating process on the basis of oral examinees' verbal reports, came to the conclusion that every rater judged speakers' oral performance according to his/her own approach, ignoring the criteria stated, varied in the terms of behavior towards the speakers which might not be reflected on the scores given.

Stoynoff (2009) reports the absence of evidence for the reliability of TOEIC test. The main reason for it might be that the Speaking part has just been introduced in December, 2008. However, he describes the process of careful selection and training of the assessors, monitoring rater performance (Stoynoff, 2009). It is expected that further research will provide more precise evidence for the reliability of this test.

2.3.3. Administration Problems

It is necessary to consider the procedure of administration of the test as 'both reliability and validity of the test are highly dependent on the manner in which the instrument is employed. Improper administration can cause entire groups 'to perform at less than their maximum effectiveness and thus invalidate intergroup comparisons' (Harris, 1969, p. 114). Henning (1987) agrees with Harris (1969), emphasizing that the errors in administration may cause the decrease of the reliability of the test. He also mentions several administrative problems that may occur while the test implementation and which the teachers should be aware of.

Clarity of instructions, the time of the test, the interaction of the test administrator with the examinee, the reporting of remaining time and other regulatory fluctuations are the conditions which can possibly result in the measurement error. It is recommended by the researchers to the administrators to think over the procedure of administration in advance. Moreover, administrators may be provided with the written guidelines (Henning, 1987). The guidelines for the teachers and visiting examiners provided by the Council for the Curriculum Examination and Assessment for the AS/A2 Modern Languages Speaking Test (2008) include several sections, one of which addressed to the administrator, another – to the test taker, as they all are responsible for the successful or unsuccessful administration (see Appendix J). The section for the administrator include the criteria like arrangements for the speaking tests (e.g. preparation of the speaking sheets), accommodation (e.g. the condition of the room where the examination takes place), a prior meeting with the candidates and the speaking test conduct (CEA, 2008).

Fulcher (2003) mentions two crucial administration points: reporting speaking test scores and financial issues. As for the former, the problem for many administrators is how to justify his/her score to the participant. Special adaptations of the measurement scale are necessary to make them comprehensible for the inexperienced person.

There has not been much research on the budgeting of the tests for the ethical reasons. Nevertheless, it is a very significant point, and unless it is paid attention to, it may become a problem of test administration. According to Fulcher (2003), the costs that are thought to be spent on the test implementation are much smaller than the real numbers are. He introduces the parts of the test development where financial support is necessary. It is pre-activity costs and activity costs (identifying design team, defining test purpose, designing prototype tasks etc.).

One more issue, raised by Underhill (1987) and Weir (1990) is worth mentioning – recording the speech. This is 'mechanical' administration – the way all the tape recorders, cameras are also responsible for the test reliability (Jones and Spolsky, 1975). In the oral test administration, it is a very influential part of the test. Technical difficulties can lead to poor quality, it is recommended for the tests to be checked right away (Underhill, 1987).

2.4 Students' Attitudes towards Speaking Tests

The significance of the investigation of students' attitudes towards different aspects of testing is emphasized by Shohamy (1982). She states that while the criteria development may not be enough in order to avoid the inaccurate assessment, awareness of students' preferences may help the teacher to do so. Her study addresses the question of what speaking procedures are more and less preferable for the students. The results indicated that students prefer oral interview more than cloze tests. Also, the study has revealed that students' attitude towards cloze test are in direct dependence of their performances, while their attitude towards oral interview is not related to it. Finally, research has shown that the most preferable speaking procedures for students are those that involve imitation of the real-life situations and those which provide positive atmosphere, decreasing the level of anxiety.

Research on students' attitudes towards language learning demonstrated that the significant factor influencing their attitudes towards speaking in particular is anxiety. According to Phillips' study, students, who are afraid of being evaluated will not probably have any positive attitudes towards any kind of oral activity. She recommends involving students in the activities in pairs or in small groups in order to improve their attitudes towards speaking English (Phillips, 1992).

Students' attitude towards teacher and his/her behavior is also worth mentioning as Shimizu (2000) emphasizes the influence of the classroom atmosphere created mostly by the teacher on the students' attitudes towards the English learning (and learning in general). According to the findings of her study, which investigated Japanese students' attitudes towards foreign English teachers' and Japanese teachers' behaviors, learners preferred former as they were more "interesting, humorous, and energetic". One more question investigated in this study is the qualities of Japanese and Foreign language teachers the students are positive about. The results have shown that being knowledgeable (63%), being reliable (57%) and being respectable (52%) were the most important qualities for a foreign language teacher to have.

The recommended way to collect students' attitudes is questionnaire introduced by Şallı-Çopur (2002) based on her research on students' attitudes towards being tested with four speaking test methods. According to the researcher, though students were positive towards all four methods (role play, oral presentation, individual interview, paired interview), surprisingly enough, they expressed preference towards being tested with individual interview rather than with paired interview (Şallı-Çopur, 2002).

Fulcher (2003) emphasizes the importance of choice of the tests that are "meaningful and relevant for learners". He also concludes: "The constructs should be driven by test purpose, taking into account the desires and motivations of those who will take the test, and be sensitive to the requirements of score users" (p. 23).

2.5 Conclusion

To sum up, there are several issues the teacher who assesses his/her students' speaking skills should be aware of. The speaking assessment area has more question marks than the solutions for the problems.

As far as the speaking tasks are concerned, there are many kinds of them, each having both advantages and drawbacks of its own. The best way to deal with the speaking tasks for teacher is to implement most of the in the classroom in order to ensure that students have been tested in many ways.

Rating scales is also quite a problematic issue as there is no agreement among raters on which rating scale, holistic or analytic, is more advantageous to use. Therefore, the best solution for this problem is to combine both scales, with analytic being appropriate for learners to understand weak and strong point of their speech and holistic – for experienced raters.

Also, rater and interlocutor training was discussed in this chapter. While some agree that in order to ensure the inter-rater reliability of the speaking test, all raters should give the same marks to the same students, others argue that such an aim is too unrealistic. For example, four large-scale speaking tests, TOEFL, IELTS, TOEIC and FCE conduct regular rater training and supervising to provide the reliability for their tests, however, the evaluation procedure of not all the tests, mentioned above, may be called reliable.

CHAPTER III

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

3.0 Presentation

In this chapter, firstly, it is explained how the present study is designed. Secondly, the participants of the study, academics and their students, are introduced. Then, four data collection instruments of the study are presented and described. Lastly, the information about data collection instruments concludes this chapter.

3.1 The Design of the Study

The study is designed to investigate teachers' practices and concerns in the assessment of speaking area, also, to discover students' attitudes towards certain aspect of their oral proficiency lessons. The participants of the study were 25 academics of three universities in Ankara, Turkey (Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi University), who have had experience of teaching speaking courses in the English Language Teaching departments and 137 first-year students of three universities mentioned, who have had speaking courses during the first semester.

The given study is both quantitative and qualitative one. Four kinds of data collection instruments were used to collect data. The first set of data (quantitative) was collected through an attitude questionnaire filled in by 137 first-year ELT students of three universities in Ankara (see Appendix K). The questionnaire consists of items focused on students' attitude towards speaking in English, five test methods usually used by teachers in the classroom and certain aspects related to scoring of their oral performance. Additionally, it required students to think about difficulties they have in speaking in English, their anxiety during speaking classes and criteria according to which they think their teachers should evaluate their oral performance.

The second data collection instrument was the semi-structured focus group interview conducted with 48 students, organized in 6 groups 8 students each (see Appendix L). The questions of the interview were related to the same aspects as those of attitude questionnaire, however, the purpose of this interview was to make the understanding of these aspects deeper and find out additional information about them.

As for the third set of data, it was collected though open-ended questionnaire with 25 academics having filled it in (see Appendix M). All the participants have had some experience in teaching speaking, which ranges from 1 semester to 37 years. The items in the questionnaire were related to the problematic issues of the assessment of speaking. The academics were asked to express their opinions about these issues.

The fourth set of data was collected from 16 academics in the form of semi-structured interview (see Appendix N). The items of the interview were related to the items of the questionnaire for academics. The researcher of this study was also fulfilling a duty of an interviewer.

The first stage of the study was constructing the appropriate data collection instruments – questionnaires and interviews both for academics and students. Both questionnaires were supposed to be related to approximately the same issues; however, they were to be formulated differently because of different levels of knowledge and positions of two groups of participants.

After filling in the questionnaire, students were asked to participate in the interviews in groups. As for academics, they were interviewed individually for approximately 20 minutes each. Later, both interviews and questionnaires were analyzed by the researcher. Students' attitude questionnaire was the only quantitative data collection tool, which was analyzed in Microsoft Excel Program. Others, open-ended questionnaire for academics and both interviews were analyzed with the help of content analysis.

3.2 Research questions

1. What is that teachers do when they assess the speaking skills?

1.1. What criteria do teachers pay attention to while assessing speaking skills?

1.2. Which of the criteria do teachers pay more attention to while assessing speaking skills?

1.3. What are teachers' attitudes towards the speaking tasks used for assessment of speaking skills?

1.4. What are teachers' attitudes towards the rating scales used for assessment of speaking skills?

1.5. What are teachers' attitudes towards the teacher (interlocutor) – student interaction?

1.6. What are teachers' attitudes towards the rater reliability in the assessment of speaking skills?

1.7. Are teachers satisfied with the materials, namely text book for developing students' speaking skills?

2. What challenges do the teachers face while assessing students' speaking skills and how do they prefer to deal with these problems?

3. Do teachers believe there exists the solution for problems in speaking assessment?

4. What are students' attitudes towards the speaking test methods?

4.1. What are students' attitudes towards speaking English?

4.2. What are students' attitudes towards being tested with role-play, oral presentation, individual interview, class discussion, paired interview?

4.3. What are the problems students face when their speaking skills are assessed?

4.4. What are students' attitudes towards the score they receive for their speaking performance?

4.5. What are factors that influence students' anxiety while speaking English in the classroom?

4.6. What avoidance strategies do students use when they are speaking in English?

4.7. What are the usual tasks and activities students are engaged in class?

4.8. What are students' likes and dislikes concerning oral proficiency classes?

5. What is the common rubric for the academics who are engaged in teaching speaking in Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi University?

3.3 Participants

The participants of the first stage of the study were the 1st year students of the English Language Teaching Department of Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi University who have already had speaking courses in the first semester. The number of students who filled in the questionnaire was 137, 48 of whom were interviewed in focus groups. It is important that students were not chosen according to their performance or any other criteria, the only criteria for being participant of this study was being the first year students of one of English language teaching departments in three universities mentioned above. This means that the data collected from random participants is supposed to be quite reliable.

The data collection procedure began in the third week of the second semester, so that students have already had oral proficiency classes. Twenty-three students out of 137 were males, while 114 of them were females.

The second part of the present study was also conducted in three Universities of Ankara: Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi Univeristy. The

participants were the academics of the English Language Teaching departments of these universities, who have given speaking courses in their career. The number of participants having taken part in the present study was 25, 16 of whom were interviewed.

The purpose of additional data collections is firstly, to check the validity of the data, collected through both attitude questionnaire for students and open-ended questionnaire for academics, secondly, to extract some additional data that would be useful for the research.

The academics and students filled in the questionnaires and were interviewed in February, in the beginning of their second semester.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

In order to receive the comprehensible data and to get an expanded picture of the phenomenon both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection were used. Though it is often emphasized that qualitative method of data collection is not appropriate one in all the studies, Dörnyei (2003) states that "by permitting greater freedom of expression, open-format items can provide a far greater "richness" than fully quantitative data" (p. 47). He further mentions one more reason for using qualitative methods – when it is impossible to predict the range of possible answers.

The qualitative data were analyzed with the help of content analysis as it is one of the most often used methods to analyze qualitative data (Weber, 1990), which involves "identifying coherent and important examples, themes and patterns in the data. The analyst looks for quotations or observations that go together, that are examples of the same underlying idea, issue or concept. Sometimes it involves pulling together all the data that address particular evaluation point" (Patton, 1987; p. 149). The data elicited in the oral and written forms were summarized into the compilation sheet, coded and the conclusions were drawn from them. The analysis of the attitude questionnaire was

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conducted with Microsoft Excel program, which allowed the researcher to calculate the mean scores and frequencies, percentages of the students' responses.

The open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview for academics were designed and implemented in order to answer the first three sets of questions. The aim of the attitude questionnaire for students and semi-structured interview was to find answers to fourth set of research questions.

3.4.1. Open-Ended Questionnaire for Academics

The data was elicited from the academics with the help of a questionnaire with 14 open-ended questions and one multiple choice item, which was designed by the researcher as the equivalent questionnaire was not found in the literature. The questions of the questionnaire were created on the basis of problematic issues mentioned by Fulcher throughout his book "Testing Second Language Speaking" (Fulcher, 2003). They focused on academics' practices and problems related to the assessment of speaking. The questionnaire consists of 14 open-ended questions and one multiple choice item as it seemed necessary to specify the answers in order to direct the ideas of the participants. In all the questions the respondents were offered to justify their choice. The explanation was a substantial advantage for the results. The reason why open-ended questions were chosen for the questionnaire is the participants, who are academics. It seemed necessary to offer them the freedom to express their opinion as it is expected to benefit to the results. The researcher tried to make the questions simple to read. However, comparing questionnaires for students and for academics, it is clear that the questions in latter are much more complex. Nevertheless, the respondents were expected to understand some terms (in case there are misunderstandings, definitions of some terms used in the questionnaire, were provided).

According to Maxwell (1996), who emphasizes the importance of the pilot study especially for qualitative research, pilot studies serve for clearing out participants' ways

of thinking, which facilitates the further analysis procedure (Maxwell, 1996). The questionnaire was given to five instructors from Basic English Department of Hacettepe university. They were asked to share their opinions about the items of the questionnaire and the corrections were made according to their pieces of advice.

3.4.2. Semi-Structured Interview for Academics

The depth interviewing of 16 academics was conducted, which "involves asking open-ended questions, listening to and recording the answer, and then following up with additional relevant questions" (Patton, 1987).

The semi-structured interview, which was designed firstly to support the data elicited with the help of the open-ended questionnaire and secondly, for the higher reliability of the data, consisted of five basic questions. However, the researcher had the right to ask spontaneous questions related to the topic, which also benefited to the results. They were recorded, transcribed and analyzed subsequently. The respondents were asked to share their opinions about the following issues in speaking assessment: assessment criteria, speaking test types, rating scales, test-taker-interlocutor relationship and rater reliability. The questions were created on the basis of the most disputable issues in speaking assessment.

3.4.3. Attitude Questionnaire for Students

The attitude questionnaire is the only quantitative data collection instrument of the study. It is an existing measuring instrument (Şallı-Çopur, 2002) adapted and modified according to the aims of the study. The main reason for it is that the aim of the questionnaire is similar to the aim of the present study – to elicit students' perceptions towards some aspects of speaking procedure. Moreover, the research conducted on the basis of the questionnaire has proven it to be valid. Some questions were omitted from

the questionnaire, for example, the ones concerning students being videotaped. Some other questions were added in order to follow the aim of the research. The sections about four methods of teaching speaking remained with a certain reduction of the elements in each section, all other elements were added by the researcher. As for five test methods that the questionnaire includes, the use of four of them was justified by the researcher of the original questionnaire (Şallı-Çopur, 2002), with addition of class discussion, students' attitude to which, according to Fulcher (2003), is not completely defined.

The first part of the questionnaire consisted of eight sections each of which focusing on different aspect: section 1 was about students' attitudes towards speaking in English, sections 2 to 6 were related to students' attitude towards five test methods (oral presentation, individual interview, paired interview, role-play and class discussion). Scoring procedure is the theme of section 7. The final section of the first part of the attitude questionnaire was related to interlocutor-test taker interaction. The Likert scale questionnaire was constructed with the following choices – strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree.

As for the second part of the attitude questionnaire, there were four items in it – a ranking item, which focuses on students' preferences of the test methods. Also, the following two items were open-ended ones, which asked students to express their thoughts about the anxiety issue and difficulties related to their speaking classes. The last item was a multiple choice question where students were to choose the criteria they think should be the most important for the teacher while evaluating their speaking performance.

To ensure the reliability of the questionnaire, it was shown to the instructor of English Language Teaching department, Middle East Technical University who has defended her Master thesis in English Language Testing. She has identified some items that were not appropriate because of students' lack of experience – items 32 (asking students' attitudes towards native language of his/her peer in the paired interview), 34 (related to students' attitudes towards paired interview with peer elder than he/she), and item 36,

related to students' attitude towards a methodological issue related to the way of assessing speaking. The items above were not completely rejected, however, it was doubtful that students were in the position to give a reliable response to these items. It was decided to test it in piloting study, drawing students' specific attention to these items.

However, the piloting questionnaire with six first-year students did not reveal any concerns about items 32, 34 and 36. Therefore, the items were left in the questionnaire, the questionnaire had been piloted a month before it was implemented. Nevertheless, the piloting procedure revealed several problems students had with the questions, which were paraphrased for students to understand the sense better.

After implementing the questionnaire, it was found out that those items that were identified as unreliable by the specialist (items 32, 34, 36), were the ones which most students did not give the answers to, apparently not understanding them. Moreover, while filling in the questionnaire, students asked to clarify those items several times. That is why, to ensure the reliability of the questionnaire the decision was taken not to include items 32, 34 and 36 into the analysis.

The reliability analysis was made with the help of SPSS program. As a result, alpha reliability of 0.84 and split-half reliability of 0.79 were found. The reliability numbers prove that the test is quite reliable and can be used for other purposes. So, as for the item reliability of every section of the questionnaire, for the first section the coefficient is 0.88, for the second one – 0.78, for the third – 0.73, fourth – 0.84, fifth – 0.76, sixth – 0.80, seventh – 0.72, eighth – 0.79. All the numbers vary from 0.72 to 0.84, which indicates that not only the whole test, but every its section separately is quite adequate.

3.4.4. Semi-structured Focus Group Interview for Students

One-third of the students, who filled in the questionnaire (N=137), were interviewed (N=48). The interview consisted of 6 questions, aimed at revealing the details which

would add to the data elicited form the students through the attitude questionnaire. Though the questions were known before the interviews, the researcher preferred to ask certain additional ones if there was need, as it was a semi-structured interview. So, 3 items of the interview were related to students' experience, like and dislikes about speaking class. A single item was about their attitude towards the mark they receive for their oral performance. Finally, students were asked to express how they would feel in certain conditions if they were interviewed in pairs.

It seems significant that first it was planned to conduct individual interviews with students. As Patton defines the purpose of the interviewing, it is "to allow us to enter the other person's perspective" (Patton, 1987). However, after piloting it with 6 students it became clear that the anxiety prevents them to speak as much as they want. That is why, focus group interviews were tried, which proved the advantages of this kind of procedure. Firstly, students felt less shy and were speaking more, secondly, some issues mentioned by one student could be objected or approved by other, which is undeniable advantage of this procedure. Thirdly, in the situations when students did not know what to say, some of them answered to the question and others could add to the answer. As Patton (1987) states, one of the advantages of focus groups interviews is that people tend to make more efficient decisions in a social context. He expressed a positive attitude towards this method of data collection, considering it quite efficient.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

4.0 Presentation

This chapter focuses on the analysis of data and interpretation of the results. First, the data collected from the students through the attitude questionnaire are presented, analyzed and the conclusions are made. Then, the second set of data, that were collected from the students through focus group semi-structured interview, is presented and examined. Also, the data collected through the open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview from academics of Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi University are introduced and analyzed. Finally, the results of four data collection procedures are interpreted and discussed.

4.1 Analysis of the Data

This study aims to investigate the current practices in the field of speaking assessment focusing on the challenges teachers face while evaluating students' oral performance and to examine students' attitudes towards being tested through the test methods teachers use, anxiety issue etc. The second aim of the study is to design the common speaking rubrics in accordance with academics' practices and students' interests.

Thus, in this study two sets of data from two sources (academics and their students) were collected. The purpose of the one collected from academics is to investigate what is it that academics do when they assess speaking skills of their students. The second data collection tool, the semi-structured interview, was conducted not only to validate the results of the open-ended questionnaire, but also to serve as an additional source of information.

The second set of data, collected from the students, intends to find out how they prefer their speaking skills to be assessed, what changes they would make in their speaking class, their problems in this area and their ways to solve them.

4.2 Analysis of the Responses to Attitude Questionnaire

The attitude questionnaire was presented to first year students in the beginning of the second semester so that by the time they filled in the given questionnaire they had already had speaking lessons for one semester. The questionnaire was composed of two parts, the first part was composed of nine sections. Each section of the first part of the questionnaire focused on a certain aspect of students' speaking lessons. Furthermore, nine sections of the questionnaire were analyzed independently.

Microsoft Excel was used for obtaining mean scores and percentage for the first part of the attitude questionnaire, which was a 4-point Likert-scale.

4.2.1 Responses in the First Part of the Attitude Questionnaire

As the questionnaire consists of nine sections devoted to different aspects of speaking assessment, they were analyzed independently, and the results were presented separately as well. In order to facilitate the interpretation of the results, the mean scores obtained by students for each item of the questionnaire were given. Further, the frequency and percentages of students' responses were calculated and presented in the table forms. In the response interpretation scores 1 and 2 of the Likert scale were considered negative, while 3 and 4 – positive. The neutral option was absent in the questionnaire in order to avoid too many uncertain answers.

A. Part I-Section 1: Attitudes towards Speaking in English

The first section of the questionnaire intended to elicit the information about students' attitudes towards speaking in English. In Table 1 below, there are students' mean scores for each item and the average one, which indicates the general students' attitude to the topic of the given section. It becomes obvious from the table below that the average mean of 2, 67 out of 4 indicates students' nearly positive attitudes towards speaking in English.

Table 1

Means of Responses to Part 1-Section 1: Speaking in English

	Speaking in English	Mean
1	I like speaking in English.	3,34
2	I feel confident when I am speaking in English.	2,51
3	I feel relaxed when I am taking a spoken test.	2,15
	Average	**2,67**

In the first section of the first part of the questionnaire the highest mean score, 3.34, is for item 1, which means that students' attitudes towards speaking in English is quite positive. Though the mean score for the item 2 is also high (2.51), it is much lower than that for item 1. The following conclusion can be drawn: while students enjoy speaking in English, they still lack confidence while performing in class. The lowest among the mean scores of three items, but still positive one, is the third item, 2.15, which indicates that students feel even less relaxed than they feel confident while speaking.

In the Table 2, the frequency and percentages of students' responses are introduced.

As it was mentioned above, 3 and 4 were considered as positive responses, while 1 and 2 as negative ones. Then, the number of the responses of every type for each item was calculated and the percentage of each type of response for every question was counted.

Table 2

Frequency of Students' Responses to Attitudes towards Speaking in English

item	4		3		2		1		total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1	57	42%	71	52%	7	5%	2	1%	137
2	15	11%	48	35%	66	48%	8	6%	137
3	8	6%	32	23%	70	51%	27	20%	137

From the results of Table 2 it is noticed that while the largest part of students (94%) like speaking in English, much less percentage of students, namely 6%, have negative attitude towards speaking in English. However, only 46% of the students feel confident while speaking in English, while other 54% experience difficulties in feeling confident. Likewise, the minority of students, that is 29%, feel relaxed while speaking in English, with 71% of the participants feeling uncomfortable when speaking in English.

Though most students like speaking in English, there still is a part with negative attitude towards it. It is important to mention here that the participants are the students of a Foreign Language Teaching Department and while 6% of participants with negative attitude towards speaking would be expectable in other departments, for the future teachers of English it is, as far as the author of the research is concerned, quite a high number. Consequently, today first year students will become teachers of English at schools and other institutions; therefore, if their attitude towards speaking in English still remains negative, there are not many chances of their efficient work in developing

speaking skills of their future students, which, with the intense development of the communicative methodology in the recent years, is an extremely big disadvantage.

When the conclusions from students' second and third answers were drawn, it was suggested that students do not feel confident and relaxed enough due to the elicitation techniques that do not always suit their personalities and lack of experience in speaking.

B. Part I- Section 2: Attitudes towards Oral Presentation
The second section of the first part of the attitude questionnaire was devoted to the attitudes students have towards oral presentation. Table 3 introduces students' answers to these questions. The average mean 2,2 out of four indicates that students have positive-neutral attitude towards being tested with oral presentation.

Table 3

Means of Responses to Part 1-Section 2: Attitudes towards Oral Presentation

	Oral Presentation	**Mean**
4	I like delivering oral presentations in class.	2,39
5	I feel relaxed during my presentations.	2,14
6	I feel nervous during my presentations.	2,09
	Average	**2,2**

Item 4 has the highest mean score (2.39), which means that no matter how students feel about delivering and being tested with oral presentation, they think of it as about rather enjoyable activity. Slightly less number of students with the mean score 2.14 feel relaxed while delivering oral presentations. However, the mean score for item 3 (2.09), which questions nervousness while delivering oral presentations, is less than one for item 2 which means that students feel relaxed during oral presentations.

In order to make sure that the students are familiar with the testing speaking procedure, the researcher found it appropriate to include the definition of every procedure into the questionnaire. The students were informed that they may have a look at definitions first before they fill in the questionnaire. In Table 4 below the frequency and percentages of students' responses are demonstrated and their explanations are provided.

Table 4

Frequency of Students' Responses to Attitudes towards Oral Presentation

item	4		3		2		1		total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
4	12	9%	50	37%	54	39%	21	15%	137
5	5	4%	28	20%	85	62%	19	14%	137
6	8	6%	30	22%	64	47%	34	25%	136

The results of the Table 4 reveal that 46% of students like delivering oral presentations in class, while only 24% feel relaxed in the process. Unlike that, only 24% of the students feel relaxed while delivering oral presentations.

For the ease of interpretation (in order to make all statements positive and to have homogeneous data for defining the mean score) the researcher of the given study turned the scale of the negative statements like items 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 20, 23 wise versa. Consequently, 72% of the students do feel nervous while delivering oral presentations.

All in all, this section of the questionnaire, devoted to students' attitudes towards the delivering oral presentations in class, shows that despite liking oral presentations, twice less students feel relaxed while delivering them, and more than twice more feel nervous while presenting. The reason for that might be the fear of their behavior not to be

approved by their classmates or to be judged by them. This issue will be cleared up in more detail in the second part of the attitude questionnaire.

C. Part I- Section 3: Attitudes towards Role-Play.

The third section of the attitude questionnaire was devoted to the attitudes of the students towards the role-play. The Table 5 below displays the mean scores of three items that are created to figure out the students' attitudes towards role-play. The average mean of this section, which is 2.52 out of four, shows the nearly positive students' attitudes towards role-plays in class.

Table 5

Means of Responses to Part 1-Section 3: Attitudes towards Role-Play

	Role-Play	**Mean**
7	I like participating in the role plays in class.	2,75
8	I feel relaxed during role plays.	2,49
9	I feel nervous during role plays.	2,31
	Average	**2,52**

The highest mean score for the three items is 2.75 out of four for item 7 which means that students enjoy the role-plays in class. Nevertheless, the mean score of students who feel nervous during the role-plays in class is 2.31, which means that despite enjoying it, most of them still feel uncomfortable. The mean score for the role-play is similar to the one for oral presentation. Although students have quite positive attitudes towards this test method, they feel not only relaxed, but also nervous during it in class. Likewise, in the Table 5 students' mean of responses for item 8 is 2.49, almost equal to mean of item

9, which can be interpreted as some students' feeling relaxed and some – nervous during role-play.

In Table 6 below, the frequency of students' responses and their percentages are demonstrated with the following explanation.

Table 6

Frequency of Students' Responses to Attitudes towards Role-Play

item	4		3		2		1		total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
7	24	17%	61	45%	46	34%	6	4%	137
8	11	8%	52	38%	65	48%	8	6%	136
9	11	8%	43	33%	56	42%	23	17%	133

Sixty-two percent of students have positive attitude towards role-plays in class, while just 46% feel relaxed while performing.

As it was mentioned above, in order to make all statements positive and to have homogeneous data for defining the mean score, the researcher of the given study turned the scale of the negative statements like items 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 20, 23 upside down. Therefore, 59% of the respondents (only 3% less than the percentage of students who like role-plays in class) feel nervous while participating in role-plays.

The results of this section display that despite feeling nervous, students still enjoy the role-plays in class. Some students mentioned that they feel both nervous and relaxed during the role-play. That leads to the conclusion that students' emotions during the role-play might depends on the degree of their preparation and the topic of the role-play.

D. Part I- Section 4: Attitudes towards Individual Interview

The fourth section of the first part of the questionnaire is aimed to reveal students' attitudes towards individual interview. Three mean scores and an average mean score are presented on the Table 7. This section's average mean score is 2.64 out of 4, which can be interpreted as students' being quite optimistic about individual interviews in class. The highest mean score among three items is for the item 10 (2.74), showing that students prefer to be tested with this test method in class. Interesting enough, the mean scores for items 11 and 12 are almost equal – 2.59 and 2.58 respectively. It might mean that sometimes the students feel relaxed and sometimes – nervous during individual interview. It may have sense if it is supposed that there were some interviews students felt nervous about, and there were some students felt relaxed about.

Table 7

Means of Responses to Part 1-Section 4: Attitudes towards Individual Interview

	Individual Interview	Mean
10	I like being interviewed individually.	2,74
11	I feel relaxed during an individual interview.	2,59
12	I feel nervous during the individual interview.	2,58
	Average	**2,64**

Table 8 shows the frequency and percentages of the students' responses to the items 10-12. The numbers in the table are interpreted below.

Table 8

Frequency of Students' Responses to Attitudes towards Individual Interview

item	4	3	2	1	total

49

	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
10	19	14%	70	51%	42	31%	6	4%	137
11	15	11%	56	41%	59	43%	6	5%	136
12	13	10%	60	44%	54	40%	8	6%	135

Sixty-five percent of the students said they liked individual interviews. However, 35% stated they disliked this test method. As for the answers to item 10 and 11, they demonstrate that almost equal parts of students feel nervous and relaxed during individual interview (46% and 52%). These results may be interpreted in the following way: having positive attitude towards individual interview, students may feel both nervous and relaxed in the process. Their condition may depend on the interest in the topic and the attitude of the teacher.

E. Part I- Section 5: Attitudes towards Paired Interview

The fifth section of the first part of the questionnaire considered students' attitude towards paired interview in class. Table 9 demonstrates students' mean scores for each of the item. The average mean is 2.75, which means that the students' attitudes towards being tested in pairs is slightly more favorable than it is about individual interview (*M=2.64*).

Table 9

Means of Responses to Part 1-Section 5: Attitudes towards Paired Interview

	Paired Interview	Mean
13	I like being interviewed in pairs.	2,78
14	I feel relaxed during paired interview.	2,76
15	I feel nervous during paired interview.	2,71

Average		**2,75**

The highest mean score for this section is 2.78 for item 13, which means that students like being tested in pairs. Students feel more relaxed than nervous during paired interviews, as the mean score for items 14 and 15 is 2.76 and 2.71 respectively. If we compare these results with the results for the individual interview, it is noticeable that the results for the paired interview are more significant (items 10 and 13, $M= 2.74<2.78$; items 11 and 14, $M=2.59<2.76$; items 12 and 15, $M=2.58<2.71$).

Table 10

Frequency of Students' Responses to Attitudes towards Paired Interview

item	4		3		2		1		total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
13	17	12%	78	57%	37	27%	5	4%	137
14	17	12%	69	51%	48	36%	1	1%	135
15	16	12%	66	49%	51	37%	2	2%	135

As it can be noticed in the Table 10, the majority of the students ($N=95$; 69%) enjoy paired interviews in class. Also, students who like being interviewed in pairs are almost as many as those who feel relaxed while being interviewed in pairs ($N=86$; 64%). However, a considerable number of students ($N=53$; 39%) also feels nervous during paired interviews. The reason for that may be the peer whose knowledge of English may be better or worse than the participant's one, which in both cases influence the student. Also, the condition that influences whether students are nervous or relaxed during the paired interview, like or dislike this procedure, might be the relationship between the peer students outside the class.

F. Part I- Section 6: Attitudes towards Class Discussion

The sixth section of the first part of the questionnaire focuses on students' attitudes towards class discussion. The average mean score of this section is the highest among all the previous sections (*M*=2.84) which means that class discussion is students' most favorite speaking test method.

Table 11

Means of Responses to Part 1-Section 6 : Attitudes towards Class Discussion

	Class Discussion	**Mean**
16	I like discussing topics in English in class.	3
17	I feel relaxed during class discussion.	2,76
18	I feel nervous during class discussion.	2,77
	Average	**2,84**

The mean of item 16 is the highest among all the previous sections, which can be interpreted as students' having highly positive attitude towards class discussion. It would be reasonable to suppose that if class discussion is students' most favorite test method, they must feel least nervous and most relaxed during class discussion. However, the means of items 17 and 18 are almost equal – 2.76 and 2.77 respectively. Therefore, students feel not only relaxed but also nervous during class discussion.

Table 12 demonstrates the frequency and the percentage of the responses concerning students' attitudes towards class discussion. As it can be noticed in the table, 71% of the

students like discussing topics in class, which is the highest result among the percentages for the speaking activities mentioned above. Moreover, the highest percentage of students answered 'strongly agree' to the question if they like class discussions. Still, if we look at the results for the items 17 and 18, we will see that 36% of the students do not feel relaxed during class discussions and 33% still feel nervous. The following conclusion can be drawn from these results: the students' attitude towards speaking activities in class does not depend on students' nervousness during these activities much.

Table 12

Frequency of Students' Responses to Attitudes towards Class Discussion

item	4		3		2		1		Total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
16	30	22%	81	59%	22	16%	4	3%	137
17	21	15%	67	49%	44	32%	5	4%	137
18	20	15%	71	52%	39	29%	6	4%	136

G. Part I- Section 7: Avoidance Strategies used by Students

Section 3 of the first part of the attitude questionnaire focuses on the avoidance strategies that students use while speaking English in class. In this section the average score ($M=2.7$) does not have much influence on the conclusion drawn from these items as each of them will be taken separately in analysis.

Table 13

Means of Responses to Part 1-Section 7 : Avoidance Strategies Students use in the Classroom

	Avoidance Strategies	Mean
19	If I do not know some word when speaking English, I usually try to describe it.	2,83
20	If I do not know some word when speaking English, I get excited and stop speaking.	2,54
21	If I do not know some word when speaking English, I use gestures to explain it.	2,89
22	If I do not know some word when speaking English, I use the word in my native language.	2,7
23	I try not to use constructions in English that I do not know even if I am supposed to (e.g. Instead of passive voice I would use active even if I am not supposed to).	2,52
	Average	**2,7**

The highest mean score belongs to item 21 (*M*=2.89), which means that students prefer explaining the word they do not know in English with the help of gestures. It is worth to mention that the mean scores for this section range from 2.52 to 2.89, which can be explained by the following: students use all kinds of avoidance strategies almost equally often – without specific preference of a certain one. However, there are still differences among the mean scores for each item. Item 19 has the second highest mean score 2.83 out of 4, which can be interpreted as students' preferring to describe the English words

they do not know or remember. Items 20 and 23 have similar mean scores – 2.54 and 2.52 respectively, therefore among all the avoidance strategies students use, least often they stop speaking, having got excited and do not use the constructions that are difficult for them. Though those are the least mean scores among all others, they are still significant enough. Lastly, item 22 (*M*=2.7) showed that when not knowing the word in English students prefer to say it in their mother tongue hoping for the help from the teacher.

Table 14

Frequency of Students' Responses to Avoidance Strategies they use

item	4		3		2		1		Total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
19	19	14%	78	57%	37	27%	2	2%	136
20	11	8%	67	49%	45	33%	14	10%	137
21	20	14%	84	61%	31	23%	2	2%	137
22	15	11%	75	56%	35	26%	10	7%	135
23	16	12%	47	36%	57	44%	11	8%	131

Table 14 above demonstrates the frequency and percentage of responses to the question from section 7 focusing on avoidance strategies students use while speaking English.

The highest percentage of students (75%) uses gestures in order to make the interlocutor or rater understand what they mean if they do not know the word in English, while slightly less (71%) try to describe the unknown word in English to make the interlocutor

55

or rater understand him/her. However, an quite a big part of students' reactions are not in favor of maintaining the conversation – 43% get excited and stop speaking, 52% of students avoid using the construction they are not sure how to use even if they are supposed to. Moreover, 67% say the unknown word in their native language, which also may not be considered a reliable strategy for satisfactory speaking skills.

The reason for students' to stop speaking when they do not know a word in English (item 20), say that word in their mother tongue (item22) or to avoid using complicated constructions in their speech (item 23) might be fear of making mistakes. Therefore, teacher's attitude to the mistakes student makes is extremely important. Nevertheless, many students prefer to use such strategies as describing a word which they do not know in target language and show it with gestures, which may be considered as attempts to continue a conversation.

H. Part I- Section 8: Scoring

The eighth section of the first part of the attitude questionnaire is devoted to scoring procedure in the classroom. The average mean score of this section is 2.5, however, it is not recommended to come to considerable conclusions based on it as each item in this section will be analyzed separately.

Table 15

Means of Responses to Part 1-Section 8: Scoring in the Classroom

	Scoring	Mean
24	My score in speaking test often depends on my mood.	3,05
25	My score in speaking test often depends on the environment I take the test in (e.g. color of wall paper, comfort of chairs etc).	2,51

26	The hours of English lessons devoted to oral proficiency development at school are enough for learners to reach the highest score on the speaking rating scale.	1,91
27	I think that my speaking skills are better than the mark I receive for it.	2,48
28	I would like my teacher to score my oral performance on the basis of his/her intuition.	2,37
29	I would like my teacher to score my oral performance on the basis of the standard rating scale.	2,69
	Average	**2,5**

The highest mean score for this section is 3.05 (item 24) and the lowest one is 1.91 (item 26). Item 24 asks students if their score in speaking test often depends on their mood. The mean score for this item is 3.05 which means that students' scores highly depend on their mood. However, students strongly disagree with the statement that the speaking lesson at their school are enough for tem to reach the highest level of speaking proficiency, thus, the mean score for this item (item 26) is the least among all the items in the section (1.91). When asked on what they think the teachers should base their scores for their speaking performance, standard rating scale or their intuition, students preferred the former one. Therefore, item 29 has got the mean score 2.69. Though students' attitude towards teachers' using mainly their intuition in order to score their speaking performance (item 28) was not as positive as about them using the standard rating scale, the mean score for this item is still quite high (*M*=2.37). Item 25 focuses on whether or not students think the environment (e. g. color of wall paper, comfort of chairs etc.) influence their speaking performance. The mean score of this item (item 25) is 2.51, which means that students agree with this statement and admit that certain factors may influence their speaking performance. Finally, in item 27 students are asked if they are satisfied with the mark they receive for their speaking. The mean score of this

item is 2.48 out of 4, which points out the lack of students' satisfaction with their marks for speaking.

Table 16 below demonstrates the frequencies and percentages of students' responses to the questions related to scoring in their classroom. Eighty-one percent of the students state the interdependence between their mood and the mark they receive for their speaking performance. However, one half of the students (50%) name environment as the primary factor influencing their mark. Also, 73% of the students tend to believe that the hours devoted to the development of the speaking skill are not enough to reach the high level of speaking proficiency in foreign language. The smaller part of students (48%) consider their speaking skills better than the mark they receive for them. As for the rating scales, a considerable number of students (44%) agree with an opinion that teachers' intuition should be the main criteria for him/her in scoring their students' oral performance. Sixty-six percent, on the other hand, agree that teachers should use standard rating scale in scoring speaking performance.

Table 16

Frequency of Students' Responses to Scoring in the Classroom

item	4		3		2		1		Total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
24	37	27%	73	54%	22	16%	4	3%	136
25	13	10%	55	40%	58	42%	11	8%	137
26	4	3%	33	24%	47	35%	51	38%	135
27	12	9%	53	39%	59	43%	12	9%	136
28	1	1%	58	43%	66	49%	10	7%	135

29	13	9%	77	57%	37	27%	9	7%	136

I. Part I- Section 9: Interlocutor-test taker interaction

Section 9 of the first part of the attitude questionnaire is devoted to the interlocutor-test taker interaction. The following is important to mention here: though during the piloting of the questionnaire items 32 and 34 was decided to be included into the questionnaire, after it was filled in, it was noticed that the above mentioned items demand from students certain experience that they may not have yet. This conclusion was made after students' having asked numerous question concerning these items and many of them still left these items not answered. Therefore, the decision was taken not to include items 32 and 34 into the analysis as unreliable data. So, section 9 of the first part of the attitude questionnaire consists of 4 questions.

In the Table 17 below the mean scores of ninth section's questions are displayed and the results follow. The mean score for this section is 2.59 out of 4, but in this section every item should be analyzed separately.

Table 17

Means of Responses to Part 1-Section 9 : Interlocutor-Test-Taker Interaction

	Interlocutor-Test-Taker Interaction	**Mean**
30	When speaking in pairs I perform worse than if I speak alone.	2,5
31	I feel nervous if in paired interview my peer's English level is higher than mine.	2,68
33	I feel nervous if in paired interview my peer's personality is	2,59

	different than mine (if you are introvert, he/she is extrovert and vice versa).	
35	During the interview in English I feel that the discussion is natural, real-life.	2,58
	Average	**2,59**

Item 31 has the highest mean score among all 4 items (2.68). This number can be interpreted as students' being nervous if in paired interview their peer's English is better than theirs. Similarly, peers' personality influences students, thus the mean score of item 33 is 2.59 which is also quite considerable. Moreover, students also answered positively to the question about the naturalness of discussion in paired interview. The mean score of this item (35) is 2.58 which proves that students consider paired interview to be real-life imitating test method.

Lastly, among 4 questions of this section item 30 has the least mean score (2.5), which reflects students' ideas as for their performance in paired interviews. This item coincides with items 13, 14, 15, devoted to the paired interview.

Table 18

Frequency of Students' Responses to Interlocutor-test Taker Interaction

item	4		3		2		1		Total
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
30	16	12%	47	34%	63	46%	11	8%	137
31	17	12%	68	50%	43	31%	9	70%	137
33	13	9%	62	46%	51	38%	9	7%	135

35	9	6%	67	49%	56	41%	5	4%	137

Table 18 above shows the percentages of the answers to the questions from section 9. In item 30 the students were asked about their performance in paired interview. Though most part (54%) said that their performance is not worse in paired interview than in other speaking activities, quite a big part (46%) stated that in paired interviews they perform worse than they would perform on the same topic in different kind of activity. Items 31 and 33 ask about the factors provoking nervousness during paired interviews. While item 31 suggests that the nervousness may be provoked by higher level of peer's English, item 33 prescribes nervousness to peers' different personalities. As for students' answers, 62% of them stated that their peer's level of English discourage them if it is higher and 55% percent admitted that if their peer's personality is different than theirs, it influences their score. Likewise, 55% of students said that paired interview imitates natural real-life situations, which adds to the advantages of paired interview.

For the ease of interpretation, Figure 2 below shows students' responses to the items 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, with the following statement: "I like delivering oral presentations in class/ participating in the role plays in class/ being interviewed individually/ being interviewed in pairs/ discussing topics in English in class".
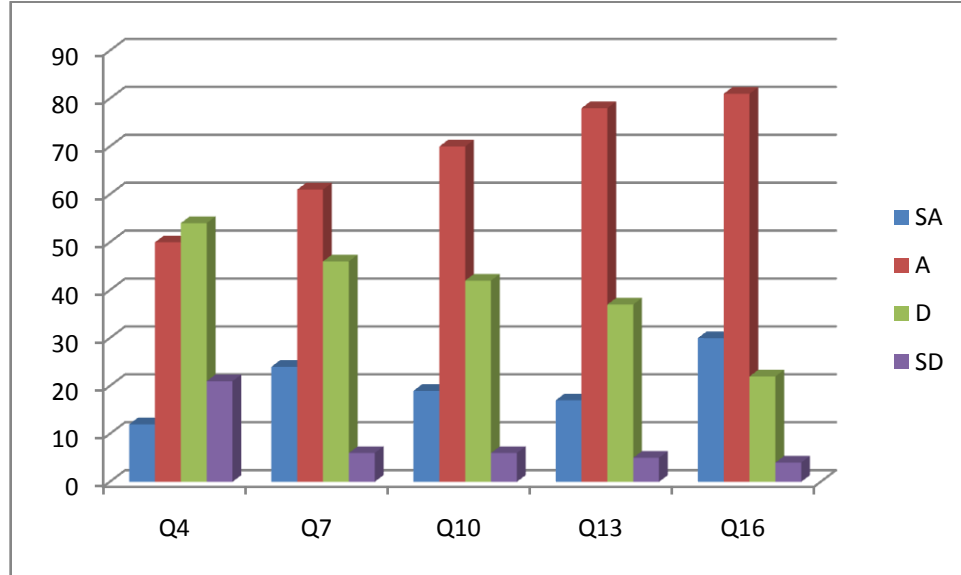
Figure 2. Students' Attitude towards Speaking Tests

(SA – Strongly agree, A – Agree, D – Disagree, SD – Strongly disagree)

As an overall trend, it is clear that class discussion (Q16) is students' favorite test method with 81 students being positive about oral presentations in class, 30 having extremely positive attitude towards it, and only 26 students have negative attitude towards this test method.

Moreover, we can see from the responses that the least number of students who said they liked the speaking procedure in class was 62 students, who answered question 4 (Q4). Consequently, it is possible to suppose that the test method students dislike most among five mentioned above is oral presentation. Seventy-five people out of one hundred thirty-seven admitted that they do not enjoy presenting the topic in front of the whole class.

Additionally, the data shows that the difference between students' attitudes towards class discussion and paired interview is marginal. While 111 students enjoy class discussion, 95 students are in favor of paired interview.

Similarly, slightly less students (*N*=89) prefer to be interviewed individually, while role-play has 85 supporters, which makes it on one hand almost as preferable as individual

interview, on the other hand almost the least favorite test method among those mentioned above (the only one with less students supporting is oral presentation).

Overall, though all the activities are ranked according to the number of students who prefer being engaged into them in class, the numbers for each method without exception is high enough.
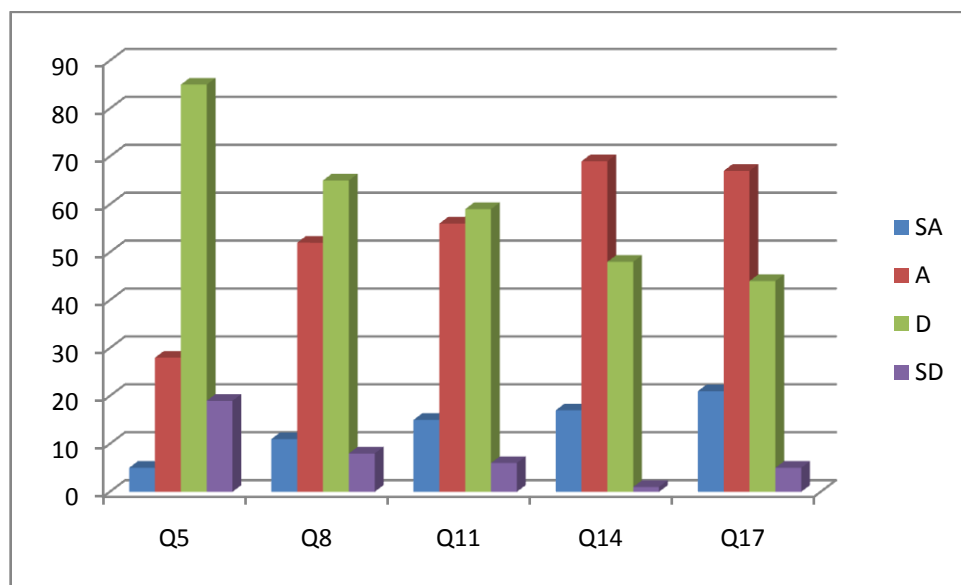
Figure 3. Students' Psychological State during Speaking Tests (Relaxation)

(SA – Strongly agree, A – Agree, D – Disagree, SD – Strongly disagree)

Figure 3 provides overview of students' responses to the question if they feel relaxed during oral presentation, role play, individual interview, paired interview and class discussion.

As it can be easily noticed, the longest "disagree" bar belongs to oral presentation columns. That means that most students (*N*=104) do not feel relaxed during oral presentation. It is a logical assumption from the previous statement because if students' favorite test method is class discussion with voluntary participation and real-life

conversation, then students' least favorite activity would be the one with an appointed speaker, prepared speech etc.

The position of the paired interview (Q14) and class discussion columns (Q17) is ambiguous as on one hand there are more students who agreed with the statement "I feel relaxed during paired interview" (*N*=69) than with the statement "I feel relaxed during class discussion" (*N*=67). Though the difference of 2 students is extremely small, it is still considerable enough for the paired interview to have a position higher than class discussion. On the other hand, if the numbers of students who strongly agree with the statements above are compared, then it is obvious that 21 student ticked "strongly agree" in item 17 (class discussion), while just 17 students did so in item 14 (paired interview). Overall, all data considered, 86 students feet relaxed during paired interview, while 2 students more feel relaxed during class discussion (*N*=88), which makes class discussion the activity during which most students feel relaxed. Supposedly, the reason for that is the whole class as a centre of attention during class discussion, not a single individual.

Two activities the columns of which are situated between the oral presentation and paired interview bars are role play with 63 students who feel relaxed during it and individual interview with 71 students not feeling intense during it.
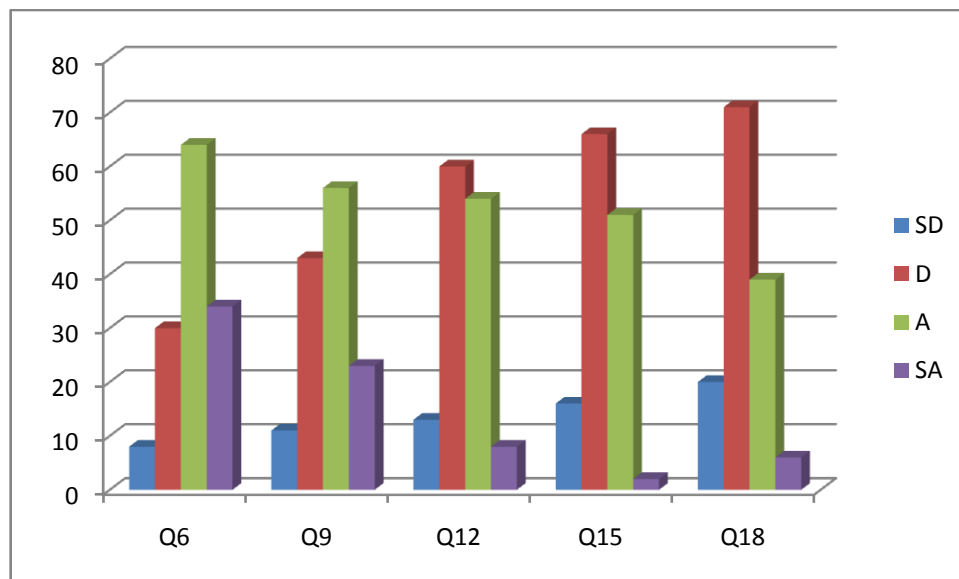
Figure 4. Students' Psychological State during Speaking Tests (Nervousness)

(SA – Strongly agree, A – Agree, D – Disagree, SD – Strongly disagree)

The data illustrated in Figure 4 is strongly related to the data from figure 2. It is obvious that the colors of the columns of this figure have the opposite meaning that the colors of figures 3 and 2. The reason for that is the following: the items 6, 9, 12, 15, and 18, unlike all other items, have negative content, and in order to find the right mean of these items, while entering the data was entered according to the opposite scale (1=4, 2=3, 3=2, 4=1). In this way, the mean of these items could be interpreted without any difference from the means of other items – the higher it is, the more positive attitude students have towards those activities. Also, when the percentages and frequencies were defined, this condition was also taken into consideration and the analysis was made accordingly. However, in order to have reliable set of data from this figure, the values have to be changed into the original ones.

As it was stated above, the data of figures 2 and 3 are strongly related because they are devoted to one and the same issue – nervousness during those activities.

While Figure 3 shows that the majority (*N*=98) think they feel nervous during oral presentation, Figure 2 demonstrates that there were the minority (*N*=33) among all the activities who feel relaxed during oral presentation. So, the data of Figures 2 and 3 seems to be logical.

It can be clearly seen that the least number of students who agreed that they feel nervous during a speaking activity is during class discussion (*N*=45). Though students who feel nervous during paired interview, individual interview and role play are less than 98 (students who feel nervous during oral presentation), their numbers are still quite considerable – 79, 62 and 53 respectively.
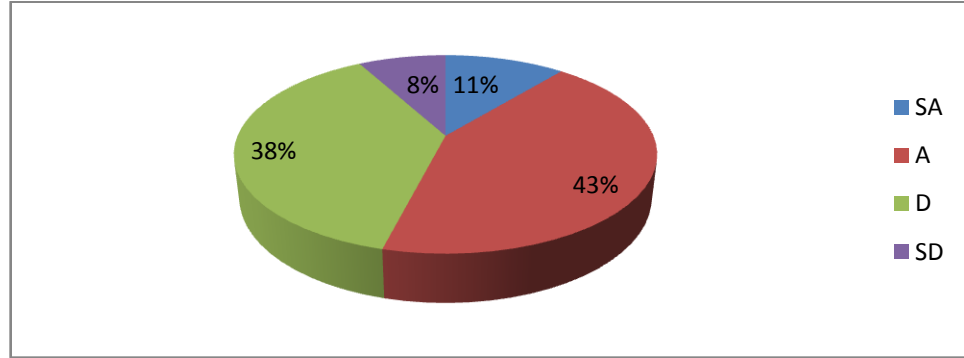
Figure 5. Students' Attitudes towards Speaking Tests

(SA – Strongly agree, A – Agree, D – Disagree, SD – Strongly disagree)

Finally, Figure 5 illustrates students' responses to the items about the speaking tests (items 4-18). It does not seem possible to illustrate the responses to all items of the first part of the questionnaire (33 questions) as other 18 items had to be analyzed separately. As it is seen in the pie chart, the majority of the students liked most speaking tests implemented in their classes. However, quite a large part of the students (46%) have negative attitudes towards speaking tests. It is obvious that there is space for improvement in this area.

The following conclusions can be made from the first part of the questionnaire: Students are positive about class discussions as they are based on voluntary participation, however, they are not likely to enjoy oral presentations most probably because of the fear to be observed by their classmates.

Also, students admit that their speaking performance is changing depending not only on their mood but also on the environment they are in. So, it is not realistic to base student's mark on his/her one time performance.

Additionally, students expressed assurance that hours devoted to the development of the speaking skills do not coincide with the criteria according to which students' performance is scored. Moreover, most students do not think the mark they receive for their speaking performance is what they deserve. This conclusion is not the reason for

the teachers to make their marks higher, it is not possible to exclude the responses of the students' whose complaints are unreasonable. Nevertheless, as far as dissatisfaction with the mark for speaking performance has become a tendency, it would be a good idea for the teachers to revise their criteria for scoring.

As far as the rating scales are concerned, students tend to think that it would be reasonable for the teachers to score their performance not according to their overall impression or intuition (which is common experience nowadays, according to the results of the interviews conducted by the researcher), but according to the standard rating scale.

As for paired interview, though students think that this speaking test imitates the real-life situations, they also state they perform worse in paired interview than when they perform in individual one because their interlocutor's personality and the level of English influence their performance.

Lastly, as far as the avoidance strategies are concerned, when they do not know the necessary vocabulary, though most students prefer describing the word in English or, if possible, to show it with gestures in order to continue conversation or monologue, there are still students who stop speaking having got anxious, or do not use the necessary words even if their speech is poor without them.

4.2.1.1. Students' Mean Score Summary

In the previous sections of this study the mean scores of every item were defined and analyzed. In this part, each students' mean score for every section will be defined and discussed.

As Table 19 demonstrates, following sections have the highest mean score possible – 4: attitude to speaking (three students), oral presentation (two students), role play (four students), individual interview (four students), paired interview (seven students), class

discussion (thirteen students), and interlocutor-test taker interaction (one student). Though the mean score of the last section, interlocutor-test taker interaction, does not make much sense as each item of this section, as of sections seven and eight, was analyzed separately, it was decided to include these items into the Table 19. As for the lowest mean score, it was found in attitude to speaking section (two students), oral presentation section (eight students), role play section (two students), individual interview section (four students) and paired interview (one student). The mean scores of the first section, attitude to speaking distributed between 1 to 4 (which is also true for the sections 2, oral presentation, 3, role play, 4, individual interview and 5, paired interview). The mean scores for the sixth section, class discussion have organized from 1,67 to 4. Section 7, avoidance strategies, has the highest mean score 3,75 and the lowest one 1,8, while the highest and the lowest scores of sections 8, scoring, are 3,33 and 1,5. The means of the ninth section, interlocutor-test taker interaction, have spread between 1,25 and 4. The highest mean score of sections 2,3,4,5, and 6 which test students' attitudes towards 5 test methods, is 4 and the lowest one is 1,33. Lastly, students' mean score for all the sections of the attitude questionnaire is distributed between 1,89 and 3,25.

Table 19

Students' Mean Scores for Sections 1-9 of the Attitude Questionnaire

Students	Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4	Section 5	Section 6	Section 7	Section 8	Section 9
1	3,33	3,33	3	3,33	2,5	2,5	2,5	2,83	2,75
2	3,67	3,33	2	3,67	2,67	**4**	3,4	**1,5**	1,5
3	2,67	2,33	3	2,33	3,67	3	2,4	1,83	1,75

					Table 19 (Continued)				
4	1,67	2	3	3,33	2,5	**1,67**	2,5	2,83	2,75
5	3,67	2,33	3,67	3	3	3	3	2,33	2,25
6	**1**	**1**	**1**	3,67	3,33	3,67	3	2,6	2,25
7	2,33	3	3	3	3	3	2,4	2	2,5
8	1,33	1,33	3	2	2	3	2,8	2,83	2,75
9	1,67	1,67	2	2	2,67	2,67	2,6	2,16	2,25
10	2,33	1,67	2,33	1,67	2,67	2,67	2,2	2,5	2,5
11	2,33	2	2	2	2,33	2,33	2,2	2,67	2,25
12	2,67	2	2	2,67	3	2,5	2,8	1,67	2,5
13	**1**	**1**	2,33	**1**	2	3	**1,8**	1,67	2,75
14	3	2	2,33	2	2,33	2,33	2,4	2,5	2,75
15	3	2	2,33	**4**	**4**	2	2,8	2,67	2,75
16	2,33	1,67	2,33	3	3	2,33	2,6	2,5	2,5
17	2,33	2	3	2	3	3	2,8	2,5	2,5
18	2,67	1,67	2,33	2,67	2,67	3,33	2,6	2,5	2,75
19	3,33	2,33	2,67	3	2,67	3	2,4	2	2,25
20	2,67	2	1,33	2	2,33	2	2,2	1,16	2,75
21	2,67	1,67	2,33	2	2,33	3	3	2,67	2,5

Table 19 (Continued)									
22	2	2	2	3	**4**	**4**	2,8	2,83	2,25
22	3	2,33	2,67	2,33	2,33	2,67	2,4	2,5	2
23	3	2,33	2,67	2,33	2,33	2,67	2,4	2,5	2
24	2	1,33	2	2	3	2	2,8	2,67	2,5
25	3	2,33	2	3,67	2,33	2,33	3,4	**3,33**	3
26	3,33	2,33	2,33	2	3	3	3,2	2,33	2,25
27	2,33	2	2,33	2	2,33	2,33	2	3,16	2
28	2,67	**1**	1,67	1,67	1,67	**1,67**	2,4	2,5	2,25
29	3	2,33	3,33	3	3	3	3	3	3
30	3	2,33	3	2	3	3	2,8	2,33	2,25
31	3,67	3,33	3	3	**4**	3	2,6	2,5	2,5
32	2,33	2,67	3,33	2	3,67	3,67	3,2	2,33	2,91
33	2,67	2,33	2,33	3	3	3	3	2,5	2,25
34	2,67	2	2	2	3	2,67	3	2,5	2,5
35	2,33	2,67	3,67	2,33	3	3	2,8	2,5	2,5
36	2,33	2	2	2	2	2,67	2,8	2,33	2,25
37	3	**1**	2,33	3	3,67	**4**	2,8	2,5	2,5
38	3	**1**	2,33	3	3,67	**4**	2,8	2,5	2,5

39	2,33	2,67	3	2	3	3	2,8	2,33	2,75
40	3,33	2	3	3,33	3	3,33	2,8	2,5	2,25
41	2,67	2	3	2	2	2,67	2,4	2,16	2,5
42	2,67	2	3	2	2	3	2,4	2,16	2,5
43	2,33	1,67	2,5	2,5	2,33	3	2,2	2,67	2,75
44	2,33	2	3	2	3	2	2,4	2,16	2,5
45	2,67	1,67	3,67	3	3,33	**4**	2,8	2,83	3
46	1,67	**1**	1,33	2	2	2	2	2,5	3,5
47	1,33	2	2	2	2	**1,67**	2,4	2,83	3
48	2	2	2,33	2,33	2	2	2,2	2,83	2,75
49	3,33	2	3	2	2	3	3	2,5	2,5
50	3,33	2,33	3	3	3	3	3	2,83	3,25
51	2,67	2,33	2,67	2,67	2,33	2,67	2,4	2,67	2,5
52	2,67	2	2	3	3	3	2,2	2,33	2,25
53	2,67	1,67	**1**	2,67	3	3	3	2,33	2,75
54	2,33	2,33	2,33	2,67	3	3	2,8	2,33	2,75
55	2,33	2,67	2,33	2,67	2,33	**4**	3	2,16	2,25
56	2,33	2,33	2,5	2,33	2	2,67	2,6	2,67	2,5
57	2,33	2,33	1,33	2	2,33	2	2,8	2,33	3

				Table 19 (Continued)					
58	2,67	2	**4**	3,33	3	2,33	2	2,83	2,25
59	2,33	2	2,33	2,33	3	3	2,8	2,5	2,5
60	**4**	2,33	2,67	**4**	**4**	**4**	**3,75**	2	1,75
61	2,33	2	2,67	3	2,67	3	2,8	2,5	3
62	**4**	**4**	**4**	**4**	**4**	**4**	3	2,16	2,5
63	3,33	3	2,67	3	3	2,67	2,8	2,33	2,25
64	2,67	2,67	3,67	2,67	3,67	3	3	2.83	2,5
65	3,33	3,33	3,33	3,33	3,33	3,33	2,75	2,5	2,25
66	2,67	2,33	3	2,67	2,67	3	2,4	3	3,25
67	3,33	**4**	3,67	3	3,33	**4**	3,2	2,83	2,75
68	3	1,67	2	3,33	3	2,33	2,8	3,16	2,5
69	2,66	1,33	1,66	2,33	3	**1,67**	2,4	2,16	2,67
70	2,33	2	3	3	3	3	2,4	2,66	2,5
71	2	1,67	2	**1**	3	3,33	2,6	2,67	2,75
72	3	2	2,33	2,33	2,67	2,33	2,6	3	3,25
73	**4**	1,67	3,33	**4**	**4**	3,33	3,2	2,5	3
74	3	3,33	3	2,33	3	1,33	3	1,6	2,67
75	3,33	2,33	2	2,67	3	**4**	2,6	2,5	3

76	2	2	1,67	**1**	2	2,33	3,4	2,5	2,25
77	3,33	3,33	3	3,33	3,33	3	3	2,5	2
78	2,33	2,33	3	3,67	2,67	2,67	3	3,16	2
79	2	2,33	2,33	2,67	3	3	2,6	2,17	2,75
80	3	3	3,33	3,33	2	3,33	2,8	2,83	3
81	2,67	2,67	3	2,67	2,67	2	2,4	3,17	3
82	2,67	2,33	**4**	3,33	3	2,33	3,33	2,8	3
83	2,66	2	2	2,5	2	2	2,6	2,33	2,75
84	2,33	2	3	2	2,33	**1,67**	2,83	2,67	3
85	3,67	1,67	3,33	2,33	3	3	2,4	2,67	3,25
86	2	**1**	1,67	3,67	3,67	3	2,8	2,5	1,75
87	2,67	2,67	2,67	3	3,33	3	3,4	2,5	3,25
88	3	2	2,33	2,33	2,33	2,33	3	2,5	3
89	2,67	1,67	1,67	2,33	2	2,33	2,4	2,17	2,75
90	2	3	2	3	2,33	3	3	2,33	2
91	2	2	2	3	3	2	2,8	2,67	2,5
92	3	2	2	2,67	1,67	3,33	3,2	2,17	2,5
93	3,33	2,67	2	3	3	3,67	3	2	2,25

Table 19 (Continued)								
94	2,67	2	2	2,5	2,67	3,2	3	3	3,5
95	3,33	2,67	2,67	2	2	3,33	2,8	2,17	3,25
96	3	1,33	2	2,33	**1**	2	2	2,5	2,5
97	**4**	2	1,67	3	3	**4**	2,8	3	3,75
98	3,33	3	3,33	3	3	3	2,6	2,33	2,25
99	2,67	2,33	2,67	3	2	3,33	2,6	2,6	3,25
100	2	2,33	2,33	2,33	3	3	2,75	2,67	3
101	3,33	3	2,33	3,67	2	3,33	2,6	2,83	3,5
102	2,67	2,67	3	**1**	2,33	3	2,8	2,83	2,75
103	2,66	2,33	2,5	2,33	3	3	2,6	2,5	2,75
104	3.33	2,33	2,33	3	3	3	3	2,33	3
105	2,33	3,67	3,33	3	2	3	2,6	2,33	2
106	3,33	2,67	2,67	2,33	3,67	3,67	2,8	2,5	2,5
107	3,33	3	3	3	**4**	**4**	2,8	1,83	1,75
108	2,67	2,33	**4**	2,33	3	3	2,8	2,67	3
109	2,67	3	1,67	3	3	3,67	2,4	2,33	2,75
110	2,67	1,67	1,67	2,67	3	3	2,4	3	2,25
111	3	2,33	2,67	3	2,67	3	2,6	2,5	2,5

112	2,33	2	2,33	3	2	2,67	2,8	2,8	2,5
113	2,33	2,67	2	3	3	3	2,8	2,5	2,75
114	2,67	1,67	3	2,33	3	2,33	2,2	2,5	2,75
115	2,67	1,67	3,33	3	3	3	2,2	3	3
116	3,67	3	3,33	3	2	2,67	2,2	3	**4**
117	3	2	3	3	3	3	2,6	2,67	2,75
118	3,67	2,33	2,33	3	2	3	3	2,5	2,25
119	2,33	1,67	3	2,67	3,33	3	2,4	3	2,25
120	1,67	**1**	2	2,67	2	2	2,6	2,67	2,75
121	2,33	2	2,33	2	2	2,33	2,8	2,33	2,75
122	3,33	3	3,33	3	2	3	2,8	2,5	2,75
123	2,33	2	2,33	1,67	3	2,67	2,5	2,33	2
124	2,67	3	2	2,67	3	2	2,5	2,33	2,5
125	2	2,67	2,67	3	3,33	3,33	2,8	2,17	2
126	3,33	3	3	3	3	3,33	3	2,83	2,75
127	2,33	1,67	2,67	3	2,33	2,33	2,8	2,33	2,75
128	2,33	2	2,33	2	2,33	2,67	2,8	2,17	2,75
129	2	1,67	2	2,33	3	3	2,75	2,5	2,5

Table 19 (Continued)

Table 19 (Continued)								
130	3	2,33	3	2	3	2,67	2,6	2,83	3
131	3	3	2,33	3,67	3	3	2,6	2,67	3,25
132	2	2,33	2,33	2	2,67	2,67	2,4	2,33	2,25
133	2,33	1	1,67	2,67	3	2	3,2	2,67	3
134	2	2	2,67	2	2,67	2	2,6	2,5	2,25
135	2	2,33	2,33	1,67	2	2,33	2,6	1,8	2,25
136	2	2,33	2,33	3	3	**4**	3,2	2,5	**1,25**
137	2,33	2	2	3	3	2,33	2,4	2,83	2,75

As Table 19 demonstrates, student 62 with the highest mean scores for sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and the highest average score for all sections, 3.25, has highly positive attitudes towards all test methods. Moreover, s/he uses some avoidance strategies, that help continue a conversation. It is worth mentioning that the other students who have taken the highest scores, students 67, 73 and 116, are positive about oral presentation, individual interview and class discussion.

Students 28, 41, 135, with the lowest scores for the attitude questionnaire, 2.08, 2.11, 2.14 respectively, have low results for all 9 sections, however, especially lowest score they have for sections 2,oral presentation, 4, individual interview and 5, paired interview. The information mentioned above proves the correctness of the test method analysis results, which defines oral presentation as the method during which students feel the least relaxed.

4.2.2. Responses in the Second Part of the Attitude Questionnaire

The second part of the attitude questionnaire consists of one ranking item, the purpose of which is to find out what students' most and least favorite test method is. Also, there are two open-ended items devoted both to the difficulties connected to speaking students face and to anxiety students feel while speaking in class. The last question of the second part of the attitude questionnaire is about the criteria that students think their teacher should pay most attention to while assessing their oral proficiency. Students' responses will be analyzed and discussed below.

A. Part II-Section 1: Ranking Item

Figure 5 below shows the distribution of students' responses to the ranking question where they were asked to rank 5 test methods (oral presentation, individual interview, paired interview, role play, class discussion) from one to five where '1' is the most preferable task for them and '5' the least preferable one. Below their responses are analyzed and discussed.
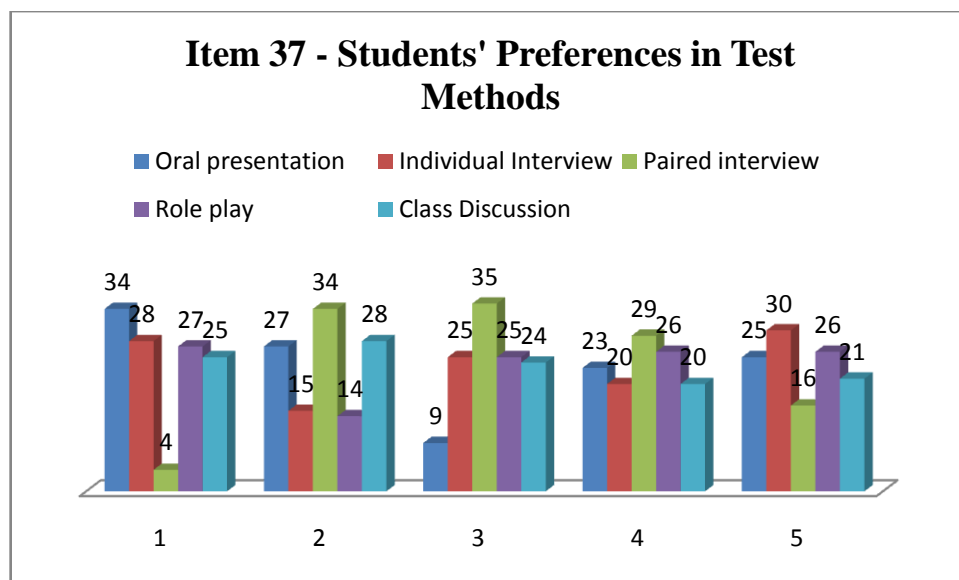
Figure 6. Students' Preferences in Test Methods

As it is seen from the Figure 6, the majority of students (N=34) stated that if they were going to take an oral test in an examination, they would prefer to do the oral presentation. However, slightly less students (N=28) would rather have individual interview as an examination. The difference among the numbers of students preferring to have an individual interview, a role play and a class discussion as an examination is marginal – 27 students would prefer to participate in a role play, while 25 would rather join the class discussion. The only test method with strikingly less students who would like to have it as an examination (N=4), is paired interview. Probably, the reason for it is the fear of students to have either more knowledgeable peer or the one with lack of speaking skills.

As for the test method least desirable for the students, which they ranked as the last they would like to have as an examination, it is individual interview (N=30). Similarly to the previously interpreted data, 21, 25 and 26 students ranked class discussion, oral presentation and role play respectively as the least desirable examination they would like to have. As for the paired interview, it is ranked as the most desirable test method in all but two sets of columns – first and fifth. In these items, it is ranked as the least desirable test method for the students.

As far as second set of columns is concerned, as it was mentioned before, here the highest column is the one of the paired interview, which means that this test method is the second one students would like to be tested with. Additionally, two sets of almost equal columns surround it – the ones of oral presentation and class discussion, which were ranked as the second preferable ones to be tasted with by 27 and 28 people respectively. Moreover, two test methods with the least number of students voted for it in this set of columns are individual interview and role play with 15 and 14 students defining it as their favorite test method in the form of which they want to have the oral examination.

It can be easily noticed from Figure 5 that third and forth sets of columns look similar. Firstly, in both of them the most considerable numbers of students, 34 in the third set of

columns and 35 in the forth one, voted for paired interview as an oral examination. Moreover, the second highest number of students (N=26) marked role play as the third and forth they would like to have as an examination in these two sets of columns. Though the similarities of these two sets of columns are undeniable, there is still a difference between them: in the third set of columns oral presentation was marked by the least number of students (*N*=9), while it is approved by 23 students as the fourth test method in the form of which they would like to have an examination, which makes it the third one in the fourth set of columns. Also, individual interview bar is the lowest in the fourth set of columns with 20 students supporting it as the forth variant for the oral examination. Unlike that, the third set of columns illustrates the role play and individual interview bars as the second highest with the equal number of students ranking them to be the third in the form of which they prefer to have the oral examination. Lastly, while 24 students ranked class discussion as the third test method among five most popular ones implemented in the oral examinations, 20 participants chose it as the forth variant for the examination.

B. Part II-Section 2: Open-ended Item 1

Open-ended item 38 of the attitude questionnaire asks students to mention what can help them calm themselves down if they feel anxious during the speaking class. This question reflects items it 6,9,12,15,18 asking students if they feel nervous during five speaking test procedures.

Table 20

The Results of Open-Ended Item 1

If you feel nervous during the task, what would make you feel less nervous?

Answer	Frequency
Familiar and interesting topic	29
Teacher's support	29
Classmates' support	26
Positive thinking	18
Taking a break	15
Nothing	10
Silent place	4
No definite time to speak	2
Not a problem for me	1
Sitting while speaking	1
No eye contact	1
My speech is not evaluated	1

As it can be noticed in Table 20, for most students teacher's and their classmates' support and topic they are offer to speak about are the most influential factors for avoiding anxiety during speaking English. Similar to that, students also stated that thinking positively and taking a break to drink water or concentrate usually help them to overcome anxiety partially. However, 10 students mentioned they have not found a way to decrease their anxiety while speaking. Silence was mentioned by 4 students as the condition for them feeling less anxious. Moreover, strictly defined time for speaking makes two students out of 137 anxious. One student out of 137 mentioned s/he does not think being anxious is a problem for him/her, which means anxiousness is quite a popular students' problem. Also, while one student feels uncomfortable standing while speaking, eye contact with a teacher makes other feel anxious. Finally, the last condition making one student nervous is the thought that his/her speech is being evaluated by the teacher. Unfortunately, it does not seem possible to solve this problem completely,

though one of the solutions for it might be the absence of oral examination, but the constant evaluation of students' oral performance throughout the semester so that students would not feel that their mark completely depends on their one time performance.

C. Part II-Section 2: Open-ended Item 2

Open-ended item 39 of the attitude questionnaire asks students to mention the most significant difficulty for them in speaking.

Table 21

The Results of Open-Ended Item 2

In speaking English the most difficult for me is…	
Answer	**Frequency**
Not remembering the necessary word	58
Pronunciation	26
Fluency	22
Speaking in front of audience	12
Translating from Turkish	7
Development of explanation	7
Speaking on unfamiliar topic	6
Use of complex sentences	6
Self-confidence while speaking	5
Interaction problem	5

Grammar	4
No problem	2
Not enough experience	1

As it can clearly be seen in Table 21, for absolute majority of students the biggest problem is not remembering the right necessary word while speaking spontaneously. For this problem, the only solution might be more practice with simpler vocabulary first and more complex one later. Likewise, pronunciation and fluency were considered to be the difficulties for 26 and 22 students respectively. Moreover, students also mentioned their fear to speak in front of an audience as the most considerable problem for them. The equal numbers of students (*N*=7) consider putting their thoughts into foreign words to explain ideas and unconscious translating sentences from their mother tongue into foreign language word by word as their biggest difficulties in speaking. Additionally, speaking on unfamiliar topic and use of complex sentences are named in this item by six students for each problem. Similarly, five students do not feel self-confident enough while speaking, whereas the same number of students have problems with eye contact and other interaction problems while speaking to an interlocutor or to the whole class. For twice less students grammatical accuracy seems to be a problem, while a single individual admitted having lack of experience in speaking. It makes much sense as several academics mentioned their first year students' not having enough experience at speaking in English previously in high school in order to perform fluently and self-confidently in university (See Appendix K).

D. Part II-Section 2: Multiple Choice Item

Item 40, the last item of the attitude questionnaire, focused on criteria students think their teacher should pay most attention to while assessing their oral proficiency. Figure 7 below demonstrates distribution of students' responses. The most important issues, according to students, are fluency and pronunciation with 15% of students picking them from the list of criteria. Slightly less students (13%) consider clarity of expression to be

the most important evaluation criteria. Likewise, while 10% of students consider confidence to be one of the criteria to take into consideration in speaking in English, the same number of students ticked the development of explanation as one of the significant criteria for teachers in speaking. Eye contact is considered almost as important criteria for speaking evaluation as the previously mentioned development of explanation, being mentioned by 9% of students.
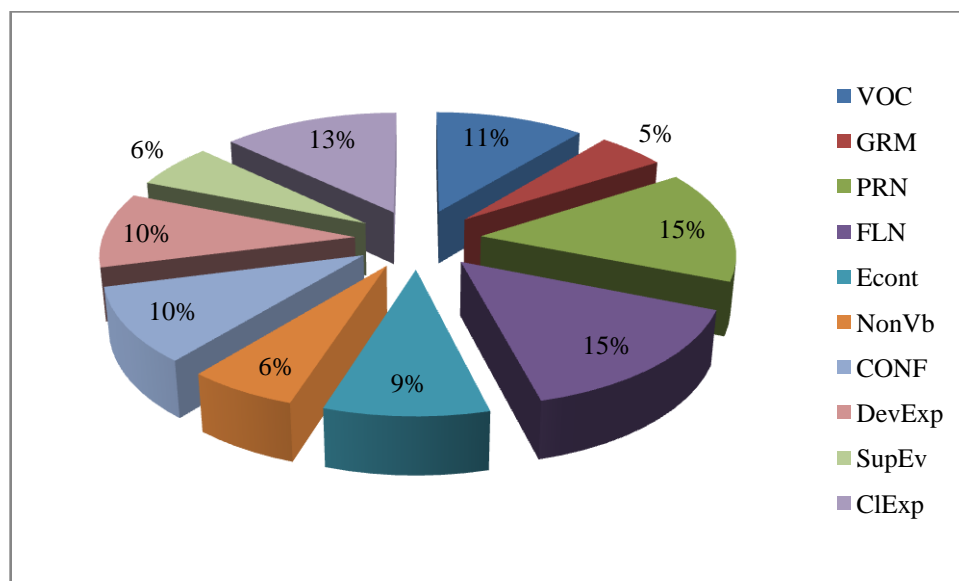
Figure 7. Criteria of Speaking Assessment – Students' View

(VOC – Vocabulary;

GRM – Grammar;

PRN – Pronunciation;

FLN – Fluency;

Econt – Eye Contact;

NonVb – Nonverbal aspects;

CONF – Confidence;

DevExp – Development of explanation;

SupEv – Use of supporting evidence;

ClExp – Clarity of expression).

Two of the least important criteria for speaking evaluation, according to students who filled in the questionnaire, are providing the supporting evidence (6%) and nonverbal aspects (6%) . Finally, the criteria that only 5% of students think important for teachers to take into consideration while evaluating students' speaking performance, is grammar.

As far as the results of the first part of the questionnaire indicate, students are highly positive about class discussions supposedly because the attention of whole class is not concentrated on a single individual for a long time and it makes them feel more relaxed. However, the test method students dislike most is oral presentation, probably, because of the same reason mentioned above. Logically enough, when asked about nervousness, students stated that they are the least nervous during the activity they expressed the most positive attitude towards – class discussion, and they are most nervous during oral presentation, which they are the least positive about. All in all, as far as all five test methods are concerned, the majority of students were positive about them, which shows that they generally enjoy being tested through five methods mentioned above. However, the results of the second part of the questionnaire, connected to the test methods, do not completely coincide with the results of the first part: Though the results of the first part show students preference towards class discussion, the results of the ranking item, where students had to rank five test methods according to their preference, prove students' most positive attitude towards oral presentation, while class discussion has rather low score.

The rating of paired interview is slightly less than that of class discussion, though it is obviously an enjoyable activity for students. Similarly, students stated that in paired interview there are some issues, connected to their interlocutor, that may make them nervous, for instance, if interlocutor's level of English is lower than students' level or if their personalities are different. Nevertheless, students agreed with the naturalness of this test method.

Moreover, among the avoidance strategies students use most while speaking, the most widely used is describing the unknown word in a foreign language and with the help of gestures. However, as the results show, the differences among the popularity of all the strategies are slight. So, students tend to use a variety of strategies both for encouraging and terminating the conversation.

One more point that the students expressed their attitudes towards in the first part of the questionnaire is scoring. Students admitted that their marks for speaking performance considerably depend on their mood and the environment they are in (e.g. the color of the walls etc). Also, they would prefer their teachers to score their performance according to the standard rating scale, rather than according to the overall impression, like many teachers prefer doing.

When asked about the anxiety during speaking and the means to overcome it, the majority of the students mentioned both the familiarity of the topic and the emotional support of their classmates and teacher.

Among the criteria that students consider to be the most important for the teachers to pay attention to while evaluating their oral performance are pronunciation and fluency. Similarly, according to the students grammar is the least important criteria for the teachers to evaluate in their speech.

The most difficult aspect in speaking English for students were remembering the vocabulary, being fluent enough and pronounce the words right. It is worth mentioning that the lack of speaking experience in high school, often considered by teachers in the interviews with the academics demonstrated further in this study, was mentioned once by the student. So, it is clear that teachers' and students' views to the problematic issues in speaking are different.

4.3 Analysis of the Students' Responses to Semi-Structured Focus Group Interview

While the attitude questionnaire was given to 138 students from three universities of Ankara, one third of them were interviewed later. As it was mentioned in the previous chapter, piloting of the interview revealed students' anxiety because of being interviewed and unwillingness to reveal some issues in the presence of an unknown interviewer. During this data collection the interview guide approach was used, which is a "list of questions or issues that are to explored in the course of interview" (Patton, 1987; p. 111), while "interviewer is free to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously: (Patton, 1987; p. 111). Therefore, it was suggested that in the presence of their classmates students may feel less nervous and more willing to talk. That is why individual interview was changed into focus group interview, where groups of 7-8 students were asked questions about their experience and preferences in speaking.

In this study the qualitative data collection tool was added to the quantitative one as many authors mention strengths of qualitative data in comparison to the quantitative one. Miles and Huberman state that it is, "the best strategy for discovering, exploring a new area, developing hypotheses…Finally, qualitative data are useful when one needs supplement, validate, explain, illuminate, or reinterpret qualitative data gathered from the same setting" (Miles and Humerman, 1994, p. 10). The last phrase of this citation is especially important as in present study the qualitative data, gathered with the help of attitude questionnaire from the students is validated with the help of semi-structured focus group interview given by the same students. Moreover, as Patton states, " Qualitative methods permit the evaluator to study selected issues, cases or events in depth and detail; the fact that data collection is not constrained by predetermined categories of analysis contributes to the depth and detail of qualitative data" (Patton, 1987, p.9).

4.3.1. Analysis of Students' Responses to Item 1 of Semi-Structured Focus Group Interview

The first item of the semi-structured focus interview focused on students' usual speaking lesson experience. Table 22 below demonstrates students' responses ranked from most frequently mentioned to the least frequently mentioned ones.

First, the descriptive analysis is presented as there are a lot of descriptive data in this study. Then, the summary is made and demonstrated in the form of table. In Table 22 students' responses to the question about the usual speaking class are presented.

Table 22

Students' Responses to the First Item of Semi-Structured Interview

1. Describe the usual speaking test in your class	
Focus Group 1	▪ Listening – roles and dialogues; ▪ Reading articles before class, preparation with 24 arguments for/against, in class answering general questions about the articles, teacher chooses 5 arguments for/against for students to talk about in connection to the text that they have read. ▪ Examination: 5 people are invited into the classroom, they are asked questions based on the articles they prepared at home (Time: 10 minutes for 5 people). ▪ Paired Interview; ▪ Class discussions.
Focus Group 2	▪ Retelling article, read at home, using the words from there; ▪ Small talks for on the article read at home (Time: less than a minute); ▪ Listening; ▪ Sometimes individual interviews, role-plays;

	▪ Class discussions.
Focus Group 3	▪ Oral presentations, sometimes with recording students' speeches; ▪ Role-plays; ▪ No examinations.
Focus Group 4	▪ Students prepare speeches on the topics at home, giving prepared speeches in the classroom.
Focus Group 5	▪ Class discussions; ▪ Oral presentations; ▪ No examinations – recently cancelled;
Focus Group 6	▪ Oral presentations; ▪ Class discussions; ▪ Role-plays.

So, the analysis of the data has enabled the researcher to identify a number of most frequently mentioned activities students are engaged in during speaking lessons.

Table 23

The Top Five Items Listed by Students as Responses to Item 1

1. Oral Presentations

2. Role-plays

3. Listening

4. Class Discussions

5. Speech on the articles read beforehand

Firstly, oral presentations are used a lot in the classroom, according to the results of this interview. However, quite generally students express quite negative ideas about them:

"I don't like oral presentations because you are alone, everyone in the class watches you, I feel nervous" (Appendix P, transcript 6).

Also, the obligation to talk during oral presentations was discussed:

"I have the right to talk, but I decide myself to talk about something, not my teacher" (Appendix P, transcript 6).

His idea was immediately opposed, which proves that students start thinking about their learning like future teachers:

"...if someone speaks, like a group of five people, they do speak, for example, others do not, so, how will they get the chance to speak or to improve their English? That's why, ok, then they have to try themselves sometimes cause they have to take the first step by themselves" (Appendix P, Transcript 6).

Secondly, the role-plays, about which students said the following, are also used in the classroom:

"Because we are linked to each other and we prepared for the role play. Before, so it is better" (Appendix P, Transcript 3).

"When we are a group of people we feel more relaxed than during the oral presentation" (Appendix P, Transcript 3).

 However, they also were criticized by some students:

"I like role plays most, but I don't think it is so useful for us because we just memorize the words and teacher doesn't allow us to make our own clauses. So, I think class discussions are best" (Appendix P, Transcript 3).

In relation to that it can be added that while any activity itself does not provide its success among the students, the way the teacher implements it in the classroom is crucial.

Listening, which also was mentioned as one of the frequently used test methods, is admitted to be a quite useful test method, though students complained that listening, rather than speaking exceeds in their classes:

"In class we have much to do listening, after that we talk to our partner about what we just heard. And that all, without speaking" (Appendix P, Transcript 2).

However, it is also enjoyed by students:

"Listening exercises. We were listening the song and we feel relaxed. I love music, so, I enjoyed it" (Appendix P, Transcript 3).

According to students, class discussion is not only popular with teachers, but also enjoyable for whole class. Moreover, students whose teachers do not make use of class discussions, express wish to have those:

"In class we have discussion between two people and they might not be speaking, they might be speaking like a couple words, so may be if we have the whole class to.. the class discussion, class debate, where you prepare the arguments (Appendix P, Transcript 2)".

The last speaking activity students have a lot in the classroom is giving a speech or answering questions about articles they have read beforehand. This activity is also criticized a lot by the students:

"We are given some articles beforehand, so, we have to use the words which are in the article, so, this is a bit hard for us. Because we want to use our words in speaking, but we have to focus on the article, so (Appendix P, Transcription 2)".

Nevertheless, students complaints may not always be considered reasonable enough, as in this case, when teachers try to involve new vocabulary in students' speech and it is obviously not approved. Though it is not always reasonable for teachers to change their teaching principles according to every complaint received, it is undoubtedly important for teachers to know what students (not only theirs) complain about.

4.3.2. Analysis of Students' Responses to Item 2 of Semi-Structured Focus Group Interview

In Table 24 below demonstrates students' responses to item 2, where they answered to questions about their favorite parts of speaking lessons.

Table 24

Students' Responses to the Second Item of Semi-Structured Interview

2. What do you like most of all in the speaking test in your classroom?	
Focus Group 1	▪ Conversations with peers (paired interviews); ▪ Class discussions.
Focus Group 2	▪ Class discussions on interesting topics.
Focus Group 3	▪ Role-plays (when friends are in the team).
Focus Group 4	▪ No favorite activity
Focus Group 5	▪ Speeches on interesting topics.
Focus Group 6	▪ Group work (with interesting topics); ▪;Activities with preliminary preparation.

Below there are four issues students said they liked in their lessons most often.

Table 25

Top four Items Listed by Students as Responses to Item 2

1. Class discussions (interesting topics emphasized)

2. Group work (with friends in group and interesting topic emphasized)

3. Paired interviews

4. Speeches (Interesting topics emphasized)

As it is clear from the table, students, though not all of them, find class discussions an enjoyable activity in their class, especially if the topic is familiar and interesting for them:

"I like talking about some topics freely. I have to discuss one topic in the classroom, we all discuss, deeply discuss. Not general truths or our things" (Appendix P, Transcript 2).

Additionally, they prefer fulfilling tasks in groups where all their peers are friendly to them. It is quite expectable, nevertheless, many interviewed teachers prefer to assign pairs and groups rather than allow students to work with their friends, in order to increase the efficiency of work:

"If I work in groups I enjoy generally, and if I know topics which are told in the classroom, and I will be enjoying the topic because I know what I say" (Appendix P, Transcript 6).

Paired interview was mentioned only by one group as an enjoyable part of the lesson; however, in other questions related to paired interviews, many groups expressed highly positive opinion about this test method:

"There is no competitiveness in this thing because we are presenting together. Two people, we are trying to make 1 person in that situation" (Appendix P, Transcript 6).

Lastly, students said they like to give speeches in class on condition that they will be genuinely interested in the topics they talk about:

"They are interesting topics, for example, I talked about UCAS and it was interesting for me also" (Appendix P, Transcript 5).

Table 26 above presents students responses to the question about what they would change in their speaking classes.

4.3.3. Analysis of Students' Responses to Item 3 of Semi-Structured Focus Group Interview

Table 26

Students' Responses to the Third Item of Semi-Structured Interview

3. If you had the chance to change the way speaking skill is assessed in your class, what would you change?	
Focus Group 1	▪ Allow students to choose their peer in paired interview; ▪ Increase time for speeches (or not to define time for students' answers); ▪ Give more time for the preparation to speak in front of class; ▪ For teacher not to appoint students who will speak; ▪ To modify topics for discussions according to students' preference.
Focus Group 2	▪ Increase time for speeches (or not to define time for students' answers); ▪ Increase number of speaking activities, decrease number of listening activities; ▪ Make level of speaking exercises higher; ▪ To modify topics for discussions according to students' preferences; ▪ More freedom for students while speaking during the

	examination;
	▪ Change paired interviews into group discussions;
	▪ Allow students to choose their peer in paired interview.
Focus Group 3	▪ To modify topics for discussions according to students' preferences;
Focus Group 4	▪ To give opportunity to students to prepare for the dialogues, speeches etc.
Focus Group 5	▪ For teacher to provide positive atmosphere for students to speak;
	▪ To provide students with the definite criteria for their speaking performance;
Focus Group 6	▪ For teacher not to appoint students who will speak;
	▪ For teacher to provide positive atmosphere for students to speak.

It is clear from the size of Table 26 that there are more issues students would rather change in their speaking lesson than those they like about them.

Table 27

Top Five Items Listed by Students as Responses to Item 3

1.To modify topics for discussions according to students' preferences

2. Allow students to choose their peer in paired interview

3. Increase time for speeches (or not to define time for students' answers)

4. For teacher not to appoint students who will speak

5. For teacher to provide positive atmosphere for students to speak

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According to many students, they would speak more willingly and freely if they were offered topics they are interested in during their speaking class:

"I like talking about some topics freely. I have to discuss one topic in the classroom, we all discuss, deeply discuss. Not general truths or our things" (Appendix P, Transcript 2).

Topics students mentioned as the least favorite are global warming, illnesses and media.

Students who were interviewed complained about teachers appointing their peers for the paired interviews. They expressed the view that with the peer they do not have friendly relationship outside the classroom, they usually feel more nervous than with one they are friends with:

"Your partner will always be the same. And to contact with your partner you have to do it until this semester. So, I couldn't contact with my partner, I couldn't speak.. she couldn't have speak to me. And teacher asked her, and she said she wasn't interested in her course. I wanted to speak, but it was impossible because of ...hard" (Appendix P, Transcript 2).

"Sometimes I... my teacher pair me, person I don't talk generally. In the speaking we don't speak very much...very well. If I chose my peer, may be I can speak more relaxed, because we have more common things, so, we can speak more".

One more issue that makes students nervous is limited time they have to speak. According to them, all the time thinking about time, they fail to care more about the content of their speeches, becoming more and more nervous:

"She (teacher) gives us 10 minutes for 5 people. I think it is a short period because, for example, we can speak in more time, but we get excited in a short period. For example, if we can't speak, find a word, we get excited, we stop and the moments she (teacher) gave us finished. She (teacher) passes the other" (Appendix P, Transcript 1).

Also, many students admit feeling stressful when they are being picked to speak in the class. They state that teacher should wait for students to be willing to speak:

"This is not about our teacher, but I don't like the teachers who pick students who will talk... I have the right to talk, but I decide myself to talk about something, not my teacher" (Appendix P, Transcript 6).

While some students accuse teachers of picking the students to speak in the classroom, other understand that is not always realistic to expect in the classroom:

"But that would be useful, for example, cause if someone speaks, like a group of five people, they do speak, for example, others do not, so, how will they get the chance to speak or to improve their English? That's why, ok, then they have to try themselves sometimes cause they have to take the first step by themselves" (Appendix P, Transcript 6).

According to many students, they would speak more willingly and freely if they were offered topics they are interested in during their speaking class:

"I like talking about some topics freely. I have to discuss one topic in the classroom, we all discuss, deeply discuss. Not general truths or our things" (Appendix P, Transcript 2).

Topics students mentioned as the least favorite are global arming, illnesses and media.

Positive classroom atmosphere is stated to be one of the issues students think would improve their speaking lessons.

"I think it is related to classroom atmosphere because I know some teachers and I feel relaxed in their class, but sometimes some teachers' lessons I am so nervous" (Appendix P, Transcript 2).

4.3.4. Analysis of Students' Responses to Item 4 of Semi-Structured Focus Group Interview

Table 28

Students' Responses to the Fourth Item of Semi-Structured Interview

4. Are you satisfied with the mark you receive for your speaking performance?	
Focus Group 1	▪ Sometimes I am not.
Focus Group 2	▪ No. .
Focus Group 3	▪ No.
Focus Group 4	▪ No.

Focus Group 5	▪ No.
Focus Group 6	▪ Sometimes I am not.

It does not seem to be necessary to create a table with a summary for this item as it is easier to describe the answers without it. So, four groups of students (*N*=32) admitted that they do not agree with teacher's opinion about their speaking performance. One of the students said the following:

"Last semester we had a teacher, we were recording our voices and sending them to a teacher. And for each assignment she was writing comments in addition to the grade. For example, if it is 80 out of 100, for example to me she wrote: "You should work more on the pronunciation that word, but that word was good, but in 4 of my assignments she didn't write anything and she gave a bad mark. So, I think I deserve more" (Appendix P, Transcript 3). Others seemed to agree with her.

However, students of two groups (*N*=16) stated that usually they are satisfied with the mark teachers give them with the exception of several occasions. Moreover, several of them agreed with the students saying the following:

"I don't think so, because I don't deserve this mark. I can't speak good, well. But I always take it" (Appendix P, Transcript 1).

Table 29 slightly differs from the tables of items 1 – 4 of students' attitude questionnaire as it includes students responses to two items. The reason for it is that items 5 and 6 are similar with just one part different.

4.3.5. Analysis of Students' Responses to Item 5 and 6 of Semi-Structured Focus Group Interview

Table 29

Students' Responses to the Fifth and Sixth Items of Semi-Structured Interview

	5. How would it affect your performance in paired interview if your peer's English is <u>better</u> than yours?	6. How would it affect your performance in paired interview if your peer's English is <u>worse</u> than yours?
Focus Group 1	▪ Not important for me (~50%); ▪ It would affect me (~50%).	▪ I would try to help with prompting him/her and paraphrasing if he/she did not understand.
Focus Group 2	▪ It would affect me.	▪ I would try to help (by not dominating in conversation).
Focus Group 3	▪ Not important for me; ▪ I would speak more.	▪ I would try to help (by using more simple sentences).
Focus Group 4	▪ I would be anxious.	▪ I would feel annoyed.
Focus Group 5	▪ I would feel anxious.	▪ I would try to help.
Focus Group 6	▪ I would speak less. ▪ I would ask him/her to check my speech before the interview.	▪ I will try to speak more.

Below is the summary of Table 29 – the most frequently used answers to the questions about influence of peer's level of English for the students.

Table 30

Top Five Items Listed by Students as Responses to Items 5 and 6

… your peer's English is <u>better</u> than yours?	…your peer's English is <u>worse</u> than yours?
1. Not important	1. I would try to help (by prompting him/her, using simple constructions, not dominating in conversation etc).
2. I would feel anxious.	2. I would try not to dominate in conversation.
3. I would speak less.	3. I will try to speak more.
4. I would speak more.	4. I would feel annoyed.

First of all, if peer's level of English is higher, for some students it would not be important, while it would cause some students' anxiety. For some students speaking less is the solution:

"In that situation we are 2 people making one people because we are presenting together. And if my friend knows English better than me, I will ask her as a favor to speak more than me. Because we are presenting together. And the important thing is to make a nice thing, like, people will like that, that's why we have to, she has to, actually, speak more than me. And I will just, may be I will just, I will speak, I don't want to say that I will just stand".

The statement above reflects students' exclusively positive attitude towards paired interview.

This question raised a small discussion among students, when one of them said the following after one of the students stated that her peer's level of English does not affect her performance:

"I think it affects all of us, for example, one of our classmates, she is a native speaker and none of us speak with her because we are afraid of speaking" (Appendix P, Transcript 1).

It is worth mentioning that, judging from students' reaction to this sentence, the opinion mentioned above has been approved by other students.

Likewise, students are extremely helpful towards their peers, whose level of English is low.

"I would try to help him or her. Because if I don't help he or she get low mark" (Appendix P, Transcript 5).

Nevertheless, there are students who were quite negative towards their peers' lower level of English:

"I'll be annoyed because it is like speaking to a wall" (Appendix P, Transcript 4).

4.4 Analysis of the Academics' Responses to Open-Ended Questionnaire

An open-ended questionnaire consists of 15 open-ended items which focused on criteria for the assessment of oral performance, speaking test method, teacher training issue and challenges teachers face while assessment of the oral performance of their students. 25 teachers of three universities in Ankara, Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi University, have filled in the open-ended questionnaire. Their responses were analyzed with content analysis, the results were interpreted and conclusions were drawn.

In this part the results will be introduced in the form of tables and will be interpreted. Top five responses to every item are supposed to be demonstrated, however, in some items two or more responses have the same number of supporters, that is why, more than five were included into items like that. The citations of teachers' responses are extracted from the questionnaires they filled in.

4.4.1. Analysis of Academics' Responses to Item 1 of Open-Ended Questionnaire

The first item of the questionnaire was multiple choice item which require academics to pick the criteria, which they take into consideration when they evaluate their students' oral performance. The answers were not justified by teachers, however, the second item

will shed the light to this one also. Below is the list of 6 top criteria teachers mentioned as the primary ones for their evaluation:

Table 31

Top Six Academics' Responses to Item 1 of Open-Ended Questionnaire

1. Pronunciation

2. Clarity of Expression

3. Fluency

4. Vocabulary

5. Eye Contact

6. Intelligibility

According to the results of the first items of the open-ended questionnaire, the criterion most teachers include into their rubrics for oral proficiency evaluation is pronunciation. It is worth mentioning that pronunciation is a special concern of students in Turkey:

"If you are teaching Turkish students than pronunciation could be quite a problem. The pronunciation of certain sounds, because when you don't have those sounds in the mother tongue, you know, then it could present a problem, like the 'th' sound in English".

While clarity of expression was considered an important criterion by the teachers, students' fluency, or flow of speech, is also quite considerable criteria. Similar to that, teachers include students' ability to maintain eye contact and their intelligibility, which is the combination of fluency and accuracy, into their rating scale.

Other criteria that less teachers had in their designed rating scales are body language, presentation skills, use of speech, politeness, effective use of voice.

4.4.2. Analysis of Academics' Responses to Item 2 of Open-Ended Questionnaire

Item 2 of the open-ended questionnaire was related to the criteria for the rating scale as well, but here teachers were asked to list the criteria they think were the most important to evaluate in student's speech. Responses to this items are shown in Table 32 below:

Table 32

Top Eight Academics' Responses to Item 2 of Open-Ended Questionnaire

1. Clarity of expression

2. Fluency

3. Pronunciation

4. Vocabulary

5. Intelligibility

6. Body language

7. Organization

8. Content

Clarity of expression was named by teachers as the most important issue for successful foreign language communication, as well as the criterion for oral performance evaluation. The primary reason for it is the understanding of the interlocutor which is the most important:

"Clarity of expression is the most important criterion form me since it is the aspect that leads to understanding from the part of the listeners. Without it, the listeners might be frustrated".

Another criterion for students' speech evaluation was fluency, which, as it can be noticed from the Table 33, was considered much more significant criteria by teachers. It is justified the following way:

"...both fluency and accuracy are needed... However, a fluent speaker with minor language and/or pronunciation problems can always be excused".

As it was mentioned in the interpretation of the results of item 1, pronunciation is one of the primary factors that Turkish teachers evaluate in Turkish students' speech. Lack of attention to these criteria during many years was emphasized by following academic:

"I can state that I give importance to use of pronunciation and fluency. Because, these are the features that disturb comprehensibility. For my students these are the most problematic areas, these features have been ignored for years and generally the attention has been paid to sound articulation and accuracy"..

Other than that, vocabulary, intelligibility, body language, organization of speech and content was named by less number of teachers.

4.4.3. Analysis of Academics' Responses to Item 3 of Open-Ended Questionnaire

In item 3 of the open-ended questionnaire academics were asked to name the speaking test method they think is the most advantageous to apply in the classroom. The results of this item were supposed to be compared with the results of students' attitude questionnaire, where they expressed their opinions on five test methods.

Table 33

Top Six Academics' Responses to Item 3 of Open-Ended Questionnaire

1. Individual interview

2. All in combination

3. Role-play

4. Oral presentations

5. Paired interview

6. Class discussion

The most advantageous test method for teachers was individual interview, which in students' opinion, is the almost the last activity, before oral presentation, that they like to participate in the classroom. It is obvious that in this matter the opinions of both parties do not coincide. Teachers' main argument in favor of individual interview was that it allowed teacher to observe students in the process of interaction.

Also, teachers prefer to combine all the test methods in one semester in order to evaluate students' performance in different communicational situations:

"All of them are very useful to be used as one needs to see the students individual performance as in a presentation and also their conversational ability i.e whether they can respond meaningfully when they are spoken to".

Role-play is an activity teachers like to use in the class as long as they are "well-designed":

" By "well-designed" I mean an activity with a real communication purpose in class, where the students forget the fact that they have been assessed".

However, according to students, most teachers probably fail to design or use appropriate role-plays as students' opinion towards this activity is quite negative – it is almost the least preferable by students test method.

The fourth most advantageous skill for use in the classroom, according to academics, is oral presentation, which students strongly dislike. Though teachers state the obvious advantages of this activity, like the opportunity for the teacher "to observe students as an outsider", the way "to assess students' non-verbal skills" and to give silent students demonstrate their speaking skills, they also stay critical towards it:

"Oral presentations are ok, but the speaker may rehearse for many times and even memorize the speech, which does not show the real speaking proficiency". For the solution of this problem asking additional questions after the presentation may be offered in order to see student's understanding of the subject".

As for the fifth activity named by teachers, which means that it is not considered to be primary activity for use in the classroom for teachers, it is paired interview, which according to students, is their second favorite activity in the classroom. Teachers admit in order to interview students in pairs, considerable attention should be paid to level of English and relationship of peers as it is useful only if "pairs have a good harmony". Students have similar opinion, having admitted that their peers' level of English and personality influences their performance.

Lastly, while class discussion turns out to be the last advantageous test method for teachers, it is a favorite one for students.

As an overall trend, it is clear that students' and teachers' opinions about the test methods in the classroom are the opposite. It might cause some problems for students' positive attitude towards their speaking lessons.

4.4.4. Analysis of Academics' Responses to Item 4 of Open-Ended Questionnaire

The fourth item of an open-ended questionnaire concerns the challenges teachers face in the assessment of speaking skills. Table 34 demonstrates academics' responses:

Table 34

Top Six Academics' Responses to Item 4 of Open-Ended Questionnaire

1. Subjectivity

2. Criteria for evaluation

3. Students' anxiety

4. Task relevance

5. Equipment for the assessment of speaking skills

6. Time

Absolute majority of teachers state that the main challenge for them is being objective and fair evaluating students' oral performance. The main reason for it is absence of reliable criteria for assessment (which is the second challenge teachers mentioned), "having students from different background" and the human factor. While being interviewed, students mentioned that they feel that sometimes their "names affect marks" they receive. What they meant was that teachers, being acquainted with the students sometimes unconsciously fail to avoid including students' reputations into their evaluations.

The third teachers' problem in this area is students' anxiety which prevents teachers to give realistic mark for their oral performance to these students:

"Learners' speaking anxiety and test taking anxiety are the greatest challenge for me, because it directly affects the reliability of the test."

Another problematic issue academics name is task relevance, which means that the purpose of tasks may be not testing the speaking skills, but the common knowledge about facts:

"...a test taker who has many ideas about paragliding may have a better score than someone who is better in English in speech but weak in terms of common knowledge on the subject matter".

Additional issues that concern teachers in the area of speaking assessment are lack of appropriate equipment and time expenses for the evaluation. As for the former problem, teacher state that it would be helpful to record all students' performances and then revise them in order to be more objective, but the equipment provided for educational institution do not allow to do it. Secondly, it is too time consuming, moreover the assessment itself takes much time:

"It's time consuming and tiring. Most teachers may refrain from assessing the students throughout the term".

4.4.5. Analysis of Academics' Responses to Items 5 to 14 of Open-Ended Questionnaire

The structure of items 5 to 14 was the same – they all were alternative questions with two variants of answers, therefore, it was decided to organize them into one table, which introduces short responses to the questions, then, justification and explanation of the responses are presented.

Table 35

Academics' Responses to Items 5 - 14 of Open-Ended Questionnaire

Number	Question	Response
5	Do you prefer to create speaking tests for your students by yourself or to use the 'standardized' instruments?	To design my own speaking tests.
6	Do you believe that paper-and-pencil tests are useful for oral proficiency evaluation?	No, oral proficiency should be assessed interactively.

7	Do you agree that there should be a different rating scale for each type of the speaking task?	Yes.
8	What type of the rating scale (holistic* or analytic*) do you prefer to use while assessing your students' oral performance?	Holistic + analytic depending on the purpose.
9	Do you think it is more useful for a teacher to use his/her own perception rather than the criteria of the scale while assessing speaking?	To use criteria for assessment
10	What seems more correct to you: to assess student's speaking skills <u>describing</u> the proficiency level or giving a <u>single score</u> for their proficiency?	To describe students' performance
11	Does it have an impact on the score of a student whether his/her interlocutor in a paired interview is a teacher or a student?	Yes.
12	Do you consider yourself a reliable rater?	Not really.
13	Which one is more important for a teacher to assess speaking performance of his/her students? Experience in teaching English or Special training in assessment?	1. Experience + 2. Teacher training
14	Do you agree with the view that direct speaking tests* may be called 'valid' while indirect ones* – 'invalid'?	Both are valid.

Item 5 focuses on academics' practices related to the design and use of speaking tests. According to teachers' responses, they prefer designing their own tasks or adapting the tasks from other source according to the purpose of the lesson. The reason teachers state is the following: "standard instrument might not reflect my students' needs". However, some teachers said that it was an obligation in the institution to use the standard tests, however, "there are still disagreements on the criteria and not every teacher is happy with it. Therefore, sometimes we adapt them".

All teachers agree with the point that the most important is "the applicability of the test in the local classroom context".

The sixth item of the questionnaire is related to academics' opinion about the evaluation of students' oral performance through paper-and-pencil test. The majority of teachers considers paper-and pencil test not valid for assessing students' oral performance:

"Speaking requires real time, unplanned, spontaneous ability to respond to what is said. Paper and pencil tests are not about speaking they are about writing. Such tests do not reflect the dynamic nature of the speaking skill either".

Additional reason for not using paper-and pencil tests for this purpose is that they decrease students' motivation to express their thoughts in English and therefore, they are too passive.

However, some teachers stated some reasons to use these tests for the evaluation of oral performance, for example, when the purpose is to test students' knowledge of formulaic expressions, testing what students would say in certain situations. Their advantage in these situations is that they allow teachers notice some points that have been missed in testing of oral performance.

Item 7 requires academics to answer the question about rating scales and their purposes. Teachers gave the following response: a different rating scale should be used for each type of speaking tasks according to the purpose and the nature of the task. Similar to this item, students gave the same answer to item 8, which was about teachers' preference of holistic or analytic rating scales. As their answers demonstrate, teachers prefer to use both according to the purpose of the task. Analytic scale is preferred for midterm or final examinations in order for teacher to be able to justify his/her score point by point. Also, teachers offer using holistic scale for role-plays particularly as it is difficult to observe role-plays analytically. Another opinion is to use both rating scales with every task –

first, a teacher should evaluate the performance using analytic scale and then transcribe the results into holistic one.

The next item which concerned teachers' grounding for evaluation – overall impression or fixed criteria. Almost all the teachers who filled in the questionnaires consider criteria to be more appropriate, though still not completely reliable way of evaluation:

"The criteria helps to reduce the shortcomings of the assessment process, which otherwise would be very subjective".

However, some teachers admit that designing or adapting the criteria in rating scales, they unavoidably include their perception into evaluation.

As for item 10, which asks teachers about the form of assessment – whether they prefer to give the description of students' levels or a single score for their performance, teachers answered that they prefer giving the description as it enable students to understand the strengths and weaknesses of their speaking skills, to realize whether he/she is making progress. However, giving a single score is considered inevitable as it is obligatory for teachers to give their students the mark for official purposes.

Also, teachers were asked about their observations of students' reactions having a paired interview where their peer is student or a teacher. Most teachers consider that students' performance is usually higher when they talk to interlocutor, who is their classmate, rather that teacher. However, the following opinion was also expressed by some teachers:

"The important point is the psychological impact of the interlocutor on the student. If the interlocutor has a negative effect on the students (either a student or a teacher) the score will be negative, or vice versa".

The twelfth item offered students to define whether they consider themselves reliable raters. It is quite interesting that the majority of teachers answered negatively, which means they think critically about their practice of teaching speaking. Some state that no assessment is reliable and teacher is affected by his/her opinion about sutdents, as it was mentioned above, subjectivity is teachers' primary concern. Others believe in the

concept of reliable rater, whose main characteristics is much experience, and are sure that they are on the way of being reliable raters.

The next item is closely related to the previous one as their common topic is rater training. Teachers are asked whether they think teaching experience is prior to special training to assess speaking. Teachers' opinions divided into two equal parts, one party considers experience to be the principal requirement for being a good rater, other – special training is necessary. The main argument of the party which supports the former opinion is that experience is a vague concept and it is not as reliable as specific training for fulfilling specific task. Those teachers who think special training is necessary give the argument that "experienced teachers tend to rely on their internal criteria which are actually subjective and can be misleading", also even experienced teachers need to be aware of certain aspects of speaking assessment.

The last item in this section is devoted to teachers' opinion about direct and indirect speaking tests. Similarly to the previous item, in this one teachers' opinions also separated into equal groups. The opinion that indirect tests are valid for the assessment of speaking skills, is supported by teachers who state that all the assessment types are equally valid "according to the purpose, needs and expectations" as in real life we have both types of communication. Additionally, indirect speaking test are offered to use as a preparation to the direct speaking tests. As for those who do not like the idea of testing speaking skills not interactively, they completely sure that speaking is spontaneous ability to which it is not possible to get ready, so, according to them, speaking should be assessed through speaking.

4.4.6. Analysis of Academics' Responses to Item 15 of Open-Ended Questionnaire

The last item of open-ended questionnaire focused on the quality of the evaluation criteria teachers are provided by their institution with. However, none of the academics stated that his/her institution provides him/her with the clear criteria for the assessment of speaking. The opinions were completely homogeneous in this issue – every instructor

develops his/her own scale for his/her class. Some teachers organize unofficial random meetings where they share their concerns and pieces of advice. However, according to the responses that teachers gave during the interview, they would like to have a common scale for the institution and to have the possibility to slightly localize it if necessary.

4. 5 Analysis of Academics' Responses to Semi-Structured Interview

According to Patton, though there does not exist a perfect data collection strategy, there exist some ways to increase the validity of data collection procedure. One of these ways is to combine more than one data collection approach so that strengths of both are combined. This technique is called triangulation (Patton, 1987). In this study data triangulation, "the use of variety of data in a study" (Patton, 1987; p. 60), was used in order to make the data more reliable and add some more information to the one already collected.

In this part of the study content analysis was used in order to structure the data into the pattern from which conclusions can be made more easily.

The interpretivism was the main approach to this data analysis. A brief description of this approach to qualitative data analysis, which Miles and Huberman (1994) discuss in their book "*Qualitative Data Analysis*" is worth to be given here. It is important to mention that according to interpretivism, researchers "have their own understandings, their own convictions, their own conceptual orientations; they too, are members of particular culture at a specific historical moment. Also, they will be undoubtedly affected by what they hear and observe in the field, often in an unnoticed ways. Interview will be a "co-elaborated" act on the part of both parties, not a gathering information by one party" (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 8).

Among 30 academics who filled in the open-ended questionnaire half of them (*N*=15) were interviewed. The participants' experience in the assessment of speaking ranged from one semester to thirty-seven years. They were asked behavior, opinion and

knowledge questions (Patton, 1987, p. 121), responding to which they shared their experience and concerns in speaking assessment field. Below is the interpretation of the data, constructed into tables through coding and memoing, which is a part of the content analysis. Also, the data were analyzed descriptively – sometimes each academic's opinion about certain issues in the interview is interesting and unique in its own way, so that the data could not be generalized.

It is worth mentioning that though the interview consists of a number of questions, 5 basic items, which, according to the researcher, are primary and the most informative ones, were identified and discussed in this section. As for other issues, that were not included into this part, they are available in Appendix O, which contains the transcripts of these interviews. The justification of every teacher's response is given in the tables, which differs from the previous analysis. In the interpretation of the results of the open-ended questionnaire for academics the justification of every response was not given by academics; thus, just the most thought provoking responses were citied.

4.5.1. Analysis of Academics' Responses to Item 1 of Semi-Structured Interview

Item 1 of the semi-structured interview focused on the areas academics think are the most problematic in the assessment of speaking skills. Table 36 below shows academics' responses to this item and justifications of each response. It is slightly different from the presentation of the results of the students' focus group semi-structured interview, comments related to every response are shown. The main reason for it is that no matter how frequent the answer is, it is still quite valuable for this study as every teacher has enough experience to share. Therefore, every academic's response is significant and is worth being supported with the comment.

Table 36

Academics' Responses to Item 1 of the Semi-Structured Interview

What area do you think is the most problematic in speaking assessment?		
Participants	Response	Comment
1	1. Pronunciation 2. Anxiety.	"The pronunciation of certain sounds, because when you don't have those sounds in the mother tongue, you know, then it could present a problem, like the 'th' sound in English." "…even if the grammar is quite good, They usually have difficulty expressing themselves in English"
2	1. Assessment 2. Subjectivity 3. Motivation. Authentic Examples.	"…especially in our department the assessment depends on one teacher only, so, you are teaching classes and you are assessing the performances as well, so..we fail to be objective probably, most of the time." "my holistic approach and another person's holistic approach wouldn't match probably. If you take a grid, again, so, it becomes too mechanical, so, that's a big challenge." "because our students are..all of them are Turkish speaking students, so they prefer to switch to their mother tongue to communicate to each other, because they don't feel the necessity to communicate in the English language, so this motivation is a problem." "…we, non-native speakers of Englsih, we fail to ..we fail to provide studentswith some authentic examples , because their performances depend on the translation very much."
3	Materials	"I think the teachers are a bit lost about what kind of materials are best to use in speaking classes. Generally, they bring like a topic to talk about in class, but generally you find that the students may not be very interested in the topic."

4	1. Fossilized pronunciation 2. Intonation.	-
5	Paired Interviews.	"Paired interviews may be a problem in the particular circumstances, but in order to lighten the problematic effect, I decided to give them and I am giving them some assignments to check for pronunciations, to check for er..accuracy."
6	Rating and scoring.	"You give the same score to 2 students, but their performances are very different from one another in terms of accuracy, fluency, use of vocabulary, pronunciation, whatever."
7	1. Pronunciation; 2. Grammar.	-
8	1. Fairness 2. Accent 3. Accuracy 4. Fluency 5. Subjectivity.	"…when I'm assessing their speaking skills, with my students, I'm assessing them on the basis of the education they got from somebody else." "I think, what you have here, the rater-inter rater reliability may be a problem. And I think would be the biggest problem."
Table 36 (continued)		
9	1. Rating Scales 2. Fairness.	"I came up with my own rubric and I'm happy with it, which is fluency part, accuracy, vocabulary, delivery part, body language part and everything. But what I can't be sure is my objectivity." "…you need at least 2 more people, sitting with you together, alright? And filling in that rating scale, later coming together and having the average grade of these 3 instructors."

10	1. Individual differences 2. Rubric.	"you have to focus on each individual, you should assess their improvement in their own speed." "Of course the prepared ones (rubrics) are a kind of guide for you, but you should find your own way when you prepare the rubrics for assessment, this was a difficulty. But I think we all have solution for it, because you should do it, you should localize your rubric."
11	Pronunciation	"It is a little bit difficult for them to get accustomed to the way some sounds are produced, after reading the word they have difficulty in articulation of the words."
12	1. Rating scales 2. Speaking tests.	- "Speaking tests…sometimes are observed here, here in our department. Speaking skill teachers use some written tests, but how can you measure someone's speaking ability in a written test?"
13	1. Rubrics 2. Subjectivity of assessment.	- "And that was all, and it was not very objective assessment in my opinion, because there were only 2 of us, even though we recorded the conversation, we were not asked to go back and listen to them again, so, in that class I doubt about objectivity."
14	1. Students' Self-assessment; 2. Background education.	"…, they have either very high ideas about themselves, or very low opinions about their ability…. So, the most problematic bit is for them (students) getting them to notice what they are not doing right." -
15	Criteria for assessment	"…there are many issues coming into play when you evaluate or assess students' performance in speaking."
16	Subjectivity	"The most problematic part in speaking assessment is the subjectivity inherent in such assessment procedures especially student-

		interlocutor interaction. It is very hard to be consistent in scoring across classes, different condition, time etc"

Below there is a summary of academics' responses, introduced in Table 37. It shows that the issue considered problematic by the highest number of academics is students' pronunciation. Coming back to attitude questionnaire for students, it is possible to notice that academics' and students' opinions in this matter coincide as when they were asked to name the most problematic issue for them in speaking, the second highest number of students said that it was pronunciation (*N=26*).

Also, not being able to identify the strict criteria for students' speaking assessment is a problematic issue for teachers. As for students' opinion, in items 28 and 29 of the attitude questionnaire they were asked if they want their teacher to score their oral performance according to the rating scale or impressionistically most of them chose the former one. As for rating scales, all the academics who have been interviewed, stated that they are not provided with the rating scales by every teacher of the university constructs their own rating scales. Moreover, teachers have quite vague idea about what their colleagues take into consideration when they score their students' oral performance:

"The teachers are alone, on their own, you know, just they decide how to assess. There is no control, whatsoever on what teachers are doing" (Appendix O, transcript 2).

Students say the following about rating scales:

"I think there is not a specific criteria for teachers, our marks depend on them".

Table 37

Top Six most Frequent Responses to Item 1 of the Semi-Structured Interview for Academics

1. Students' pronunciation

2. Criteria for assessment

3. Subjectivity of assessment

4. Students' background education

5. Materials for teaching speaking

6. Students' Accuracy

Moreover, subjectivity of assessment is named as one of the most problematic issues in the assessment of speaking. Not only teachers admit that their assessment lacks objectivity, but also students noticed it:

"I guess our names affect our marks".

As far as background education of the students is concerned, this issue is also the concern for teachers. Moreover, students, having entered university, realize that speaking was the neglected skill in their high schools:

"We are at the university, we didn't practice. Our teacher don't like speaking in class. In Turkey everywhere is like that".

Additionally, it is considered to be a difficult task for teachers to find and select the materials for teaching speaking as they always need to combine several sources in order for their students to have progress.

Finally, students' accuracy is named by the teachers as the issue that should remains a problem for academics.

4.5.2. Analysis of Academics' Responses to Item 2 of Semi-Structured Interview

As it can be seen from Table 38 below, every teacher has his/her own solution for the problems they face. So, summarizing Table 38 does not seem to have sense.

Table 38

Academics' Responses to Item 2 of the Semi-Structured Interview

How do you prefer to deal with those problems in your classroom?		
Participants	Response	Comment
1	1. Anxiety issue – teacher's support;	"…perhaps they need the teacher's support, like, you know, the friendly atmosphere in the classroom, and positive feedback, even if they make mistakes sometimes, you know…, encouraging them to speak even if they make mistakes..and. putting them into groups, usually, some fun activities, so that they feel willing, enthusiastic, to speak" "…we don't usually make the correction staff like, oh, you made such mistakes and that's terrible. Usually I tell them, even native speakers make mistakes"
	2.	"Sometimes I also get them to correct each other,

	Pronunciation – self-correction	for example, when some people act out something, the others take notes as they are listening and then I get them to..like..I get them to do self-correction and peer correction. And finally I result in the teacher correction"
2	1. Assessment – differentiating assessment types; 2. Motivation – regular syllabus update	"I try to use different assessment types in each exam, like we have 2 exams per semester, so, in week terms I use different kind of assessment, like more holistic and I have the speaking groups, like having discussion together, er..and in the final exam I try to use some grit and..er, I would have them speak individually on a subject" ""I keep my eyes and my ears very open to try to update my syllabus and everything, depending on the latest things. The students are involved in their real life right now, so, if it is facebook that they are dealing with very much, so, I try to make it part of my syllabus in the classroom"
3	Materials – combining materials from different sources	-
4	Pronunciation – shadow reading	-

5	Student-interlocutor Interaction	"in order to lighten the problematic effect, I decided to give them and I am giving them some assignments to check for pronunciations, to check for er..accuracy, so, and I think, little preparations will help me in the presentations, will help me to evaluate them more accurately"
6	Rating scale – design own rating scale	-
7	Pronunciation – constant practice	"And I would encourage students to practice certain sounds that are difficult to learn in English, you know, some sounds that we don't have in Turkish. So, I think I will have them pay attention to those sounds particularly"
9	Lack of experience/ need of advice - Stuff meetings	In the beginning of every term I invite, since, I mean, somebody's even more experienced, I invite the other colleagues, who are going to teach speaking with me to a meeting. So, we have a meeting, and I share with them what I've done so far, I ask their opinion, they share with me what they have been doing.
10	1. Classroom management problems – learner observation, intuition	"As for classroom management problems, because in speaking we generally have classroom management problems and intuitively, and my observations, my learner observations…Of course as a learner I observed my instructors while they were teaching and I remember: "Oh, that instructor

| | 3. Step into students' shoes | used that one when I was a student. I can use it, it works."

"So, if you just try to hypnotize their ideas they in a way appreciate you and you don't have management problems. If they understand that you are thinking on the issue, you are just trying to teach something, you don't have management problems. It is important not to lose the ability to learn" |
|---|---|---|
| 11 | Pronunciation – intonation patterns | "Now, we can start may be with the diagnosis of the problem, defining problematic areas by considering complete class, so that we may work on the individual sounds, but we may not need to work on the sounds individually throughout our lesson. Ok, we can work on the individually in some of our courses, like Pronunciation and Articulation course"

"Especially we can use intonation patterns, the teaching of intonation patterns and repetition of some problematic sounds in sentences, also in words, they may help." |
| 12 | Speaking Tests – late correction techniques | "I prefer late correction techniques in the speaking process, not the immediate ones. Because the immediate correction techniques break down the communication process…. They may get frightened, anxious, and when their anxiety level increases, it is likely that you may have more |

		problems to deal with"
13	Subjectivity – native teachers involved in assessment	"…it really needs good organization, and I think speaking assessment should be organized within a group, I mean, a mixture of native and non-native teachers, I think" "…may be putting some videos, showing, reflecting that that may be more useful and might give us more realistic picture. Also, the standardization is a big issue, I think, and those trainees or the assessors should be trained first"
14	One to one training; student-teacher conferences	"I start doing one to one raining, rather than you know, speaking to 30 people about their problems, I do student-teacher conferences, when they come to me after class, after presentation and we discuss strengths and the weaknesses of that student and what we can do, so we try to individual problems, rather than, you know, talking to the class about that."
15	Providing students with criteria for assessment	"So, basically, students must have first of all, accurate criteria of what they are taught and what they are to be assessed, that is my solution."
16	Constant observation of students' performance	"I do not assess my students based on one single occasion, I observe them throughout the semester and give a mark at the end of each lesson and take the average at the end so that I can increase the

		validity of assessment."

So, the basic solutions for the problems mentioned above are the following: teacher's support and late correction techniques to overcome students' anxiety; letting students do self- and peer-correction, to work with intonation patterns and using shadow reading techniques for pronunciation problems; using different assessment types in order to avoid subjectivity; in order to keep students motivated teachers update the syllabus regularly. Also, in order not to be dependent on the materials that are not sufficient enough and make the students feel bored, teachers prefer to combine speaking exercises from different sources. Similarly, teachers prefer to design their own rating scale or localize the existent one. Stuff meetings are the way to solve any problem, to take advice from colleagues and to share experience. Moreover, some teachers prefer to deal with problems with the help of their intuition, while others recollect their experience as learners.

Finally, more solutions for all kinds of problems teachers are involving native speakers into assessment, which is not realistic enough for every class, one to one training in order to work on students' individual problems and assessing students' performances throughout the semester instead of basing mark on one time performance.

4.5.3. Analysis of Academics' Responses to Item 3 of Semi-Structured Interview

Item 3 focuses on academics' attitudes towards the materials, namely text books, provided for teaching speaking. Table 39 demonstrates responses of 14 academics out of sixteen.

Table 39

Academics' Responses to Item 3 of the Semi-Structured Interview

To what extend do materials used in schools focus on speaking proficiency?		
Participants	Response	Comment
1	Happy with materials nowadays.	"Well, nowadays, I believe, there is a lot of material and some really good stuff. Before we had problems. But now I think those students and teachers are very lucky. On the market there is some really good teaching material."
		""Odds and Ends" …It's a beautiful book. Inside there are really nice activities, proverbs to discuss, plays, games to play, er…even stick figures, exclamations"
2	Getting better, but how teacher deals with materials is more important	"..I don't prefer to follow a book because when I have a book in my hand as a teacher, I feel like it limits me somehow, so I depend on the book very much, ok? So, instead, I try to prepare syllabus full of various activities like I try to keep it on a white range as much as possible."
		"…like for example one week it's a discussion, one week it's a role play, another week is't like, I don't know, some story telling session… I take some bits from the books, some bits from the Internet, some bits I design, you know, depending

		on my assumption of real life communication and everything."
3	Not sufficient	"I don't think they are sufficient actually, because it's not very…they don't try to develop the necessary skills in the students, but it is more like accuracy is more important, even if the speaking materials are enough. "
4	There are some good ones	-
5	In search of sufficient book, but at present combining exercises form several manuals	"Well, I take exercises from the book provided, it is Upper-intermediate and sometimes advanced course books speaking sections and I choose upper-intermediate level role plays." "Well, I think I would still need to combine exercises, if I had such a book, I would probably use the majority of exercises, but I still would be in need of checking and looking other sources as well to enrich the content."
6	I design materials by myself	"I prepare the materials by myself. There was no specific book I used. I was just gathering the materials, preparing it with my colleagues, let's say. So, we have a syllabus and we do it like that."
7	Teacher designs own curriculum	"When I was teaching, all teachers were required to prepare their own curriculum, their own syllabuses and everything, their activities and materials, so , I remember going to the Barsenova,

		it's a big big book store in New York, so, I remember going there and choosing books which emphasized vocabulary and speaking, and grammar , and like colloquial English. "
9	No books for future English teachers, though many good books for schools	"I think our students, they need a higher level of proficiency in speaking. That includes a lot of things, since they are going to be teachers. So, the clarity of the message, the clarity of their accent pronunciation, to know how to talk to their students, so, it's more complicated than that. That's why all of us in this department, we use bits and pieces of material, we gather things, we rely on different sources."
10	Not sufficient	"… they aren't enough, they aren't sufficient because each teacher has his/her own style. Some people think that if they allow students watch films in the courses, then they will learn it." "Some people think that ok, Internet source for materials, ok, it's good, but you should find the one, which works for the aim of the course. But they just don't do it, they just find it and they just use it. They aren't for the preparing of materials. "
12	Text books should concentrate on developing of several aspects	"…in out department speaking course here, our teacher was using his own course book which was about only intonation patterns" "And he was trying to teach the students the intonation patterns, junctures, etc. But a real

	of speaking	speaking lesson or speaking skills course should not be focused only on this criteria, you know, ok? In speaking skills there are other things to take into consideration and it is not easy to talk about the topic, what you should do, you should see what your students would like to talk about."
13	Not enough attention is paid to speaking skills not in text book, but by teachers	"…if you look at recent editions, I mean, you will apparently see that there is room for speaking activities. There is, I can say, much more emphasis on speaking than ever. But I think that what matters is not the existence of such activities in the book, but the way the teacher handles these, organizes these. Because in the EFL contexts these activities are the first ones to be skipped, I mean, in case of time pressure."
14	Were not helpful before, but at present – quite good	"They were not so helpful in the beginning of my career, because they weren't really backed up with a lot of audiovisual material, I can show you a few of them here. A 500 page book about speaking skill without any video material won't mean anything at all." Recommended manual - the Lucas 2007 book "The art of public speaking".
15	Materials are good, but teachers need special training	"I was not empowered by such resources. I was not aware that such recourses existed... But I like those materials and I needed those materials and give it a chance, I would restructure these courses

	in speaking assessment	as such."
16	In text books there are many exercises, but they do are not sufficient	"They emphasize speaking, but the activities are not adequate to encourage students to speak and practice. Even if there are activities, these so called communicative activities do not require real life creative language use"

As a summary of the Table 39, it is important to mention that just 6 teachers out of 14, who answered to Question 2, were not satisfied with the materials, provided for teachers nowadays. Similarly, 6 academics consider that the effectiveness of the materials completely depend on teachers' abilities to use them. Additionally, two academics stated that while there are text books of pretty good quality for schools, there do not exist manuals for university students who are going to become professional English teachers. So, only 2 academics completely satisfied with the materials provided to teach students.

4.5.4. Analysis of Academics' Responses to Item 4 of Semi-Structured Interview

In Table 40 academics' responses to the question about the solution to the problems in the assessment of speaking are presented.

Table 40

Academics' Responses to Item 4 of the Semi-Structured Interview

Do you personally believe that there exists the solution for most of the problems in speaking assessment?

Participants	Response	Comment
3	Yes, there exists the solution	"Yes, but I think teachers have to learn together, because generally they don't know what each other is doing. They don't come together and talk about what kinds of skills we should focus on. I think yes, they should work together."
4	It is impossible	"Impossible. Because students have different learner types. The non-nativeness will always be existent. There will be not solution if not professional teaching is provided."
6	No	"…it's just the human factor, when there's a human factor, let's say, it's always problematic. I don't know how we can…there can be standards, standardization, but that doesn't mean, let's say, the problems will be overcome"
7	Yes	"Well, it's possible, that it can become one of the most developed areas, but in the country like Turkey, because students do not get used to English, do not practice it, I think it will remain a problem for them"
8	No	"I don't think so. Well, as long as non-native speakers are evaluating non-native speakers about a shared foreign language, I think there will be problems about this issue"
9	Most probably no	"Because the people don't improve their language skills, especially the productive language skills over night, it takes a long time, it takes a long

		process"
10	Yes

and

No | "But if you are a clever teacher and you are working and thinking on the issue, you will have solutions for yourself."

"…because we don't have a general solution, it's impossible because the learning is something localized" |
12	Yes	-
13	Most probably no	"Well, I am doubtful about that, but it really needs good organization, and I think speaking assessment should be organized within a group, I mean, a mixture of native and non-native teachers, I think"
14	It is impossible	"…as many teachers there are, as many students there are, as many problems there are, there is no way that you can show them all at once".
16	Yes, partially	"Training raters and carefully preparing rubrics may help"

From the Table 40 the following conclusion can be made: while the majority of academics (N=7) do not believe in the existence of the solution for all the problematic issues, almost the same number of academics (N=5) have the hope in all the problems being solved. The main reasons for not accepting the view that the problems are possible to solve are the following: firstly, it is stated that non-nativeness will always be a

problem for foreign language learning, secondly, human factor is undeniable. As for the optimistic view to this problem, some academics think speaking assessment area may become one of the most developed ones under following conditions: if teachers start learning together, organizing stuff meetings and if they are specially trained for teaching speaking. Moreover, there was a view that every teacher should come to his/her own solution and there does not exist the common solution for all the problems.

4.5.5. Analysis of Academics' Responses to Item 5 of Semi-Structured Interview

Table 41 demonstrates academics' descriptions of the good quality test procedure features. Though almost all the teachers have their own special views on what is right and wrong in speaking assessment, there are still some common patterns that will be discussed below.

Table 41

Academics' Responses to Item 5 of the Semi-Structured Interview

Can you briefly describe a good quality speaking test procedure in your opinion?		
Participant	Response	Comment
1	Every test method should be implemented.	"I believe, perhaps all of them should be tried in the classroom. Sometimes, it could be an individual presentation, sometimes, working as a group, and then, perhaps acting out, sometimes it's just like group discussion, the teacher provides them with a topic, sometimes may put hem against groups and then discussing as a group. Sometimes even individual tasks to do,

		listening all together, to a dialogue or a song, and then discussing. Perhaps, a film watching ."
2	There does not exist an answer to this question	"I wish kind of chance to record everyting that is going on in the classroom and just look at their speaking performances and everything. Other than that, speaking assessment are doomed to be subjective a little"
3	1. Pre-activity 2. comfortable atmosphere	-
4	1. Naturalness 2. good utterance	-
5	Giving students material beforehand	"…if the team of one class would be like restaurants and food, for example, or telling a story or a past event, I simply ask them beforehand to get prepared with the adjectives, so that they can prepare at least with ten adjectives and then work on these adjectives' pronunciation and forms and when they come to class… I try to lighten the event of the problems of evaluation by that. "
6	1. Strategy training 2. authentic materials 3. students –	"I ask them to make a research in the Internet, come up with the articles to the class…I give them 4 minutes to summarize the activity, then they change their partners, I give them 3 minutes to summarize it, and then they change their partners, I give them even 2 minutes to do that.

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	trained to be autonomous learners	So, each time they do it let's say, they become more fluent."
7	1. Self-evaluation 2. learner-centered classroom 3. native speakers involved	"…I think they should focus on problematic like sounds, hmm, in terms of phonetics, work on them, help students evaluate themselves, have them give presentations, create a lerner-centered classroom, where they interact with each other and do a lot of practice and..have native speakers come to classes and give lectures"
8	Speaking exercises imitating real life	"I think speaking is a social skill, so if I can evaluate somebody talking in a group, talking about personal and academic issues like giving a presentation, introducing himself, talking on the phone, which is like an entire different skill. If I can evaluate all this in the context or the performance of the candidate in all of these contexts, then that's a reliable speaking procedure"
9	1. Speaking exercises imitating real life 2. Detailed thought through rubrics.	"The most important thing is to engage our students in the natural, meaningful conversation because you are in a classroom situation. " "You see, first of all, every teacher who is

		teaching speaking should sit down and think about what does speaking involve"
10	1. Pre-test, not graded	"I have a test, mirroring test, let's say, they will be graded, but before that students will have a mirroring project so that they wouldn't be anxious when they are working on it because they wouldn't be graded as a test from this mirroring activity"
	2. Working on problems in cooperation with student	"We will look at the difficulties that they experience, we will look at , let's say, how may be we could give some feedback to the students, we can videotape them and we can allow them to see themselves in this situation and you can find the difficulties and the solutions together with student"
	3. Comfortable classroom atmosphere	"…relaxation and the confidence of learners is the key issue for test procedure"
	4. Possibility of giving student second chance	"It's right, because you are trying to evaluate speaking, you are just taking some segment and say: "Ok, she is always talking like that". It's impossible. Even in our native language we couldn't say that just 5 minute segment showed all the proficiency of this person."
	5. Allowing student to record his/her speech at home	-

11	Most important – delivering message	"If they can code meaning, if they can tell what they are trying to say, it is ok, for the start, later, after breaking the problem, breaking gap about communication, we can pass to some detailed points, just like pronunciation of single words and the intonation, juncture, pitch, all the other things are important. They are complementary to the basic part."
12	Picture stories	"Pictures trip stories is one of the effective language teaching materials why, because you have a story there and the story may be presented through 6 pictures, very shortly, let's say first 2 pictures are about the introductory part and second 2 pictures are about body part and the last 2 are about conclusion. And you may give them, you may share the pictures with the mixed order with your students. And you may have a chat with your students about the pictures and you may ask your students to correct the pictures, to put them in the correct order and to see the whole story relying on their discussions at the end"
13	1. Students' self-assessment 2. Showing students assessment rubrics	-

	3. Variety of tasks 4. Familiar test structure for students	
14	1. No oral examinations; 2. Variety of activities	"Because it is a very unrealistic atmosphere, you call a student into your office, ask them a question, they reply. This is not how the things happen in real life, you know. You have time to think about things, you have option of not speaking" "…I am for multiple test procedures, for my classes also I have at least 4 things. I think they all contribute to my general idea of what is speaking,"
15	Naturalness = main criteria in assessment	"Naturalness, as long as 2 individuals talk, respond to each other, they understand each other, they do not hurt each other's feeling, they do not cause serious, heartbreaking or confusing, too confusing feeling, as long as they pass their messages across. It is a perfect conversation…. Assessing this should be based on to what extend the students did that"
16	1. Starting with easy questions	-

	2. different topics	
	3. several raters	

Table 42

Top Six most Frequent Responses to Item 5 of the Semi-Structured Interview for Academics

1. Naturalness of task

2. Pre-activity

3. Learner-centered classroom

4. Multiple test procedures

5. Students' self-evaluation

6. Comfortable atmosphere of the lesson

It is clearly seen from the table 42 above that naturalness of speaking task is considered the most preferable part of good-quality speaking procedure. Moreover, teachers think pre-activity, which is not graded, should be implemented in the classroom before introducing a new test method, which will be evaluated, to the students. This will decrease students' anxiety and will provide their more reliable performances. Many academics emphasized the importance of the learner-centered classroom, which means that learners' opinions will be considered significant enough for making changes in any aspect of the speaking lesson. Also, if the classroom is learner-centered, teacher shows rubrics with the criteria for their speeches to the students beforehand. Similarly, the same number of academics stated that in order to make the mark they give for oral performance more reliable they prefer to use several test methods during semester. It provides them with assurance that if some students are not able to perform well during

individual interview, for example, then they will definitely participate in the activity that they like.

Moreover, the importance of self-evaluation for students is approved by a considerable number of academics as it allows future teachers consider their own oral performance realistically, without superficial attitude towards it. Consequently, it would decrease the number of students who are not satisfied with their marks, which, according to the results of attitude questionnaire for students, is 50% of students' concern.

Finally, providing a positive atmosphere in class is also extremely important part of the lesson, providing students' motivation to participate.

4.6 Summary of Significant Results

According to the results of the attitude questionnaire for students, students' attitudes towards speaking in English is highly positive; however, the slight part of the students are negative towards speaking in English, which for ELT department is quite a high result. Students' favorite activity is class discussion and paired interview, while oral presentation and role-play is their least favorite test method. Also, students consider their speaking performances to depend on many factors, like environment of the classroom and their mood. Additionally, they expressed the wish to increase the hours of speaking lessons as the hours devoted to the development of speaking skills are not enough to reach the highest proficiency level on the rating scale. Therefore, most students are not satisfied with their mark given by teachers for their oral performance. When asked about the rating criteria, students expressed a common view that they would like their teachers to score them according to the fixed criteria rather than according to their impression and based on their experience. Also, in paired interview, despite the fact that students consider this test method to imitate real life situation, they still state that they do not perform as well in paired interview as their performance depends on his/her

peer's performance. The most popular avoidance strategies students use is explaining the unknown word with gestures or describing it in English for interlocutor to understand it.

The second part of the questionnaire revealed test method students would like to be tested with in the examination. Surprisingly enough, they picked oral presentation, though in the first part of the questionnaire students stated that it is their least favorite activity. Moreover, the primary factors that influence students' anxiety are familiarity of the topic, their teacher's and classmates' support. The biggest challenges for students in speaking in English are not remembering the necessary vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency problems. The criteria which students consider to be the most important in their speech are the following: fluency, pronunciation, clarity of expression, while least important ones, according to them, are providing the supporting evidence and non-verbal aspects.

According to the results of semi-structured interview for students, the most common procedures in the speaking classroom are oral presentation, role-play, listening activity, which students do not enjoy, as far as the results of the attitude questionnaire demonstrate. Also, there are class discussions, which students like to be engaged in, and giving speeches about the articles the articles they have read. Interesting topics to discuss and any kind of group work are emphasized by the students as their favorite activities to be engaged in class, while the activities they dislike are paired interviews with the peers assigned by teacher. In order to support the results of the attitude questionnaire, the question if students were satisfied with their marks for oral performance was asked. The results of this item supported the results of attitude questionnaire – students were not satisfied with the marks given by their teachers for their speaking skills. Lastly, students admitted that in paired interview their performance would not change is their peer's English is better than theirs, however, it would influence them if their peer's level of English was lower as they would help them speaking less than usual.

The analysis of the open-ended questionnaire for academics revealed the following facts: the criteria which they take into consideration most of all assessing students' oral performance are pronunciation, clarity of expression, fluency. Also, the test methods they prefer to implement in class are individual interviews, oral presentations and role-plays, which they prefer to design by themselves according to students' needs. Among the problems in the assessment of speaking teachers' biggest ones are subjectivity, criteria for assessment and students' anxiety.

The semi-structured interviews for teachers indicate that teachers have variety of ways for solving the problems they face in speaking assessment. Moreover, as far as materials are concerned, most of the teachers are not satisfied with the materials provided for teaching speaking. Lastly, not believing in the possibility of the solution for all the problems in the assessment of speaking, teachers describe the features of the procedure they think is maximally appropriate for teaching and assessing speaking: naturalness of activity, conducting pre-activity and creating learner-centered atmosphere in the classroom.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.0 Presentation

In this chapter, firstly, the study is summarized. Secondly, the results of the study are presented. Then, the assessment of the study is discussed. Lastly, the implications for further research are introduced.

5.1 Summary of the Study

The study on teachers' practices and concerns in teaching and assessing speaking skills and students' preferences and dislikes in this area was carried out in three universities of Ankara, Turkey: Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi University. The participants of the study were 25 academics teaching or having taught English speaking courses at ELT departments and 137 first-year students studying at the same departments of the universities mentioned above.

This study investigated teachers' experiences and problems in the assessment of foreign language speaking and students' preferences and difficulties in this area. For this purpose two questionnaires were implemented and two interviews were conducted with the subjects. Another aim of this research was to design the speaking rubric, common for academics of three universities in accordance with their views of the criteria that should be taken into consideration by the teacher while assessing students' oral performance.

In order to accomplish the aim of this study, four sets of data were collected. First, academics filled in the open-ended questionnaire and the students – attitude questionnaire. Second, additional data were collected both from academics and students in the form of semi-structured interviews in order to support the data collected through questionnaires as some researchers approve the combination of qualitative and quantitative data in one study in order to strengthen its reliability (Patton, 1987; Miles and Huberman, 1984).

The attitude questionnaire for students was not created by the researcher, a prepared Şallı-Çopur's (2002) questionnaire was modified in order for it to suit the aims of the study. The aim of the attitude questionnaire was to reveal students' attitudes towards speaking in English, five speaking methods most used in the classrooms, scoring procedure, the criteria they think teachers should take into consideration while assessing their oral performance and the problems they face speaking in English. As for the open-ended questionnaire for academics, having been prepared by the researcher, it contained items the topics of which were called in the literature the most problematic ones in the area.

After it, two interviews were conducted with approximately half of the academics (*N*=16) and one-third of students (*N*=48) in order to support the data collected and to add more facts about the assessment of speaking skills. The interviews were recorded and transcribed in order to prepare the data for content analysis.

Each of four data collection instruments was analyzed separately, the results were presented and compared, the conclusions were drawn in order to find the answers to the research questions.

5.2 Results of the Study

This study focused on the following research questions:

1. What is that teachers do when they assess the speaking skills?

1.1. What criteria do teachers pay attention to while assessing speaking skills?

1.2. Which of the criteria do teachers pay more attention to while assessing speaking skills?

1.3. What are teachers' attitudes towards the speaking tasks used for assessment of speaking skills?

1.4. What are teachers' attitudes towards the rating scales used for assessment of speaking skills?

1.5. What are teachers' attitudes towards the teacher (interlocutor) – student interaction?

1.6. What are teachers' attitudes towards the rater reliability in the assessment of speaking skills?

1.7. Are teachers satisfied with the materials, namely text book for developing students' speaking skills?

2. What challenges do the teachers face while assessing students' speaking skills and how do they prefer to deal with these problems?

3. Do teachers believe there exists the solution for problems in speaking assessment?

4. What are students' attitudes towards the speaking test methods?

4.1. What are students' attitudes towards speaking English?

4.2. What are students' attitudes towards being tested with role-play, oral presentation, individual interview, class discussion, paired interview?

4.3. What are the problems students face when their speaking skills are assessed?

4.4. What are students' attitudes towards the score they receive for their speaking performance?

4.5. What are factors that influence students' anxiety while speaking English in the classroom?

4.6. What avoidance strategies do students use when they are speaking in English?

4.7. What are the usual tasks and activities students are engaged in class?

4.8. What are students' likes and dislikes concerning oral proficiency classes?

5. What is the common rubric for the academics who are engaged in teaching speaking in Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi University?

In order to answer the first, most general question about teachers' practices in the assessment and teaching speaking skills, the results of the semi-structured interview were interpreted. According to academics, they try to do what they think is right for the assessment of speaking, namely, the following: no matter what speaking method is applied in the classroom, it should maximally imitate the real-life situations. Also, a pre-activity, where students are not evaluated, should always be conducted before introducing the new activity to the students. Thus, they will have the chance to get used to it without getting anxious because of fear to receive a bad score. Furthermore, one more way to reduce anxiety of students is to create a learner-centered classroom, where students would feel free to speak when they want and where the topics would be chosen according to learners' tastes. Another point that teachers mentioned is that students should be evaluated during a semester, rather than based on their single performance during the examination. In addition to that, when students were asked as a part of the attitude questionnaire if their oral performance depends on their mood, environment etc., they answered positively. In this item students support teachers' opinions. Moreover, teachers usually allow students to evaluate themselves. Thus, they have the chance to apply the evaluation criteria they practice, which especially valuable for future teachers of English. Also, they tend to understand what performance is expected from them. Lastly, according to teachers' responses, it is important for the classroom atmosphere to be positive. In this case students also supported teachers' opinions by giving the following response to the open-ended item of the questionnaire: my teachers' and classmates' support helps me to overcome anxiety during my oral performance.

In order to answer the first and the second questions of the first set of research questions, an open-ended questionnaire was offered to teachers. So, among the criteria teachers pay attention while evaluating students' oral performance there are pronunciation, clarity of expression, fluency, vocabulary, eye contact, intelligibility (ranked in the order of chosen by the most number of teachers to the one chosen by the least number). Among

the criteria teachers pay most attention to are all the mentioned above, except for eye contact, three additional criteria – body language, organization and content of speech.

The third research question of the first set of questions focuses on speaking tasks used for the assessment of speaking. Several items of the open-ended questionnaire were related to it. Teachers, who filled in the questionnaire, stated that they prefer creating or adapting speaking tasks according to the needs of their students. Also, they consider paper-and-pencil tasks and indirect tests invalid in testing students' oral performance.

Based on the data of the open-ended questionnaire, the answer to the fourth research question of the first set of questions about teachers' attitudes towards rating scales is the following: not being provided with any rating scales by the institutions they work in, teachers prefer designing separate rating scale for the separate task according to the type and purpose of the task. As for their choice of the rating scales, while some academics use both holistic and analytic one depending on the purpose of the task in their classes, others prefer using both holistic and analytic rating scales for each task. Lastly, students' and teachers' opinions coincide in this issue – teachers consider it right to base their score on the separate criteria rather than assessing based on the experience.

The answer to the fifth question of the first set of research questions which focused on teachers' considerations about the teacher (interlocutor) – student interaction is the following: according to teachers, it is less stressful for students to participate in paired interview talking to their peers and being assessed by the teacher, than to talk to a teacher like interlocutor. The reason for it may be teacher's unconscious domination in the conversation.

The next research question concerns rater training. Teachers were asked to evaluate themselves as raters and to state whether they think they are reliable raters. Absolute majority of teachers admitted that they are not sure they are reliable raters. However, they could not decide on the most important requirement for the rater – to be experienced or to be specially trained to assess speaking skill as the number of answers to this question was equal.

The last, seventh question of the first set of questions is related to the materials, namely text books, for teaching speaking. As the interview revealed, teachers are not satisfied with the number and quality of speaking exercises in the text books.

The second research question concerns challenges teacher face while assessing students' oral performance and the ways to solve them. Among other problems teachers encounter, there are top six challenges that most teachers have to solve when dealing with speaking assessment. They are: ways to correct students' heavy accent, the reliable criteria for assessment, students' background education, where not enough attention was paid to development of speaking skills. Also, subjectivity of assessment concerns teachers, this was the reason why the majority of them could not call themselves reliable raters. In addition, materials for teaching speaking are the problem, that is why teachers have found the following solution: to combine several sources if they want their students not only to learn, but also to enjoy interaction in the classroom. In order to deal with pronunciation problems, teachers prefer to use intonation patterns and shadow reading technique. As for the criteria for assessment, teachers design their own rating scales according to the needs of their students. To solve the subjectivity problems involving native speaker into the assessment was suggested, however, it is not realistic to expect native speakers to be involved in the assessment of every test. The only solution for other two problems – background education (with lack of attention to the speaking skills) and students' accuracy – is constant practice.

To answer the third research question an interview with teachers was conducted. The aim of the third research question was to find out teachers' opinion as for the possible solution of the problems in speaking assessment area. Though this question seems slightly general, the answer to it is undoubtedly important for the further research as it justifies the purpose of studies in this area. So, the majority of teachers are skeptical about the idea of absolute solution in the area. It means that while researchers should strive for the solution of the problems, it is still necessary to realize that most probably the problems may not ever be solved. The main reason for it is so called non-nativeness, both of learners and of teachers, which is a very influential reason. Also, human factor is

a reason for subjectivity of the assessment. Therefore, till non-native speakers, even the most professional ones, will evaluate other non-native speaker, the doubts of the subjectivity of assessment will exist. Finally, maximally possible solution for these problems is regular staff meetings in the institutions where oral communication in the foreign language is taught.

The fourth set of research questions focused on students' attitudes towards the way their oral proficiency is tested. As for the first question, it is the most general one. Its aim is to reveal whether students are satisfied with all the test methods teachers use in order to develop and assess their speaking skills. The answer to this question may mean at the same time whether students like their speaking classes. So, while the majority of students were positive about all the speaking test methods, slightly less, which should also be taken into consideration, were negative about them. The participants of this study are the students whose future profession is English language teaching, so, the numbers that would be positive for students of other department, in this situation are evaluated according to higher criteria. That is why half of the students who do not have positive attitude towards speaking test method used by teachers in class, is an extremely high number. It is recommended that certain measures should be taken by teachers to improve students' attitudes towards their lessons. One of them is for teachers taking students' views and interests into consideration slightly more.

However, as far as the next question of the fourth set of questions was concerned, which requires students to share their opinions about speaking in English, their answers are highly positive – almost all the students like speaking in English, which in this situation is quite expectable result as the subjects are the students of ELT department. However, it is doubtful that students feel relaxed while speaking in English, which does not influence their attitudes towards it.

The following might mean that the situation with students' not liking the test methods teachers use in the classroom is easily improvable, as long as their attitude towards speaking in English in general is positive.

Another research question which belonged to the fourth set of questions is related to students' attitudes towards five test methods: oral presentation, individual interview, paired interview, role-play and class discussion. According to the results of the first part of the questionnaire, class discussion is students' favorite test method. It can be supposed that students have the most favorable attitude towards it as it does not demand obligatory participation and during class discussion class' attention is not drawn completely to the speaker. As the results of the focus group interview point out, the condition that students' interest depends on in class discussion is the degree of their interests in topics offered for discussion. As for the least favorite test method for students, it is oral presentation. The reason for students not to like this activity is similar to that to like class discussion: during oral presentation students feel that the attention of the whole class including teacher is drawn to them and it makes them feel nervous. However, according to the results of the second part of the questionnaire, oral presentation was the first test method students would rather have as an examination. Likewise, during the analysis of the results the following tendency was noticed: the more students like the test method, the more relaxed they feel when teacher implements it in the classroom, and vice versa – the more nervous they feel in the classroom during the activity, the more they dislike this activity. The conclusion can be drawn that the principal condition for students to like or dislike the test method is their psychological condition during it.

Paired interview attracted researcher's special attention, as interlocutor-test taker interaction is quite a problematic issue in English language teaching methodology (Fulcher, 2003). First, though students expressed their preference towards class discussion, the difference between the number of students, who considered class discussion to be their favorite activity and those who thought they liked paired interview most, was small. Unlike to other test method, the separate section of the first part of the questionnaire was devoted to students' opinion about interlocutor-test-taker interaction, which takes place during paired interview. However, students do not think they get better marks in paired interviews, but it does not prevent them from preferring it to other

three test methods. It can be interpreted as students' preferences of speaking activities not depending on the mark they receive for their performance in these activities. Such opinion about their marks not being as high as the marks for participation in paired interview may be explained with students' responses to other items of the questionnaire. For example, students admitted that their performance in paired interview depends on their interlocutor's level of English or his/her personality and behavior. Nevertheless, despite being critical towards this test method, they consider the discussion during paired interview to be close to real-life communication.

As a part of focus group interview, students were asked two questions about their behavior if their peer's level of English better or worse than theirs in order to support or object the results of the attitude questionnaire, which indicate students' being nervous if their peers' level of English is higher than theirs. However, as the results of the interview show, most students do not consider it the reason to be anxious. But some part of the students still state that it would cause discomfort to them. In the opposite situation, when their peer's level of English is lower than theirs, students expressed their willingness to help him/her prompting and not dominating in the conversation.

The results concerning individual interview and role-play are the following: individual interview is the third among five test methods according to students' preference, while role play is almost least favorite test method among five – the oral presentation is the one that comes after it. It is necessary to mention that all students had experiences every test method during their lessons, according to their teachers.

The following research question of the fourth set of questions concerned problems students encounter when their speaking performance is being assessed. The most problematic issue for students while speaking foreign language turned out to be the vocabulary – students admitted they often cannot remember the necessary word spontaneously. The second problem for the students is the fluency problem, while pronunciation is considered to be students' third concern. It is worth mentioning that during the interview with the academics, several of them mentioned these students'

problems as their problems as well. So, heavy accent, intonation problems of students were considered by both groups to be difficulties.

The next question of the fourth set of research questions focused on students' attitude towards the score they receive for their oral performance. The results of the attitude questionnaire demonstrate that the majority of students consider that teachers underestimate their speaking skills. Moreover, the results of the semi-structured interview indicated students' strong dissatisfaction of their marks. The justification for it might be students' numerous statements about their not understanding the mark they receive and the need for the teacher to explain the reasons for the certain mark. So, it is possible to conclude that the students are not satisfied with the mark they receive for their oral performances, however, teachers' justifications of the results of their marks might solve this problem.

Also, the results of the first part of the attitude questionnaire indicated that students' performance depends on the environment they are in and on their mood at the time of taking speaking test. That is why it is recommended that students' oral performance was evaluated several times during the semester including his/her performance at the examination.

Another statement that should be made concerning students' scores is that according to them, the number of lessons devoted to oral proficiency development is not enough for students to reach the level of proficiency that would be reflected by the highest score. Though it is a well-known fact that in order to be proficient in English students should work on it outside the classroom, the hours devoted to oral proficiency depend on how much time will be spent by student for the preparation for the lessons.

As the participants of this study are going to become English language teachers, it was supposed to be appropriate to ask them methodological question: whether they think their teachers should judge their oral performance according to fixed rating scale or intuitively, relying on his/her impression from the conversation or dialogue.

The fifth item of the fourth set of research questions is the one referring to students' anxiety in the classroom and their ways to overcome it. Although the question of the second part of the questionnaire was formulated differently, it gives the researcher the opportunity to get to know two answers instead of one. An interesting and familiar topic to discuss or to talk about would make students feel less nervous, therefore, the teacher offering an unfamiliar topic that students would not like to talk about even in their native language would make students nervous at the lesson. Also, the both the teacher's and the classroom's support makes students feel relaxed. It explains why, according to the results of the first part of the questionnaire, students like and feel more relaxed during class discussions, and intense during oral presentations. The reason is that during class discussion the students support each other talking on the same topic one after another and teacher's attention is not concentrated on one student. However, during oral presentation the conditions are the opposite.

The sixth question of the fourth set of research questions was related to the avoidance strategies students use when they do not know or forget some vocabulary or grammatical construction in order to continue conversation. As the results indicate, most students try to avoid using their native language in this situation, but rather try to use imagination in order to get the interlocutor understand what they mean – if possible they can show the unknown word with gestures or explain it in English. This indicates that students' approaches to the conversation in English are quite mature for the foreign language speaker – they do their best to continue conversation or monologue rather than stop speaking having got excited.

The next research question of fourth set of research questions was devoted to students' classes and the activities they are usually engaged in. According to the results, the speaking test method that is the most frequently used in class is oral presentation. As the results of the attitude questionnaire indicate, students' least favorite activity is oral presentation, which, as it is clear from the results of the interview, the most often used I class. It is not realistic to expect students to enjoy speaking classes in the situation when their least favorite activity is the most often used in class. On the other hand, as it was

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found out during the interview with teachers, they are not highly positive towards this activity either, however, the reason they use it is students' not homogeneous participation, when some students are keeping silence during all classes, teachers use oral presentations for whole class in order to hear shy students speak. Nevertheless, they admit that oral presentation is not the most appropriate test method for imitating real-life situations.

Role-plays, as students state, is also the activity they participate in quite often. However, according to the analysis of the test methods students like and dislike to be involved in the classroom, it is interesting that role-play is almost the least favorite students' activity. It is not an expected result as it is a well-known fact in the English teaching methodology that role-play's principal advantage is positive attitude from the side of learners; therefore, it is usually conducted in the classroom to decrease students' level of anxiety.

Also, as listening is considered inseparable from speaking skills, this activity is one of teachers' favorite ones as well. However, teachers are alone with this view – according to the opinions students expressed during the focus group interview, they would like to speak more, but to be engaged in listening activity less in the classroom.

Class discussions, test method students especially like, belongs to top five test methods that are used more frequently in the classroom, however, it is the fourth one in this list, which means that it is not used more often than other three activities.

Though the last activity in the list of five most frequently used ones is similar to individual interview or oral presentation by nature, there are some peculiarities that make it different. Students are given the articles to read at home, additionally, they are given a list of arguments for and against the ideas expressed in the article. In class teacher names any of arguments and asks each student to talk about one of them using the vocabulary from the article. Thus, students not only have the opportunity to develop their speaking skills, but also to practice new vocabulary items. However, when students were asked about their opinion about this activity during the focus group interview, they

were highly negative towards it because of several reasons: first, they expressed their wish to talk about their own attitude towards articles rather than developing the thought teacher assigned to them. Second, the topics of the articles did not seem interesting to them, so, the speeches in the classroom were considered quite artificial.

As for the last question of fifth set of research questions, it is related to students' likes and dislikes in speaking in English.

Four issues students like about their speaking lessons are to discuss interesting topics in class, to work in groups which consist of their friends, to be interviewed in pairs and to give speeches on interesting topics. In three out of four issues, mentioned above interesting topics emphasized. Likewise, the first issue students would like to change about their speaking lessons is topics which in most cases are not interesting for them to talk about. Next point they would like to change is also related to the issues they like – paired interview was mentioned among their favorite activities, however, students would like to choose their peers to talk to. Also, they mention that lack of time for preparation with their speeches in classroom makes them anxious. Another point students dislike about speaking lessons is that teacher appoints those who will speak in the classroom. However, the reason for it is understandable for some other students – teachers have to do it as there are always several students in class who do not want to speak voluntarily.

Lastly, the atmosphere at the lesson is very important for the students. Despite the fact that every teacher admits its importance for students' participation, apparently, not all of them put their knowledge into practice.

5.3 Common Rubric for the Speaking Classes of Three Universities in Ankara

One of the purposes of the study was developing the speaking rubric which would be common for the English speaking classes of Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi University.

According to Stevens and Levi (2005), scoring rubric is a "scoring tool, which lays out the specific expectations for an assignment" (p. 3). They divide the assignments into the parts, each of which is evaluated separately.

The specialty of this rubric is rather in its commonality for three institutions than in some other peculiarities. To solve the problem of subjectivity at least partially, it seems necessary to conduct research like this. Thus, having the same criteria for assessment, teachers' assessment of every institution would be more or less objective. Table 43 demonstrates the rubric, which contains nine scale levels and four dimensions.

Table 43

Generalized Scoring Rubric

100 scale	Distinguished	Proficient	Intermediate	Novice
Fluency(20)				
Pronunciation (20)				
Vocabulary (15)				
Clarity of Exp. (25)				
Eye-contact (9)				
Body language (3)				
Intelligibility (5)				
Organization (3)				
Content of speech (3)				

Though this rubric presented above needs some development and it may not be very applicable, it is the first step for the generalizing academics' view. It consists of 9 elements, each of which has its own evaluation part, depending on how significant that criterion was for academics. Students' views were also included in this rubric, however, they mostly coincided with teachers' rubric, therefore, changes have not been done. The scale levels that were chosen among the variety of offered ones, were offered by Stevens and Levi (2005) as an example of the part of a rubric.

As teachers mentioned in the open-ended questionnaire, every task should have its own rubric designed. However, as a part of questionnaire, teachers were asked to state the general criteria, which they take into consideration while evaluating oral performance. Therefore, it is not quite realistic to expect the rubric above to relate to some proper task. It is rather the generalizing of teachers' views and it is the starting point for those who want to develop their own speaking rubrics, which also would not be too different from common view.

The following is more developed rubric that is recommended for practical use. It consists of ten criteria, which are evaluated according to four scales (poor, fair, good and excellent). Being a descriptive rubric, it contains the descriptive of every criteria at every level thus, making its use easier. The highest score of this rubric is 100 and the lowest one – 30. It is a combination of all the rubric that the author has revised.

Table 44

Recommended Descriptive Scoring Rubric

	Poor (3 points)	Fair (5 points)	Good (7 points)	Excellent (10 points)

DELIVERY				
• Eye Contact • Voice Usage	Student avoids eye contact	Rare eye contact	Some eye contact	Student maintains eye contact most of the time
• Body Language	Speech is heard if listener makes effort to hear	Speech is heard, but tone is unstable	Speech is loud enough, but could not be heard from all the places of the room	Speech is enthusiastic, stable and loud enough to hear from all places of the room
•Comprehens-ty	Gestures are exaggerated and prevent listener from understanding the speech	Student avoids using gestures	Student's gestures are not natural and rarely coincide with the sense of the speech	Student's gestures are natural and add to his/her speech
	Student's response demonstrates complete non-understanding of speaker's question	Student's response demonstrates comprehensibility of separate words of speaker's question	Student's response demonstrates comprehensibility of speaker's question with rare misunderstandings	Student's response demonstrates complete comprehensibility of speaker's question
LANGUAGE USE				

• Pronunciation	Constant mistakes in student's pronunciation prevent his/her speech from being understandable	Mistakes in student's pronunciation sometimes prevent his/her speech from being understandable	Pronunciation is correct with rare mistakes that do not interfere with comprehension of the speech	Pronunciation is correct and precise and the intonation is natural
• Vocabulary	Due to inadequate vocabulary use student's speech is rarely understandable	Student uses vocabulary of lower level	Student uses the words which make his/her opinion clear, but not enhanced	Student uses wide range of vocabulary enhancing his/her speech
• Fluency	Student's speech is hard to follow due to constant pauses due to which student does not finish his/her ideas	Student's ideas are easy to follow, however, he/she all the time makes pauses not according to the sense	Student's ideas are easy to follow, however, he/she sometimes makes pauses not according to the sense	Student's ideas are easy to follow due to the natural pace and pauses according to the sense
TOPIC DEVELOPMENT				
• Clarity of Expression	Student expresses his/her ideas in a non-comprehensible	Student's ideas are vague with some points stated clearly	Student states the ideas rather clearly, speech is comprehensible with rare effort	Student states the ideas clearly, speech is

	way, listener constantly does not understand what student wants to say		from the listener	comprehensible and does not demand effort from the listener to understand
• Organization				
• Content of Speech	Ideas lack organization and transitions among ideas are not made	Ideas are poorly organized so that it is hard for listener to follow	Ideas are well organized with some ideas not being well related to each other	Ideas are well organized, key points are clearly and meaningfully described
	Student does not introduce any supporting ideas and examples in his speech	Student rarely introduces supporting ideas and examples in his speech	Student introduces some supporting ideas and examples in his speech	Student introduces original supporting ideas and examples in his speech

5.4 Implications for Teaching

The implications for teaching, which are described below, are the result of this study:

1. Teachers need to take into consideration the results of this study in order to avoid several problems that they encounter with evaluation of their students' oral performance.

2. Teachers should be aware of their students' interests and preferences in speaking in order to get students enjoy speaking classes and avoid anxiety issue in class.

3. Teachers of Middle East Technical University, Hecettepe University, Gazi University should construct the rating scale which was designed by the researcher as one of the results of this study.

4. The results of the open-ended questionnaire and the semi-structured interview for academics about teachers' common practices in the assessment of speaking filed would serve a guide for young teachers who start teaching speaking course.

5. Having identified their problems in the assessment of speaking and realizing that their colleagues have similar concerns as well, many teachers should think of the ways to find the solution for them together, organizing stuff meeting on the regular basis.

6. Teachers should encourage students to speak at the lesson by increasing the time for preparation for the speech at the lesson.

7. Students' speaking skills should be tested throughout the semester rather than on a single occasion.

8. Teachers should inform students about the criteria of evaluation before the speaking test, rather than giving them a score without the explanation of the mistakes.

9. In paired interviews teachers should give students the opportunity to choose their peers thus increasing the reliability of the speaking test, avoiding students' anxiety.

10. Teachers should pay more attention to the positive atmosphere during the speaking lesson, as teachers' support is one of the primary factors causing students' anxiety.

11. Teachers should try to give students chance to initiate the response in class first, rather than assigning the speaker.

5.5 Assessment of the Study

The study included 137 students and 25 teachers of Middle East Technical University, Hacettepe University and Gazi University. The results of the study can be generalized to the first-year students and teachers of the same departments of other universities, while not to the students and teachers of English in other departments. Also, it cannot be applied to the students of the same department of different levels of language knowledge and years of studying.

Moreover, the limitations of the study are presented below in order to consider the possible improvements:

1. The number of issues of this study may be too broad. Also, not considerable number of questions focuses on every item - they are not discussed in detail because of their quantity.

2. Some observations of the speaking lessons could have been done in order to draw more realistic conclusions about the way speaking is assessed in universities.

3. The experience of the teachers, who participated in the study, on one hand, could have been broader. Thus, more reliable data from more experienced instructors could have been collected. On the other hand, it is also interesting to get to know the thought of the teachers whose experience is not so considerable.

5.6 Implications for Further Research

Firstly, the studies that will be conducted on the subject of the assessment of speaking are recommended to deepen the research into issues of the present study – a separate research could be made on each of them (speaking tasks, rating scales, scoring etc.).

Secondly, some research could be conducted in the international context – first, the same study could be carried out in other country, then, the results of both studies could be compared and conclusions could be drawn as for the similarities and differences of the assessment of speaking skills in these countries.

Furthermore, this study is one of the few studies on speaking assessment, especially in Turkey, where the challenges of the assessment of speaking just start to be realized. More studies on similar topics would contribute to the research in the speaking assessment area.

Moreover, the same issues might be investigated in the high school context with high school teachers and their pupils. Though the results of this research revealed lack of the attention paid towards the assessment of speaking skills at schools, this study would shed the light to this issue and would get the teachers of English in high schools include speaking element into their lessons.

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Revised ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines

SUPERIOR
Speakers at the Superior level are able to communicate in the language with accuracy and fluency in order to participate fully and effectively in conversations on a variety of topics in formal and informal settings from both concrete and abstract perspectives. They discuss their interests and special fields of competence, explain complex matters in detail, and provide lengthy and coherent narrations, all with ease, fluency, and accuracy. They explain their opinions on a number of topics of importance to them, such as social and political issues, and provide structured argument to support their opinions. They are able to construct and develop hypotheses to explore alternative possibilities. When appropriate, they use extended discourse without unnaturally lengthy hesitation to make their point, even when engaged in abstract elaborations. Such discourse, while coherent, may still be influenced by the Superior speakers own language patterns, rather than those of the target language.

Superior speakers command a variety of interactive and discourse strategies, such as turn-taking and separating main ideas from supporting information through the use of syntactic and lexical devices, as well as intonational features such as pitch, stress and tone. They demonstrate virtually no pattern of error in the use of basic structures. However, they may make sporadic errors, particularly in low-frequency structures and in some complex high-frequency structures more common to formal speech and writing. Such errors, if they do occur, do not distract the native interlocutor or interfere with communication.

ADVANCED HIGH
Speakers at the Advanced-High level perform all Advanced-level tasks with linguistic ease, confidence and competence. They are able to consistently explain in detail and narrate fully and accurately in all time frames. In addition, Advanced-High speakers handle the tasks pertaining to the Superior level but cannot sustain performance at that level across a variety of topics. They can provide a structured argument to support their opinions, and they may construct hypotheses, but patterns of error appear. They can discuss some topics abstractly, especially those relating to their particular interests and special fields of expertise, but in general, they are more comfortable discussing a variety of topics concretely.

Advanced-High speakers may demonstrate a well-developed ability to compensate for an imperfect grasp of some forms or for limitations in vocabulary by the confident use of communicative strategies, such as paraphrasing, circumlocution, and illustration. They use precise vocabulary and intonation to express meaning and often show great fluency and ease of speech. However, when called on to perform the complex tasks associated with the Superior level over a variety of topics, their language will at times break down or prove inadequate, or they may avoid the task altogether, for example, by resorting to simplification through the use of description or narration in place of argument or hypothesis.

ADVANCED MID
Speakers at the Advanced-Mid level are able to handle with ease and confidence a large number of communicative tasks. They participate actively in most informal and some formal exchanges on a variety of concrete topics relating to work, school, home, and leisure activities, as well as to events of current, public, and personal interest or individual relevance.

Advanced-Mid speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in all major time frames (past, present, and future) by providing a full account, with good control of aspect, as they adapt flexibly to the demands of the conversation. Narration and description tend to be combined and interwoven to relate relevant and supporting facts in connected, paragraph-length discourse.

Advanced-Mid speakers can handle successfully and with relative ease the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events that occurs within the context of a routine situation or communicative task with which they are otherwise familiar. Communicative strategies such as circumlocution or rephrasing are often employed for this purpose. The speech of Advanced-Mid speakers performing Advanced-level tasks is marked by substantial flow. Their vocabulary is fairly extensive although primarily generic in nature, except in the case of a particular area of specialization or interest. Dominant language discourse structures tend to recede, although discourse may still reflect the oral paragraph structure of their own language rather than that of the target language.

Advanced-Mid speakers contribute to conversations on a variety of familiar topics, dealt with concretely, with much accuracy, clarity and precision, and they convey their intended message without misrepresentation or confusion. They are readily understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives. When called on to perform functions or handle topics associated with the Superior level, the quality and/or quantity of their speech will generally decline. Advanced-Mid speakers are often able to state an opinion or cite conditions; however, they lack the ability to consistently provide a structured argument in extended discourse. Advanced-Mid speakers may use a number of delaying strategies, resort to narration, description, explanation or anecdote, or simply attempt to avoid the linguistic demands of Superior-level tasks.

(ACTFL 1999 Revised ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines – Speaking,1999).

APPENDIX B

TSE Rating Scale

60 Communication almost always effective: task performed very competently; speech almost never marked by non-native characteristics
Functions performed clearly and effectively
Appropriate response to audience/situation
Coherent, with effective use of cohesive devices
Almost always accurate pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and vocabulary

50 Communication generally effective: task performed competently, successful use of compensatory strategies; speech sometimes marked by non-native characteristics
Functions generally performed clearly and effectively
Generally appropriate response to audience/situation
Coherent, with some effective use of cohesive devices
Generally accurate pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and vocabulary

40 Communication somewhat effective: task performed somewhat competently, some successful use of compensatory strategies; speech regularly marked by non-native characteristics
Functions generally somewhat clearly and effectively
Somewhat appropriate response to audience/situation
Somewhat coherent, with some use of cohesive devices
Somewhat accurate pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and vocabulary

30 Communication generally not effective: task performed poorly, ineffective use of compensatory strategies; speech very frequently marked by non-native characteristics
Functions generally performed unclearly and ineffectively
Generally inappropriate response to audience/situation
Generally incoherent, with little use of cohesive devices
Generally inaccurate pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and vocabulary

20 Not effective communication: no evidence of ability to perform task, no effective use of compensatory strategies; speech almost always marked by non-native characteristics
No evidence that functions were performed
No evidence of ability to respond appropriately to audience/situation
Incoherent, with no use of cohesive devices
Almost always inaccurate pronunciation, grammar, fluency, and vocabulary

A still from the British Council (1983) Oral Testing video.

A still from the British Council (1983) Oral Testing video. Maintain eye contact, and avoid engaging in other activities during the speaking test. This results in increased gaps between turns because the test taker is not engaging in meaningful exchanges.

A still from the British Council (1983) Oral Testing video. Don't whisper, cover your mouth, or mumble, when talking to a test taker. If they cannot understand what you are saying you will not be able to elicit a ratable speech sample.

- Don't correct the test taker when they make mistakes;
- Don't speak so quickly that the test taker has difficulty understanding you;
- Don't whisper, cover your mouth or mumble;
- Don't speak too much;
- Don't be condescending (e. g. following en error in speaking , don't say 'It's a bit difficult isn't it, speaking English');
- Don't be offensive (e. g. Make negative comments about the test taker's culture, etc.);
- Maintain eye contact with the test taker;
- Don't engage in other activities (e.g. reading the assessment criteria, or candidate forms) during the test (British Council VOTE Oral Testing, 1983).

APPENDIX D

Rating Scale of TOEIC Speaking Test

SCORE	RESPONSE DESCRIPTION
5	A response at this level largely accomplishes all of the following: ■ It effectively addresses the topic and task. ■ It is well organized and well developed, using clearly appropriate explanations, exemplifications, and/or details. ■ It displays unity, progression, and coherence. ■ It displays consistent facility in the use of language, demonstrating syntactic variety, appropriate word choice, and idiomaticity, though it may have minor lexical or grammatical errors.
4	A response at this level largely accomplishes all of the following: ■ It addresses the topic and task well, though some points may not be fully elaborated. ■ It is generally well organized and well developed, using appropriate and sufficient explanations, exemplifications, and/or details. ■ Displays unity, progression, and coherence, though it may contain occasional redundancy, digression, or unclear connections. ■ Displays facility in the use of language, demonstrating syntactic variety and range of vocabulary, though it will probably have occasional noticeable minor errors in structure, word form, or use of idiomatic language that do not interfere with meaning.
3	A response at this level is marked by one or more of the following: ■ It addresses the topic and task using somewhat developed explanations, exemplifications, and/or details. ■ It displays unity, progression, and coherence, though connection of ideas may be occasionally obscured. ■ It may demonstrate inconsistent facility in sentence formation and word choice that may result in lack of clarity and occasionally obscure meaning. ■ It may display accurate but limited range of syntactic structures and vocabulary.
2	A response at this level may reveal one or more of the following weaknesses: ■ Limited development in response to the topic and task. ■ Inadequate organization or connection of ideas. ■ Inappropriate or insufficient exemplifications, explanations, or details to support or illustrate generalizations in response to the task. ■ A noticeably inappropriate choice of words or word forms. ■ An accumulation of errors in sentence structure and/or usage.
1	A response at this level is seriously flawed by one or more of the following weaknesses: ■ Serious disorganization or underdevelopment. ■ Little or no detail, irrelevant specifics, or questionable responsiveness to the task. ■ Serious and frequent errors in sentence structure or usage.
0	A response at this level merely copies words from the prompt, rejects the topic or is otherwise not connected to the topic, is written in a language other than English, consists of keystroke characters that convey no meaning, or is blank.

(Educational Testing Service, 2009).

APPENDIX E

Speaking Test of IELTS Examinations

Input	Response	Time	Evaluation
3-part oral interview		11–14 minutes	Level of performance as judged by a trained rater using a scale (1–9) and assessment criteria (fluency and coherence, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation)
Interview: interviewer posed questions	Respond to interviewer's questions	(4–5 minutes)	
Extended response: interviewer's instructions and follow-up questions and written input (task card)	1 minute to prepare and 1–2 minutes to respond to task card topic and content prompts	(3–4 minutes)	Reported as band-level descriptors on scale of 1–9
Discussion: interviewer's questions on Part 2 topic	Respond to interviewer's questions	(4–5 minutes)	

Pronunciation

- uses a full range of pronunciation features with precision and subtlety
- sustains flexible use of features throughout
- is effortless to understand

- uses a wide range of pronunciation features
- sustains flexible use of features, with only occasional lapses
- is easy to understand throughout; L1 accent has minimal effect on intelligibility
- shows all the positive features of Band 6 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 8

- uses a range of pronunciation features with mixed control
- shows some effective use of features but this is not sustained
- can generally be understood throughout, though mispronunciation of individual words or sounds reduces clarity at times
- shows all the positive features of Band 4 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 6

- uses a limited range of pronunciation features
- attempts to control features but lapses are frequent
- mispronunciations are frequent and cause some difficulty for the listener
- shows some of the features of Band 2 and some, but not all, of the positive features of Band 4

- speech is often unintelligible

(Cambridge ESOL, not dated).

APPENDIX G

Speaking Test of FCE Examination.

Component	Input	Response	Time	Evaluation*
Speaking**			14 minutes	Level of performance as judged by trained raters (2) using different scales (holistic/analytic) and assessment criteria (overall
	Part 1: interlocutor's questions	Respond to interlocutor's questions	(3 minutes)	
	Part 2: interlocutor's instructions and prompt, two photographs, written question above photographs, and other examinee's discourse	Produce 1-minute response to input and 20-second response to other examinee's discourse	(4 minutes)	performance/grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and communication)
	Part 3: interlocutor's instructions, several visuals, and other examinee's discourse	Interact with other examinee, discuss visuals, and express opinions	(3 minutes)	
	Part 4: interlocutor's questions on topic addressed in Part 3	Respond to questions and engage in discussion	(4 minutes)	

*All five FCE components are weighted equally. Performance on the FCE is reported on a scale of 0–100 and letter grades (A–E) are assigned to score ranges (e.g., scores from 80–100 are designated Grade A and scores of 54 or below are designated Grade E).
*The FCE speaking component uses a paired format in which two examinees and two assessors are present.

(University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations, 2007).

APPENDIX H

Speaking Test of TOEIC Examination.

Test (Task)	Input	Response	Time	Evaluation
Speaking	Written instructions and prompts; photographs	0–45 seconds to prepare and 15–60 seconds to respond	20 minutes	Level of performance as judged by trained raters and reported on scale of 0–200
(Read aloud)	Written instructions and text	45 seconds to prepare and 45 seconds to respond		Raters use scale (0–3) and assessment criteria (pronunciation and intonation and stress)
(Describe picture)	Written instructions and photograph	30 seconds to prepare and 45 seconds to respond		Raters use scale (0–3) and assessment criteria (pronunciation, intonation and stress, grammar, vocabulary, and cohesion)
(Respond to question)	Written instructions and written and spoken prompts	No time to prepare and 15–30 seconds to respond		Raters use scale (0–3) and assessment criteria (pronunciation, intonation and stress, grammar, vocabulary, cohesion, relevance and completeness of content)
(Respond to question and visual)	Written instructions, written and spoken prompts, and visual	30 seconds to read written input before spoken prompt begins and 15–30 seconds to respond		Raters use scale (0–3) and assessment criteria (pronunciation, intonation and stress, grammar, vocabulary, cohesion, relevance and completeness of content)
(Solve problem)	Written instructions and written and spoken prompt	30 seconds to prepare and 60 seconds to respond		Raters use scale (0–5) and assessment criteria (pronunciation, intonation and stress, grammar, vocabulary, cohesion, relevance and completeness of content)
(Express opinion)	Written instructions and spoken prompt	15 seconds to prepare and 60 seconds to respond		Raters use scale (0–5) and assessment criteria (pronunciation, intonation and stress, grammar, vocabulary, cohesion, relevance and completeness of content)

(Educational Testing Service, 2009).

APPENDIX I

Speaking Test of TOEFL iBT

Component	Input	Response	Time	Evaluation
Speaking	6 tasks		20 minutes	Level of performance as judged by trained raters (3) using scale (0–4) and assessment criteria (delivery, language use, and topic development)
	2 independent tasks: spoken and written instructions/prompt	15 seconds to prepare and 45 seconds to respond		
	4 integrated tasks	20–30 seconds to prepare and		Reported on scale of 0–30
	Type 1 task: read/listen/speak	Type 1 task: respond to questions related to the situation or academic topic		
	Spoken instructions and prompt 75–100-word reading passage followed by 90 seconds of related discourse			
	Type 2 task: listen/speak	Type 2 task: summarize or demonstrate understanding by responding appropriately		
	90 seconds of discourse			

(Educational Testing Service, 2006)

APPENDIX J

Extract from the guidelines for the teachers and visiting examiners for the AS/A2 Modern Languages Speaking Test (2008).

1 ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SPEAKING TESTS

1.1 *Preparation Sheets for Presentation* (pro forma) are normally issued in the December and March despatch (see Appendix 1). Each centre should ensure that they have an adequate supply of these for their students. These are provided in duplicate; one copy retained by the teacher until the day of the examination and the other by each candidate for use on the day of the examination. The teacher should provide a complete set of these for the Visiting Examiner on arrival at the centre. This pro forma should contain an outline of the candidate's presentation of no more than 60 words.

2 ACCOMMODATION

2.1 Both the Examiner and the candidates require appropriate arrangements and suitable conditions for the conduct of the speaking tests. The following are general guidelines:

- A relatively small room, which does not echo.

- The room should be in a quiet part of the school, away from normal pupil traffic, especially at breaks. If possible, the nearest bell should be switched off.

- Where possible, a room with a glass-paneled door or divide would be preferable. This would be in the interests of both candidates and Examiners in regard to child protection issues.

3 BRIEFING MEETING FOR CANDIDATES

3.1 This briefing meeting **must** take place and be attended by all candidates. It should be organised for the morning of the examination. In the case of FE colleges where candidates may be adults with work commitments, an afternoon briefing may also be arranged. Where more than one day is required each group should receive a separate briefing. If necessary, the subject teacher can also be present. The Examiner will use the briefing for the following:

- To establish credentials as a sympathetic Examiner who is to be welcomed rather than feared.

- To put candidates at their ease and reduce tension, through humour and other means, and re-assure them, particularly should anything go wrong.

Council for the Curriculum Examination and Assessment (2008).

APPENDIX J (Continued)

4   CONDUCT OF SPEAKING TEST

4.1   Each candidate should bring along his/her copy of the Preparation Sheet for Presentation (pro forma) to the preparation room adjacent to the examination room. On arrival, the Examiner will check candidate details. At AS there are normally 10 role-plays provided from which the Examiner will offer three role-plays for each candidate. The order in which they are presented will vary throughout the day in order to minimise any overlap between the content of the role-plays and the candidate's presentation topic. Only the titles of role-plays will be shown from which the candidate can make a meaningful selection of two.

4.2   At A2 there are normally 10 visual stimuli provided from which the Examiner will offer three to each candidate to choose from. Candidates will see all of the content of the stimuli before selection. Again, the Examiner will vary the order in which the stimuli are made available in order to minimise overlap between the content of the stimuli and the candidate's presentation. The candidate should not delay in choosing the stimulus and preferably choose something reflecting a familiar topic or theme.

4.3   Candidates should ensure that they take their Preparation Sheet for Presentation (pro forma) with them into the preparation room. No further notes should be added to this. They may, however, make further **minor** notes or amendments on the notes page provided even at this late stage but not long extracts from which to read. However, they will be strongly advised that further notes may lead to confusion during the presentation and militate against a good performance. Any notes they wish to make on the role-plays should be made on notepaper provided by the Examiner (see Appendix 4). Again, candidates will be advised that translating role-play tasks and reading their responses without regard to the Examiner's roles may also militate against them.

4.4   At A2 they may also make notes on the visual stimulus chosen and refer to these during the discussion. 'Prepared written statements' would, however, be unacceptable. The candidate should return all materials used to the Examiner when the test is finished, including notes made during the preparation time. **Nothing should be taken from the examination room.**

APPENDIX K

STUDENT ATTITUDE QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to reveal students' preferences, attitudes and problems in *foreign language speaking* tasks that will clarify teachers' views and direct them in their search for better solutions.

It is not a test so there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers and you do not even have to write your name on it. We are interested in your personal opinion.

Fill out the following questionnaire, checking the box, which best describes whether you agree or disagree with the statements.

SA=strongly agree   A=agree   D=disagree   SD=strongly disagree

Class_____.

	Speaking	SA	A	D	SD
1	I like speaking in English.				
2	I feel confident when I am speaking in English.				
3	I feel relaxed when I am taking a spoken test.				
	Oral presentation.				
4	I like delivering oral presentations in class.				
5	I feel relaxed during my presentations.				
6	I feel nervous during my presentations.				
	Role Play.				
7	I like participating in the role plays in class.				
8	I feel relaxed during role plays.				
9	I feel nervous during role plays.				
	Individual Interview.				
10	I like being interviewed individually.				
11	I feel relaxed during an individual interview.				
12	I feel nervous during the individual interview.				
	Paired Interview.				
13	I like being interviewed in pairs.				
14	I feel relaxed during paired interview.				
15	I feel nervous during paired interview.				
	Class Discussion.				
16	I like discussing topics in English in class.				
17	I feel relaxed during class discussion.				
18	I feel nervous during class discussion.				
19	If I do not know some word when speaking English, I usually try to describe it.				
20	If I do not know some word when speaking English, I get excited and stop speaking.				
21	If I do not know some word when speaking English, I use gestures to explain it.				
22	If I do not know some word when speaking English, I use the word in my native language.				
23	I try not to use constructions in English that I do not know even if I am supposed to (e.g. Instead of passive voice I would use active even if I am not supposed to).				
	Scoring.				
24	My score in speaking test often depends on my mood.				
25	My score in speaking test often depends on the environment I take the test in				

	(e.g. color of wall paper, comfort of chairs etc).				
26	The hours of English lessons devoted to oral proficiency development at school are enough for learners to reach the highest score on the speaking rating scale.				
27	I think that my speaking skills are better than the mark I receive for it.				
28	I would like my teacher to score my oral performance on the basis of his/her intuition.				
29	I would like my teacher to score my oral performance on the basis of the standard rating scale.				
	Interlocutor-test taker interaction.				
30	When speaking in pairs I perform worse than if I speak alone.				
31	I feel nervous if in paired interview my peer's English level is higher than mine.				
32	When speaking in pairs my peer's native language makes difference to me.				
33	I feel nervous if in paired interview my peer's personality is different than mine (if you are introvert, he/she is extrovert and vice versa).				
34	I feel nervous if in paired interview my peer is elder than me.				
35	During the interview in English I feel that the discussion is natural, real-life.				
36	I believe that it is possible to evaluate students' speaking skills without face-to-face interaction.				

37. If you were going to take an oral test in an examination, which of the five tasks would you prefer to do? Rank them from one to five where '1' is the most preferable task for you and '5' the least preferable one.

- ☐ **Oral presentation** (a short speech on a topic that you have known in advance).
- ☐ **Individual interview** (an interview with one student and one interviewer who asks questions).
- ☐ **Paired interview** (an interview with two students and an interlocutor).
- ☐ **Role play** (an interaction activity that includes real world tasks).
- ☐ **Class discussion** (a class activity when a teacher offers a topic and the students express their opinions on the topic).

38. If you feel nervous during the task, what would make you feel less nervous?	39. In speaking English the most difficult for me is…

40. Tick the criteria that you think your teacher should pay most attention to while assessing your oral proficiency.

- o Vocabulary
- o Grammar
- o Pronunciation
- o Fluency (flow of speech)
- o Eye contact
- o Nonverbal aspects
- o Confidence in manner
- o Development of explanation
- o Use of supporting evidence
- o Clarity of expression
- o You can add your own criteria:_____.

Feel free to comment on anything you think is relevant to the assessment of speaking skill:
_____

_____

THANK YOU!

APPENDIX L

Semi-structured Interview Questions for Students

1. Describe the usual speaking test in your class.

2. What do you like most of all in the speaking test in your classroom?

3. If you had the chance to change the way speaking skill is assessed in your class, what would you change?

4. Are you satisfied with the mark you receive for your speaking performance?

5. Imagine the situation that you are having a dialogue with one of your classmates and your teacher is listening to your performance. You feel that your classmate's English is much better than yours. How would it make you feel?

6. Imagine the situation that you are having a dialogue with one of your classmates and your teacher is listening to your performance. You feel that your classmate's English is much worse than yours. Would you try to help her/him by speaking more etc.?

APPENDIX M

A Questionnaire

Your work experience:_____. **Scientific degree**_____.

Areas of professional interest_____.

     It is a well-known fact among the foreign language teachers that the assessment of speaking is one of the most challenging tasks in the teaching methodology. The purpose of this interview is to reveal a good deal of mystery surrounding speaking assessment.

     It is not a test so there are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers and you do not even have to write your name on it. We are interested in your personal opinion.

     Please, answer the open-ended questions below in as many details as you think is necessary to make your point clear. Write your answers in the spaces provided. If you need more space, you can use an additional sheet of paper attached to this test. Some of the notions are marked with *. It means that their meanings are explained at the end of the questionnaire. We are grateful to you for assistance in the research which is the part of the author's Master Thesis.

<div align="right">Anna Lozovska</div>

1. What do you take into consideration from the following while assessing oral proficiency?
- Vocabulary;
- Grammar;
- Pronunciation;
- Fluency (flow of speech);
- Eye contact;
- Clarity of expression;
- Your own criteria:_____.

2. Which of the above mentioned criteria do you give primary importance to while assessing speaking? State the reason for it, please.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____.

3. Which type of speaking test (e.g. oral presentation, role-play, individual interview, paired interview etc.) do you think is the most advantageous to use while assessing oral proficiency? Why?_____
_____
_____
_____
_____.

4. What do you think are the greatest challenges in assessment of the speaking skill? Why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____.

5. **Do you prefer to create speaking tests for your students by yourself or to use the 'standardized' instruments which are prepared by professional testing services? State the reason for your choice.**

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____.

6. **Do you believe that paper-and-pencil tests are useful for oral proficiency evaluation? Why?**

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____.

7. **Do you agree that there should be a different rating scale for each type of the speaking task (e.g. for oral presentation, role-play, individual interview, paired interview etc.). Please, justify your opinion.**

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____.

8. **What type of the rating scale (holistic* or analytic*) do you prefer to use while assessing your students' oral performance? Explain your opinion, please.**

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____.

9. **Do you think it is more useful for a teacher to use his/her own perception rather than the criteria of the scale while assessing speaking? Explain your point of view, please.**

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____.

10. **What seems more correct to you: to assess student's speaking skills <u>describing</u> the proficiency level or giving a <u>single score</u> for their proficiency?**
    Why?_____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

11. **Does it have an impact on the score of a student whether his/her interlocutor in a paired interview is a teacher or a student? If it does, in what way?**

    _____
    _____
    _____

_____

_____.

12. Do you consider yourself a reliable rater? Give arguments for it, please.

_____
_____
_____
_____

_____.

13. Which one is more important for a teacher to assess speaking performance of his/her students? Experience in teaching English or Special training in assessment. Explain why?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____.

14. Do you agree with the view that direct speaking tests* may be called 'valid' while indirect ones* – 'invalid'? Why?_____
_____
_____
_____
_____.

15. How clear are the evaluation criteria of oral language skills of the curriculum in your institution, in your opinion.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____.

Feel free to comment on anything you think is relevant to the assessment of speaking skill.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____.

VOCABULARY

Closed tasks – tasks with pre-determined outcome. (e.g.read the text).	Open tasks – tasks which have many different possible outcomes (e.g. role play – when teacher can not predict exactly what the student will say).

Holistic scales offer several dimensions together (teacher evaluates rhetorical, linguistic, informational features of student's speech as a whole).	Analytical scales offer a separate scale for various dimensions (teacher evaluates rhetorical, linguistic, informational features of the speech evaluating each unit separately).
Direct speaking test – procedure with face-to-face interaction with an interlocutor (e.g. interview, role-play etc.)	Indirect speaking test – procedure where there is no fa ce-to-face interaction with an interlocutor (e.g. paper-and-pencil test – student writes down answers, teacher evaluates his/her speaking skills according to those answers).

Thank you very much for participation. If you like to know the results, please, leave your e-mail address so that the author could send it to you. _____@_____. /

APPENDIX N

A Semi-structured Interview Questions for Academics.

1. What area do you think is the most problematic in speaking assessment (e.g. oral proficiency test, rating scale, test score, student – interlocutor interaction, rater training etc.) Why do you think so?

2. To what extend do materials used in schools focus on speaking proficiency?

3. Do you personally believe that there exists the solution for most of the problems in speaking assessment?

4. How do you prefer to deal with those problems in your classroom?

5. Can you briefly describe a good quality speaking test procedure in your opinion?

Transcript of the Semi-Structured Interview for Academics

Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 1

What is your experience in teaching speaking?

Well, I've been teaching speaking perhaps…more than twenty years…twenty-five years.

What area do you think is the most problematic in this field?

Well…eh.. it depends on who you are teaching actually… Er, If you are teaching Turkish students than pronunciation could be quite a problem. The pronunciation of certain sounds, because when you don't have those sounds in the mother tongue, you know, then it could present a problem, like the 'th' sound in English. It's quite problematic for Turkish speakers, because we don't have that… in doesn't exist in Turkish, you know. And also the 'æ', in phonetics we call in 'the butterfly sound' the 'æ', as in 'bæg'. Usually the Turkish students wouldn't be able to make discrimination between 'bed' and 'bæd', for example.

Thank you, what do you think about the psychological issue, the anxiety, did you face with it?

Eh, well.. that's quite a problem as well, I should say. For example…, even if the grammar is quite good, They usually have difficulty expressing themselves in English. So, when it comes to spoken English, usually they get nervous and anxious, as you say, in the classroom, so, it takes them a while to get over this problem, so, perhaps they need the teacher's support, like, you know, the friendly atmosphere in the classroom, and positive feedback, even if they make mistakes sometimes, you know…, encouraging them to speak even if they make mistakes..and. putting them into groups, usually, some fun activities, so that they feel willing, enthusiastic, to speak.

I have interviewed some teachers before, academics, and they shared their experience, that to … to avoid the anxiety issue in they classroom, they give their students the voice recorder home, or they just use theirs, and they try to record their speech at home., where they are not anxious. What do you think about it?

That could be an idea too, but usually, you know, when you speak out, then you hear your own voice. That could be quite helpful, so, I usually tell my students, for example, if their….flat or I don't know, their room is available, to put themselves in front of the mirror sometimes. Just speak out loud, so that they can hear what they say..so, because that goes to the brain, according to the theories and that could help them improve their speaking skills as well.

Ok, thank you. And what about the materials that are provided for the teachers of speaking. Do you think they are sufficient enough?

For teachers or for students?

For teachers to teach students.

Well, nowadays, I believe, there is a lot of material and some really good stuff. Before we had problems. But now I think those students and teachers are very lucky. On the market there is some really good teaching material.

Could you name some of these materials?

Perhaps, specifically naming, it is difficult, but there is a lot of speaking material. Speaking books, also CDs, and many books come now with their CDs for listening, and also students could do some of the listening at home, not necessarily in the classroom. But in the classroom you could use songs and…I don't know..there's films, film CDs and….games, activities. And not necessarily does the teacher stick to one speaking book, usually, I mean personally speaking, nowadays, in recently speak… because the more experienced you are, as a teacher, the more variety of material, perhaps, you could use in the classroom, not necessarily sticking to one book. ..er…of course, sticking to one book could be easy for the teacher, but students get bored after a while, so, I, personally speaking, use different things sometimes, eh, for example one of the books I really like is… Its not quite a speaking book only, but .. that's "Odds and Ends", have you heard of it? It's a beautiful book. Inside there are really nice activities, proverbs to discuss, plays, games to play, er…even stick figures, exclamations. Again, I don't stick to that, that is just my reference book, but I use some staff from that book sometimes and students usually enjoy it when you try different things.

Ok, thank you. You names different problems in your classroom, like every teacher has: pronunciation issues, anxiety issues. |how do you prefer to deal with the problems when they occur. Do you address your colleagues, do you try to solve it by yourself?

Sometimes we get together of course and discuss what the common problems are, but again, as I say, when you get the experience, you naturally know how to help them out, how to deal with the problems,..er.. confidence is very important, self-confidence on both sides. In the first place when the student that the teacher has experience and self-confidence, and the mastery of the language, perhaps they trust the teacher. And when they trust the teacher it's easier to break the ice. Sometimes I also get them to correct each other , for example, when some people act out something, the others take notes as they are listening and then I get them to..like.. I get them to do self-correction and peer correction. And finally I result in the teacher correction, so that also gets them in a way to enjoy the thing, like teachers they are also correcting, they are also realizing the mistakes and..so, we don't usually make the correction staff like, oh, you made such mistakes and that's terrible. Usually I tell them, even native speakers make mistakes. Try to feel at home, fluency sometimes is even more important then accuracy itself, you know, so, usually I think creating a nice friendly atmosphere, cozy atmosphere in the classroom is perhaps the most important thing.

Have you ever had experience when a student came to you and he was not happy with his or her mark?

Oh, yeah. Honestly, that's funny, but when my students have some poor marks, they always knew that they didn't deserve any better. They felt miserable of course about their marks, but they usually told me: "Actually, you are right, Teacher, I knew I didn't deserve any, but what could I do to get something better? Then I always try to encourage them saying that this is not the end of the world, you could also make an effort. Or usually, also encourage them to do listening outside the classroom, like film watching or news watching on BBC, CNN. Because hours are limited, anyway, you know, classroom hours are so limited, so they always need perhaps to expose them selves to English outside the classroom, and in

Turkey it is very difficult, because this is not an English speaking country. So, but now we are lucky because we have cable TV, digital, you know, and other means, you know, perhaps…to being exposed to English. But, as far as myself concerned, I've never had this..so far, honestly like.."oh, I deserve something more, why they should give me this". No, they always knew.

If you had, what would you do, how would you prevent this situation?

Aha, well, in speaking it's quite hard, because if you take writing itself, then you could show them, you know, ok, you know , you see, but usually, while listening to them I take notes. Of course its almost impossible to make a note of every little thing, but some striking errors I always jot down in my notes about the errors they have made, and…and they I say "Perhaps you don't notice when you are speaking, but you make, you know, errors like this". It could be grammar, it could be pronunciation errors, it could be usage errors, and these are just the things that I've been able to jot down while listening, even more then that. Usually, they would be persuaded, I believe.

Thank you, what about rating scales? Are you provided with some common rating scale?

No, honestly speaking, I think every teacher has his or her own here, but mine is like: grammar, pronunciation, usage, fluency, I make like a checklist for myself, for each area and then grade, but I believe my colleagues also follow something like that, but generally, we don't make for ourselves scale like this, that we all go by this, we are all independent here.

Would you like to be provided with this scale, or you think you should grade it according to your classroom.

Well, personal, I would say, personal scale, because every teacher has perhaps their own notion or concept in mind, but still they are general more or less rating scales anyway, that we all follow, but that's not something collective that we do.

Thank you, now my last question. What is the good quality speaking procedure in your opinion?

Well, I've already mentioned, actually, perhaps most of them..

For example, the ways of assessing, which ways, like role play, oral presentation…

Of course, of course, actually, I believe, perhaps all of them should be tried in the classroom. Sometimes, it could be an individual presentation, sometimes, working as a group, and then, perhaps acting out, sometimes it's just like group discussion, the teacher provides them with a topic, sometimes may put hem against groups and then discussing as a group. Sometimes even individual tasks to do, listening all together, to a dialogue or a song, and then discussing. Perhaps, a film watching .

Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 2

Do you have any experience in teaching speaking?

Yes, I have a lot of it. I've taught speaking for like 8 years or something like that. Only this term I'm having a holiday from it. Sometimes you feel like you are done or something. So, you need a break to have some renovations in your syllabus and everything, so..But actually I'm now teaching speaking some

groups, but this is Anadolu University, open education faculty, so their program is fixed, like very much fixed. So, they give you a book and you are not allowed to anything other that a book. So, it's speaking, but I don't feel that I am just...I am just helping them to digest the book. That's it, ok? So, we try just to open up some topics to discuss about, but we don't have time for that, so, that's speaking, but not ideal type of speaking course, I would say.

Speaking about this, Hocam, do you think one material, even perfect one, is enough to teach speaking?

No, because if we just take real life as a basis, so one source of information or one type of communication is not available as you know, we also..we have to nurish our students in many aspects of the real communication, because we call this "communicative approach", so one material would never be enough in my opinion.

What materials do you prefer to use in your classroom?

Er..I don't prefer to follow a book because when I have a book in my hand as a teacher, I feel like it limits me somehow, so I depend on the book very much, ok? So, instead, I try to prepare syllabus full of various activities like I try to keep it on a white range as much as possible. So, on the weekly basis I bring some activities into the classroom, so I try to use different activities like for example one week it's a discussion, one week it's a role play, another week isn't like, I don't know, some story telling session. So, I try to make it as various as possible , you know, like my topics and everything. So, I depend on some books of course, I take some bits from the books, some bits from the Internet, some bits I design, you know, depending on my assumption of real life communication and everything, so, its a combination.

What do you think about the quality of the material provided for teaching speaking nowadays?

Yeah, I must say they are getting better, of course, because the understanding of this teaching is getting better, hopefully, ok? But no matter what the material is, that would very much depend on the teacher. You know, the teacher's attitude and the way they handle the material, ok? So, you can not guarantee the same thing happening in every classroom, like giving the same material to every teacher, because every teacher would make a lot of difference in the classroom. So, I think they are getting better, and I hope teachers are getting better.

Thank you, what do you think one of the most problematic areas in this field is?

Yeah, I would say assessment of course, especially in our department the assessment depends on one teacher only, so, you are teaching classes and you are assessing the performances as well, so..we fail to be objective probably, most of the time, because after some time, for example in my speaking exams I have to listen to like 30 people like in 3 hours or something like that. Most of the time you switch off, you cannot just ...listen to them very carefully, and .. what makes speaking assessment difficult, another thing..I would say, if we just take holistic approach , ok? So, that would be too subjective, because my holistic approach and another person's holistic approach wouldn't match probably. If you take a grid, again, so, it becomes too mechanical, so, that's a big challenge. And another thing is the motivation in the classroom , because our students are..all of them are Turkish speaking students, so they prefer to switch to their mother tongue to communicate to each other, because they don't feel the necessity to communicate in the English language, so this motivation is a problem. Another thing is, sometimes we, non-native speakers of English, we fail to ..we fail to provide students with some authentic examples , because their performances depend on the translation very much, ok? So, you have to struggle with their translations,

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like you have to think in 2 ways, like their mother tongue, the target language and everything, ok? So, this would be the challenges in the classroom.

These problems that you mentioned, how do you prefer to deal with them, when you face them in the classroom?

Ok, so, as for the assessment part, I try to use different assessment types in each exam, like we have 2 exams per semester, so, in week terms I use different kind of assessment, like more holistic and I have the speaking groups, like having discussion together, er..and in the final exam I try to use some grit and..er, I would have them speak individually on a subject. So, I try to use different techniques in assessment, let me say, and I also include their classroom performances , like...so, the things they do in the classroom, or sometimes I especially assign them to do very short speeches and things like that, so, I also add it to my assessment. For the motivation part, so, I keep my eyes and my ears very open to try to update my syllabus and everything, depending on the latest things. The students are involved in their real life right now, so, if it is facebook that they are dealing with very much, so, I try to make it part of my syllabus in the classroom, so I try to choose the topics depending on their interests and I try to find things that would motivate them to speak..er..I guess that's it.

As for the criteria you use for the assessment. Is it provided by the administration, or every teacher should develop his/her own one?

Not at all, not at all. The teachers are alone, on their own, you know, just they decide how to assess. There is no control, whatsoever on what teachers are doing.

There are different views as for this: some teachers say that every classroom is different and every teacher should develop his/her own one, other teachers say that it should be some common scale. What do you think?

I guess, it should be some common scale and I guess, the instructor of the class shouldn't be the one assessing their performances. The instructor should have a say of course in the assessment, but, after you teach those people like one semester, two semesters and everything, you develop some kind of relationship with those people, so this lessens your chances of being objective, so I guess, there should be a common scale.

Thank you, and the last question. What do you think should be the good quality speaking procedure like?

I don't know, I wish I really knew the answer. But we are just trying our ways here, because ... I wish, this kind of fantasy like something, but I wish kind of chance to record everything that is going on in the classroom and just look at their speaking performances and everything. Other than that, speaking assessment are doomed to be subjective a little because, you know what, what I am expecting from a student and what another instructor is expecting from a student would change, you know, very drastically. Actually, in the past we have had some problems about this. Some students thought that it is easier to pass some course with one certain instructor, but with other instructor it wouldn't be so easy, so, depending on the instructor's competence and skills , ok? Their expectation would change, I guess. I don't know, my only solution would be trying to have variations in the assessment as well, like classroom participation should be part of it and different tasks should be given in the assessment process.

Have you ever had an experience when a student came to you and he/she was not happy with his/her mark?

Yeah, actually, recently that happened to me. These two girls came up to me and said, they failed the course, actually, and they said, they are not very happy with their grades, but they said: "Ok, we are not claiming that , ok, we are very good speakers of English, so, i don't know, if they were just caring about the grade, not about their performances, I guess.

What did you do? What was your answer?

I tried to convince them that their performances were not at the expected level, ok? So, that would be unfair if i do anything with their grades and everything, there is no way I can do it. But still i just suggested that they should just write a petition for a presidency and ask for a ..ask for like, they can retake the exam with another instructor may be, so, they left. They were kind of too late, but this kind of things happens. And sometimes some students come up to me and say like: "This friend in my class, he got this grade, but I got this and I got this. Do you think this is fair?". So, they go there, each other, so, they compare each other with one another. So, they come and question. Not very often, but it happens.

Do you think something can be done to avoid this situation?

Yeah, so, they should know what kind of performance you expect from them. What kind of things is the example, what is based on er...I always tell them that in the exam i most care about fluency and intelligibility and then comes accuracy and everything er...may be the exam grid could be given to the students and that would be lovely if we can record their performances and have them watch later on. But with the technology we have now it seems to be impossible. But that would be lovely, you know, if speaking exams like be recorded and they could listen to themselves because there are..and to ensure that they wouldn't come and say that you were not fair to me in the exam, I always take people in the exam, like two people, three people together so people have some kind of witnesses, you know, because otherwise they can say anything, so, I think these are the things that I do to avoid that kind of things.

<center>**Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 3**</center>

Do you have any experience in teaching speaking? If you do, how much?

For the last four semesters I've been teaching speaking. Before that I've been teaching speaking as well.

What area do you think is the most problematic in this field?

 I think the teachers are a bit lost about what kind of materials are best to use in speaking classes. Generally, they bring like a topic to talk about in class, but generally you find that the students may not be very interested in the topic. And if you want to follow a specific book er..we have tried some speaking books, but they are very boring, so I try not to use…not to follow a book. I think there is not consensus among speaking teachers about what kinds of materials to use in class.

Do you think that the materials themselves are developed enough for teachers not to be lost in them?

I don't think they are sufficient actually, because it's not very…they don't try to develop the necessary skills in the students, but it is more like accuracy is more important, even if the speaking materials are enough.

And what do you think about the anxiety students face especially during their oral presentations?

Yes, they are very nervous, so, they prefer not to talk in front of the class when they are on stage. But they prefer group presentations. And they avoid role play.

Avoid?

I mean they don't like. The role play in front of their friends. But when they got used to it, then it is more comfortable, but at first it is difficult.

Have you ever had the situation in your teaching speaking career when the student came to you and he didn't agree with the mark you gave him for his speaking performance.

I haven't encountered such problems.

So, all the time they agree…

Yes.

What do you provide for them to agree with that? Do they know the criteria or they understand by themselves that really, they performed for this mark?

Usually I give them the criteria beforehand, each activity. If it is a group presentation, they have the criteria and they may be looking at it during their presentation. So, I think it helps them and they don't complain afterwards.

Can you briefly describe the good quality speaking procedure in your opinion? There are many, but for example. What do you think is right in speaking?

The teacher should first, instead of just jumping to the topic immediately, she should do some pre-activity first, like they should see the topic, like in the written format, just do warm-up and she should be willing to be open for different kinds of ideas, she should try to provide a comfortable atmosphere in class. And afterwards, there should be a wrap-up, yes, for first activity.

Previously I interviewed some teachers and some of them said that the best way for them to avoid anxiety of the students is to give them a recorder, send them to their homes and they can record themselves while they are in comfortable atmosphere. Do you think it is a way to avoid this anxiety and nervousness?

I didn't do such thing. May be it would be like they could interview some people outside the class and while they are interviewing, they not only get the information from other people, but they talk as well as

they can in the talk like this, but I don't do it. Its kind of extensive learning for them. They should be skilled at speaking in class as well in front of friends.

Ok, and the last question, just a general one. Do you think there exists a solution for these problematic areas in speaking?

Yes, but I think teachers have to learn together, because generally they don't know what each other is doing. They don't come together and talk about what kinds of skills we should focus on. I think yes, they should work together.

Are you provided with the rating scale for your speaking class by the administration? Do you prefer to modify this rating scale for your class?

We are not provided with it, with such a rating scale, but I just make use of the speaking books and other materials. And I develop, I try to focus on some other scales, that are not in those materials like interaction scales.

Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 4

What is your experience in teaching speaking?

I've teaching pronunciation and intonation for a long time. It's been disregarded in speaking assessment area.

What area do you think is the most problematic in speaking assessment?

In speaking assessment the most problematic area is fossilized pronunciation and intonation errors, fossilization.

What do you think about the materials used for teaching speaking? Are they sufficient enough?

I use, for example, shadow reading. Also, speaking dictionary, speaking books.

Do you think there will come time when the speaking problems are solved by the teachers?

Impossible. Because students have different learner types. The non-nativeness will always be existent. There will be not solution if not professional teaching is provided.

Do you think that the hearing ability of the students may be the problem for the wrong pronunciation?

There are other techniques for those people.

So, it is possible to teach a student with bad hearing ability the right pronunciation?

Yes, to some extent. But they cannot be professional foreign language teachers.

Have you ever taught courses for general speaking, like to develop fluency etc.?

Yes, I used to teach intonation analysis, speaking dictionaries. To give you an example, I use this kind of material, short or long texts. (Demonstrates exercises developing pronunciation: native speaker says the phrase and then repeats the trained word e.g. How could she abandon her own child? (Pause) Abandon). İ use them for projects and for other activities.

In your speaking class, if the student cannot perform well because of his/her hearing ability, will it influence the mark?

Absolutely, do not forget that it is a professional department. We train professional foreign language teachers.

Can you describe a good teaching speaking process?

Naturalness, good utterance, or there can be miscommunications between the learner and the teacher.

Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 5

What is your experience in teaching speaking?

I have, I admit, very little experience yet, because I had the chance to teach just about 3 classes. And this semester I consider myself as a new speaking teacher or instructor.

During these three classes, have you noticed any problematic areas?

Paired interviews may be a problem in the particular circumstances, but in order to lighten the problematic effect, I decided to give them and I am giving them some assignments to check for pronunciations, to check for er..accuracy, so, and I think, little preparations will help me in the presentations, will help me to evaluate them more accurately.

Have you ever had a paired interviews in your class yet?

Well, for example, if the team of one class would be like restaurants and food, for example, or telling a story or a past event, I simply ask them beforehand to get prepared with the adjectives, so that they can prepare at least with ten adjectives and then work on these adjectives' pronunciation and forms and when they come to class, they are prepared for at least vocabulary items so that we can do a lot of activities in the classroom, but they had the awareness that they should pronounce accurately as much as they could, so, I try to lighten the event of the problems of evaluation by that.

Thank you, what about the rating scale, does the administration provide you with it, or you should construct it?

Well, we construct it, of course we collaborate with my colleagues, with who is teacher the speaking class. Before the midterms I try to form sheet of evaluation points only a couple of weeks after I am accustomed to the class. To get accustomed to their level, to their maturity level, so, and their speaking abilities. So, I try to consider that also in evaluating sheets.

In your current class, do you have any students who you know are able to speak well enough, but they cannot because of their anxiety?

Well, you can immediately observe their anxiety. Fear of making mistake is one of the points of anxiety that they have, but in a very short period of time, may be 1 or 2 classes after they do a lot of progress about their anxiety, they try to participate, well immediate correction I think is important because when they mispronounce or when they cannot form a structure we can just talk about it and immediate correction helps them out, so they learn there is nothing wrong in making a couple of mistakes, but it's important to keep speaking when they're learning.

Will you include the performance of students during this semester into their midterm exam results?

Before the exams, all throughout the weeks, I ask them like role play and some impromptu speeches, 1 minute, so that they can immediately think of some topics that I give them. Then they make little speeches, they try hard, well, and I of course consider their efforts throughout the semester, so that I don't evaluate them just by 3-minute speech in midterm because as you said, they are anxious, nervous, and I consider their semester also.

What about the materials you use for your lessons?

Well, I take exercises from the book provided, it is Upper-intermediate and sometimes advanced course books speaking sections and I choose upper-intermediate level role plays. And then beforehand we talk about the functional language. We talk about different functions, we cover..I try to cover the classes like team and topic in each class, like for example, with a role play between 2 neighbors, who are conflicting over loud noise and beforehand we are talking about different forms for asking politely, refusing politely, convincing, this is how the course generally goes.

Would you like to have a book, that you would be able to have all the exercises from?

Well, I think I would still need to combine exercises, if I had such a book, I would probably use the majority of exercises, but I still would be in need of checking and looking other sources as well to enrich the content.

In your practice have you seen such a book or now you are currently searching may be?

Counting my inexperience also, I am in search of such a book. If there is such a large, content wise large book, then I would definitely refer for some exercises and role plays.

But still you are unable to find it, specialized on speaking?

Well, I haven't and I am still taking like two or more sources, course books to gather together as a weekly class.

<center>Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 6</center>

What is you experience in teaching speaking?

 I have told my friends that actually it's been like 4 years I haven't been teaching speaking, but I taught speaking for about 4 or 5 years let's say, but then the curriculum has changed and I haven't been teaching speaking courses.

In speaking assessment what issue do you find the most problematic?

Well, the biggest problem I also discussed with my colleagues is that rating or scoring the students is really really problematic because I don't know how to score the students, some of the students are quite fluent, but they do a lot of mistakes in terms of accuracy let's say or pronunciation, or on the other hand some students are very accurate, but they are not very fluent. So, according to what I am going to score them is really really problematic. And I still don't know what the score depends on, yes, you have the rating scale, but it does not work that well. You give the same score to 2 students, but their performances are very different from one another in terms of accuracy, fluency, use of vocabulary, pronunciation, whatever. So, it's really really problematic, so, I really hate, to be honest, ok, scoring in speaking.

Have you ever had any conflicts with students when, for example, they say that their friend got higher mark, but he/she speaks worse?

Of course, of course they say things like that, but generally, when I give the final score, one of the things that affects their score is their classroom performance, like some of the students, they never open their mouth during the term and they expect, you know, pass the course with their only performance during the exam, let's say. So, they think that ok, they can perform better, but what about the..the .. you know, the exams, like speaking exams, the have at most like 5 or 6 minutes..at most. So, within these 5 minutes you have to grade them on scale when it's not enough, their classroom performance should be taken into consideration, but , yeah, I..I..I received some objections.

What about the anxiety issue? Have you have a problem when you think that your students can perform better, but because of his or her anxiety he can not do it?

Well, I try to …you know, relax the student a little bit, they are very very anxious, let's say, during the speaking exam, but if I know that student from the classroom performance, then, you know, their notes are not that much effected, but if they are too anxious to speak I just say: "ok", I just try to ask questions to make him feel more relaxed, give examples, I kind of trying to create friendly atmosphere, you know, whatever it takes to calm them down. But, I don't know, some people are really really anxious, there is nothing you can do about it. They are so stressed, then, well, there is nothing I can do about it. I try to do my best, I try to make them speak, ask them questions, simplify the questions, paraphrase the questions, in every way that I can make them speak, but if it doesn't work, then I say: "There's nothing I can do about it". I have to get over it, because students are going to be the teachers. It's not like regular student who are learning general English. So, we expect them to perform better.

Some previously interviewed teachers prefer to avoid this anxiety issues asking their students to use voice recorder at home to record their own speech, because at home they feel more comfortable.

How would they know he is not reading from somewhere? Because we were discussing it with Canan Hoca just today, sorry yesterday. She is also…planning her PhD Thesis on audio journals or something like that she discussed this situation with another teacher, and he came up with an idea how would you know that the student is not just reading from somewhere. So, I don't think it is very very reliable, may be if it is like videotaped, may be. No, I never tried such a thing.

What do you think about materials available 4 years ago when you were teaching speaking, manuals, and what materials did you use?

First of all, I searched..I made some research and I started the course with communication strategies. I really believe in the importance of strategy training. How the students…how to help the students, let's say, to speak more fluently, or accurately, accuracy hm…yeah, it is important, but if you ask me fluency is

important as well. So, I prepare the materials by myself. There was no specific book I used. I was just gathering the materials, preparing it with my colleagues, let's say. So, we have a syllabus and we do it like that. But generally if you are so free, then you can use any materials that you wanted.

Do you think that there exists a manual devoted to speaking?

There used to be, when I first started there used to be a book, but it was so boring, and let's say…it didn't appeal to me, so, when I teaching the first thing I have in my mind is I need to like the materials myself so that I can use it effectively in my classes. For instance, "The words you need" book here, right below, so it's a horrible vocabulary book, so, I decided to change it, the students don't like it as well, but this book has been used in this department for many many years. But for me it doesn't work that well, so I changed it with another book. So, this is just like the speaking courses that's just the same, I prepared the material, I didn't like the book.

Do you think it would be profitable if book like this would be written?

It might be. I did my MA on speaking course syllabus, but as soon as I finished my MA Thesis, the syllabus has changed. Because previously, the speaking course was not like only the speaking course, but it included like listening and pronunciation and speaking all together, but then after the change of syllabus it's just speaking separately, and then listening and pronunciation separately. I think this is much better in this way, because we have just 3 hours a week, I mean it's not enough to include pronunciation, listening and speaking all at the same time so we just focusing on the speaking. Our students' major problem is speaking.

Can you describe a good quality teaching speaking procedure in your opinion?

Well, I don't know, let's say. Again, strategy training, what I am in favor of all the time, other than that authentic materials, for our students, let's say and, but…what else? I don't know, good thing would be autonomous learners, let's say. They..I don't know, it's not may be about speaking, but if we think about listening as well I would prefer them, well, I always advise them to watch DVDs in English, read English subtitles, it does not matter. Do something in English. For them it's very difficult to have a chance to talk to a native speaker, but..but what might work for them as the best strategies…

What techniques do you prefer to use in the classroom? Do you prefer role-plays?

Yeah, yeah, I prefer debates, but this is like how it works, I ask them to make a research in the Internet, come up with the articles to the class and let's say. One thing I prefer doing is like that: they come up with the articles and they summarize the articles to their friends, and then…but they do it like couple of times, I ..there is this activity I really like to do. I give them 4 minutes to summarize the activity, then they change their partners, I give them 3 minutes to summarize it, and then they change their partners, I give them even 2 minutes to do that. So, each time they do it let's say, they become more fluent, let's say, and then make less mistakes, because they repeating themselves, but these are their own words. So, something lie that, and then they have a class discussion let's say altogether. In my classes exams were also like that. I prefer to give them short role cards, this is this, this is this situation. There's always a conflicting situation, and also in small groups of 4 or 6 let's say, they just, you know, discuss about it. So, role plays, to some extend yes, I like problem solving activities, opinion gap activities to be used, let's say, games we can say, it's like, I need to have fun as well, let's say. Also, I prefer to involve activities like that.

Do you believe there exists a solution for the problems in speaking assessment?

I don't think so, because it's just the human factor, when there's a human factor, let's say, it's always problematic. I don't know how we can…there can be standards, standardization, but that doesn't mean, let's say, the problems will be overcome. Because it's so subjective. One thing that could be, having 2 or 3 teachers, assessing the students might solve the problem, but our department is so crowded, for instance, so, in our case I don't think it would be possible, we have over 250 students in each grade and 3 teachers dealing with these students, it's just impossible. So, in our case it's not possible, but may be in other scenarios it might be possible, but again, not very likely, not without..not problem-free, let's say.

Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 7

How much time have you been teaching speaking?

Well, I taught an integrated skills course like content-based teaching, so speaking was part of it. This was in 2005, 2006. I've started working here in November, months ago. Speaking is not one of the classes that I'm teaching now, but I'll see what I can do, I don't know.

What area do you think is the most problematic in speaking assessment?

Well, I can tell you now, I'm teaching, well, students in my classes are presenting, you know, certain topics, so I have first-year, second-year and third-year students and they have problems, serious problems with pronunciation and grammar. So, I think the subject matter is also important, but what catches my attention is their pronunciation and grammar. So..

How do you prefer to deal with these problems?

Well, I think it's basically pronunciation problems and phonetics courses. And I would encourage students to practice certain sounds that are difficult to learn in English, you know, some sounds that we don't have in Turkish. So, I think I will have them pay attention to those sounds particularly.

What do you think about the anxiety of the students? Is it a problem in your classroom? If it is, how do you prefer to deal with it?

Anxiety is common among the first year students because they have never given a presentation before, so, and I think they are gonna get used to it, as they have more oral presentations. Second year and third year students are not as anxious as first year students, but last week I gave some advice to them. I think they should participate more in the classroom...and this way they are gonna get used to being in front of the classroom and giving lecture. But if they don't participate, if they don't open their mouth and speak English, then, of course, I think one of the reasons of anxiousness is that they don't practice, they don't speak English much, and they are afraid of making mistakes them excited and anxious and worried.

Some previously interviewed teachers said that to get rid of anxiety they give their students the voice recorder for them to record their speech in the comfortable atmosphere. Do you think it is a way?

Of course, they can listen to it and evaluate themselves.

What can you say about the materials used for teaching speaking? Are they sufficient enough?

Well, it's been a long time since I actually looked at speaking book, so, I don't really remember which materials their people were using. So, listening, listening, it was like listening followed by speaking, so ..

Do you remember if you were trying to search the materials outside the classroom, you materials?

When I was teaching, all teachers were required to prepare their own curriculum, their own syllabuses and everything, their activities and materials, so , I remember going to the Barsenova, it's a big big book store in New York, so, I remember going there and choosing books which emphasized vocabulary and speaking, and grammar , and like colloquial English.

You say "books", so, you tried to mix some exercises from different sources?

I had the variety of books with cassettes because at that time we were using, still you know, tapes and those kind of materials I had.

And do you believe there exists any solution for these problems?

Well, it's possible, that it can become one of the most developed areas, but in the country like Turkey, because students do not get used to English, do not practice it, I think it will remain a problem for them.

Can you briefly describe a good quality speaking test procedure in your opinion?

As I said before, I think they should focus on problematic like sounds, hmm, in terms of phonetics, work on them, help students evaluate themselves, have them give presentations, create a learner-centered classroom, where they interact with each other and do a lot of practice and..have native speakers come to classes and give lectures...and.. that's all I can think of right now.

Have you even had a situation in your teaching practice when a student came to you and he/she was not happy with his/her mark for his speaking performance?

I usually have the criteria in which I evaluate the students, so, if I reduce their grades, you know, I can prove them that. You had the problems in this area, so you didn't get the points.

Do you develop the criteria by yourself?

Yes, since I don't teach speaking right now, I don't have the criteria right now, but I have the criteria for other courses. And..so, according to that I give the student feedback. So, talking to the wall, I don't think it's a good way of assessing, so, if you are just assessing how they are pronouncing certain words – ok, may be. Or maybe they just record their voices while reading a passage. And if you are just evaluating their phonological scales, that may be ok. But for the presentation skills, I think you need a ground.

Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 8

How long have you been teaching speaking?

When I first started in this department, actually, I was teaching writing before, I never did speaking assessment. When I was teaching here in Modern Languages and in U. S. where I was teaching writing, I didn't do any speaking assessment. I did presentation assessment, but that focused on their speaking proficiency. Here when I came and started working for this department in 2003, I taught speaking class, now it's not in the program, but I taught these speaking lessons. I followed what everybody else was following: the students watched movies and they talked about the movies, they gave mini presentations, they gave mini talks and I assessed that, and other than that I taught oral expression and public speaking class a couple of times, because it's a new class in our department and I did speaking assessment there.

What is the most problematic area in speaking assessment in your opinion?

In assessing speaking, there is always the concern about fairness, and the thing, for example, for other students when I'm assessing their speaking skills, with my students, I'm assessing them on the basis of the education they got from somebody else. So, that's usually my worry. I know that when they were in high school, they had kind of weak speaking, I mean not even weak, like a non-existing training of speaking, so, now they come here, and we assess their speaking skills. So, for me it's one of the biggest problems in our department. And after the certain age unless the students are really motivated to speak well, they can never get over their heavy accent and their fluency and accuracy problems. So, they always have fluency and accuracy problems, that's one of the things. And of course the evaluation is a little bit subjective, so I think, what you have here, the rater-inter rater reliability may be a problem. And I think would be the biggest problem.

What do you think about the anxiety of students, or personality of students, is it a problem for you?

That also may have an effect. When I was teaching oral expression and public speaking I saw that sometimes when students were really really nervous, they make more mistakes. And I was evaluating their presentation skills, that wasn't just their speaking skills, but the way they were dressed, their posture, the way they were standing, the way they were moving around the class, cause I was just evaluating everything. So, if the students were presenting, if they were anxious, they were doing like weird things with their body and their voices were shaking, and of course they had more fluency and accuracy problems, because they got anxious.

Some previously interviewed teachers said that to get rid of anxiety they give their students the voice recorder for them to record their speech in the comfortable atmosphere. Do you think it is a way?

Well, if you are evaluating just the speaking skill of a person, which is not a serial concept, I don't think it's serial, cause speaking is a social skill, like if somebody is talking to the wall and tape recording himself, and you are sitting at your computer evaluating that, I think there's something wrong with that, I don't agree with that. I did this with one of my…with few of my students in the practice teaching, assessed teaching course, when they were teaching at the schools, and when they didn't want me to be in

the classroom taking notes, but I saw that I' missing things in their teaching. And I think similar to speaking is not..let me see, not a sterile skill, not..I don't know how to say this, I know but..It's not a skill that is performed in isolation. So, a presentation should be evaluated in the context of the classroom or room full of people, being in front of the audience, so, that included in that.

What about the materials used in this university or in other universities you have been teaching? Do you think they are sufficient enough?

I think everybody uses different material, we try to use authentic materials, we use movies, audiofiles, little clips.

Is enough space devoted to speaking skills in manuals?

I don't know, to tell you the honest truth, because I right now am not teaching listening ad pronunciation and I don't know what materials they use, but I think it depends on the teacher, it depends on the teacher, cause everybody uses something different. I don't think I can give an opinion about everybody's materials.

Do you think there exists a solution for problems in speaking assessment?

I don't think so. Well, as long as non-native speakers are evaluating non-native speakers about a shared foreign language, I think there will be problems about this issue, because there is the proficiency of the rater, that's always a question, the inter rater issues, the proficiency of, the inter rater proficiency differences. I think there always be discrepancies in this area. And also the anxiety issue that you mentioned, and the conditions under which the test is taken, for example, in the TOEFL in the speaking section people are in this laboratory and they have these headphones and everybody is talking at the same time. I would never be able to speak in the environment like that, if we talk in the microphone and like talking to the computer, and then 15 other people are talking at the same time, its like a call centre. So, I don't believe in the reliability of that kind of evaluation, so, I think the context may cause some problems. And i don't think there is a solution for that, unless schools interview everybody one by one.

Can you describe the good quality procedure of the speaking test?

I think speaking is a social skill, so if I can evaluate somebody talking in a group, talking about personal and academic issues like giving a presentation, introducing himself, talking on the phone, which is like an entire different skill. If I can evaluate all this in the context or the performance of the candidate in all of these contexts, then that's a reliable speaking procedure, I think, because speaking doesn't have just the presentation level, because that's one way interaction or it doesn't happened in the friendly group, in the social environment, because that's informal talking. So, there has to be formal and informal speech, social and academic talk and also talking on the phone, without the eye contact, without any nonverbal communication elements, so, looking at these would be complete.

Should the speaking rubrics be designed for every classroom or standardized?

Designed, because the context of each classroom, each evaluation situation even within the same classroom, is different, for example, when I am evaluating students' performance in oral presentation and public speaking I use different rubrics for each task. There is an academic talk, there is a debate performance, you know, it is another skill of course, and there is also a personal presentation, and for each of these tasks I use different rubric, because their focus is different. So, even within a class, that lasts

for a semester, I use 3 different rubrics, across cultures, depending on the expectations of the assignment of course, if crossculturally they have the same expectations, then they can use the same rubrics, but the expectations of the assignment I think should determine the criteria.

Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 9

How long have you been teaching speaking?

I think I've been teaching speaking for over 20 years. Every year I taught at least 1 speaking course in this department, besides, my PhD Thesis is about spoken discourse. So, not necessarily on teaching, but oral communication skills and discourse, spoken discourse basically.

What areas do you think are the most problematic in speaking assessment?

When I look at your example, you mentioned oral proficiency test, rating scale. First of all, I don't give my students a test to assess their speaking, but rather I try to divide speaking into different components and constructs. One of them is, for example, vocabulary and other one is listening. So, I give my students a listening test, a listening exam, to get them ready with the vocabulary components that we had learned to assess the listening part of the speaking skill. Because I believe that speaking can never go on it's own – it's always together with listening. You can't say that today is my listening day, and tomorrow is my speaking , it always go together, right? And for the speaking, I do several things, I have individual presentations and drama sessions and acting out, I mean role play sessions, so that I get the chance to see their individual performance and also how they interact in group. And another thing I get idea about their speaking proficiency are debates. Because if I come up with a good topic, I offer them a good topic to carry a discussion on, then they are all relieved about their concern for grammar and vocabulary and..because they focus on some much on the message, especially when we have heated discussions. But there is another thing about the most difficult thing, the most problematic area, I think , to come up with a detailed rubric, what you call a rating scale, that's the most difficult part in assessing the speaking skill. Why? Because first of all, you need to have a very detailed rubric, which looks at fluency. I came up with my own rubric and I'm happy with it, which is fluency part, accuracy, vocabulary, delivery part, body language part and everything. But what I can't be sure is my objectivity. Do you know what I mean? I think this is the most difficult part, to be, to have fair assessment of each of these component. So, there are 2 things that are important: first, to have a very detailed rating scale, and the second thing is, I think it's not enough for only one teacher , for one instructor, to fill in these rating scales , you need at least 2 more people, sitting with you together, alright? And filling in that rating scale, later coming together and having the average grade of these 3 instructors, otherwise, there could be lots of things, like sometimes, the way the students speak could be disturbing, you know, because of their voice, their English language mistakes, just because they make grammar mistakes, you might fail to see how fluent they are. Or they might have good lexical competence, but they might not be very fluent. So, all of these are somehow grift and they are somehow interconnected and it is really difficult to understand which has an impact on which. That's why I think objectivity is the most important thing.

Do you think that every teacher is able to develop his/her own rubric?

I don't think so. It was difficult enough for me, although I did a lot of research on spoken language, you see what I mean? I always looked at it from the lexical point of view, from discourse point of view and from phonological point of view. So, I think it's not realistic to expect every teacher to come up with his or her own rubric. Especially in schools, yes, probably for departments like us it could be ok , but we always look at it from a larger perspective, we read about it, we research about these things. So, I think for people like us, we really need to come out with something that works out and share it with other people. Ok, probably publish the material, so that it can reach some other people. No, it's not realistic, because, but then again we've got very good teaching, so, this should be a teamwork, right? I mean people who teach speaking should come together. So, it shouldn't be a personal rubric, but usually that's the case.

So, there should be some standard, right?

That's right, so that every student in this department or in some other departments can be assessed, ok? On the basis of similar things, if not the same.

Is the part devoted in manuals to the speaking skill enough?

You see, I'm in an interesting position here, I mean I teach in the department where I train people to be English teachers. That's why I find it very difficult to find a course book, or a speaking book full of activities that are useful for my students. But if I had been a teacher teaching English in any school, I could say yeah, there are very good materials: more interactional tasks, speaking oriented activities and exercises, and projects and group works and everything. But they are not useful for my purpose, because I think our students, they need a higher level of proficiency in speaking. That includes a lot of things, since they are going to be teachers. So, the clarity of the message, the clarity of their accent pronunciation, to know how to talk to their students, so, it's more complicated than that. That's why all of us in this department, we use bits and pieces of material, we gather things, we rely on different sources. May be we should come together and write our own materials, but then again, things are changing, it would be very difficult to stick to one course book. But course books and the other books available in the market, I think they are good.

How do you prefer to deal with the problems you face in the class?

In the beginning of every term I invite, since, I mean, somebody's even more experienced, I invite the other colleagues, who are going to teach speaking with me to a meeting. So, we have a meeting, and I share with them what I've done so far, I ask their opinion, they share with me what they have been doing. So, I do learn from them of course, but still, I mean in the course of time, since I've been involved in the things for a long time I learned how to rely on myself first, I mean mostly. But that can't mean that I'm learning from my colleagues, I mean if there are 4 sections, 6 sections, 6 different groups of students being taught speaking in the department, I think they should all go through the similar phase of assessment, same materials, same topics, there should be standard.

Some previously interviewed teachers said that to get rid of anxiety they give their students the voice recorder for them to record their speech in the comfortable atmosphere. Do you think it is a way?

Well, I think it could be done, and sometimes it's not only anxiety, it's just a student being quiet and in their own world. It's really a personality thing, it's not only shyness or anxiety, but usually, I mean luckily, I don't have very frequently students of that sort. I mean not many students, I never tried that. But I think it could be of use, usually, I find the way to make them talk, and if there's no other way, there are

individual presentations, that student needs to come up there and talk. And there are the debates, and in the debate the rule is that everybody should speak at least once at least something, ok, about the topic. Otherwise, if they just going to be sitting there as pieces of decoration, I'm going to improve my own speaking, not them. That's a good way, otherwise, that would be unfair, I mean if one student is particularly shy and they need to be encouraged, they could do that as an additional support, ok? for their assessment probably.

Is it true that in this department the speaking exam was cancelled?

Every teacher does it differently, I mean, in the pat i invited every student one by one for an oral interview as a final exam, ok, and I talked to the 10 – 15 minutes. And I recorded their speech as well, but then I realized, that takes a lot of time, when you have 30 – 40 students, you can't do it. Then what I do is I give them 2 listening quizzes and then speaking tasks that they do those that I mentioned and the vocabulary. I try to evaluate each component of speaking. So, by the time I mean there will be a need for the final interview, I will already have an idea about the students' speaking proficiency.

Do you think there exists a solution for the problems in assessment of speaking?

No, that's a very difficult question, I don't think so. Because the people don't improve their language skills, especially the productive language skills over night, it takes a long time, it takes a long process. But it is very important I think for people to rely on real languages outside the classroom: discourse, corpus findings, ok? And how native speakers are engaged in meaningful conversations in formal and informal situations. O, to offer students a variety of input in the form of listening, so two things they benefit a lot from: debates and listening, that's what they say. And I think vocabulary has an important impact on their speaking skills as well because if they don't know, and also erasing their interest, if i don't want to talk about the football game, I wouldn't, and I wouldn't myself, do you know what I mean? I could be extremely competent, but i don't wanna talk about that, and I just choose to be quiet. So, the topics, the materials, but I think we can learn, sometimes, how can I say, we've got some clishes in our mind, like "It's difficult to assess speaking", "It's impossible to find the solution to all of these" , "It's not possible to be objective". And I think we need to be more suspicious about these clishes of ours. We need to question them, we need to test them, we need to come, probably, we need to meet on a more regular basis with our colleagues and share the problems, because we can never do that, I can...these are not talked about in a departmental meeting. In a departmental meeting we talk about the administrative issues and I don't know, the promotion criteria bladi-bladi bla. To feel problems about how students should be free to add.., we never get the chance to talk about them. If you are teaching speaking and you are one of my colleagues, if I accidently invite you for lunch, let's have lunch together. And if we talk over lunch about that, this is it. But...do you know what I mean? I think there should be like speaking group in the department, methodology group, right? And they should meet on a regular basis.

Can you describe the good quality procedure of the speaking test?

You see, first of all, every teacher who is teaching speaking should sit down and think about what does speaking involve. So, as I believe, there is the listening part, there is the vocabulary part, there is the pronunciation part that are important, ok? And all of these, and there is fluency, accuracy, so, there is a structure, everything has an overall impact on speaking. And it's not like speaking, but there are...so, speaking is a construct, it's made of other constructs like fluency and accuracy and lexical competence, this is how you should look at it, right? And also, you have to decide about what you what to do, I mean, is it important for you to, for your students to get their meaning across, to be fluent, I think this is more

important than being extremely accurate and not making any pronunciation or grammar effect, because fluency has a good impact on the listener, but your language could be great, if you are not fluent, if you are hesitant, then your listener wouldn't be motivated to listen to you, ok? So, you've got to pick one thing, to focus on it. I think this should be fluency and meaningful communication and more, how can I say, more task oriented, but message oriented speech, rather then, you know, meticulous details or grammatical details, or structural sort of accuracy expecting from the students, but I don't know if I was able to answer your question. Another thing is...I also question the...how can I say, the effectiveness of making our students give individual presentations in speaking courses. Because if I don't, then sometimes there are some students in the classroom, their mouths are sealed, I mean you can never get the chance to hear their English unless they come up and give their presentation, so, this somehow forces them, but them you think about giving a presentation, about the delivering, and it has a public speech part, I'm using the visuals and everything, so, my point is, when we give an individual presentation, how much of their speaking skills can be assessed really? Because it comes together with other things that I mentioned, if you know what I mean. The most important thing is to engage our students in the natural, meaningful conversation because you are in a classroom situation.

Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 10

Can you talk a little what experience you have in teaching speaking?

Actually, I was just assisting the course, which was for pronunciation teaching for language teaching candidate in our department. The instructor was leaving space to me in teaching course, actually. I taught the course for 2 semesters and I had a chance to know the students, you know, it was all. I was just having some extra hours with students, office hours for each student apart from the course that I was teaching. And that was all that I remember.

What area do you think is the most problematic in speaking assessment area?

I think the most problematic area was individual differences. Because you are trying to identify the problem, but you can't define the problem, which is general in the classroom. Because each learner has a different past experience, personally, some are shy, some are more extraverted, some are open to new body movements, but some aren't. You can not define that this is a problem for all students, you should focus on each student when you are assessing. The students are open to change, so, they are changing immediately, but some are not. You should not it, this, you know, this..let's say, they aren't so rapidly changing, they are slow, but they are at least trying. So, the most problematic thing was the individual differences and you have to focus on each individual, you should assess their improvement in their own speed. This was the most problematic one, and the other is I think , you don't have a kind of good rubric for it, you should define your own rubric. Because, you know, the rubrics are prepared generally from the central countries, from the US, from the Britain or some other counties. But each country, each classroom has it's own local differences, so, you should find your own goal. Of course the prepared ones are a kind of guide for you, but you should find your own way when you prepare the rubrics for assessment, this was a difficulty. But I think we all have solution for it, because you should do it, you should localize your rubric.

Do you think every teacher should develop his/ her own rubric, or may be the administration should develop the rubric for this very university? Is every teacher able to do that?

For some standardization purposes we should have some standardized rubrics for each, let's say, at least department, because in our department we have different aims, he program is designed to educate teachers, English language teachers, so, it is different from the departments of physics, it's different from the peaking courses of chemical engineering students. So, we can have a standardized rubric for it, but then you should localize then according your own students. You asked another question and you said: "Do you think all the teachers are capable of developing their rubrics?". They should, because if you teach this course, you should read on it. If you are anxious to teach it appropriately, you should work on it, and you should prepare your rubric for your students. May be you wouldn't have anything to adapt, may be the rubric which is standardized for the department would be ok for your classroom, ok? It's ok, but if it is not, you should revise it and adapt it.

Do you think among the techniques teachers use there is one right way to assess speaking?

No, I don't think so, it's personal and also it depends on the relationship between the students. Sometimes we had some tests, for instance, in these tests the student does not know the tester, some proficiency test, you know. They don't know each other, so, she is there just to test the student, so, in this context you should have different assessment way – interview, or something like that. But if you are in a process with your students, if you are teaching your course on your own, you know your students very well, you should differentiate the assessment techniques, according to your relationship with these students. Because anxiety is a big problem for the speaking courses and also for speaking assessment. Even if most students are ok with you, they feel relaxed or if they are reviewed, you can have different types of assessment, which does not require any standard or any strictly questioned, you know, and strictly designed questions like interview, something like that, you can just have a kind of , you know, it may look like something very relaxed and flexible but we are not punishing the students, we are just trying to assess them.

You should have different assessment techniques in a semester, so that each student would have a chance to show herself. Some students like, let's say, role play, but for some students role play is something disastrous, because they are affected by other people, the interlocutor that they are talking to. So, if you have, let's say, interviews, if you have role plays, if you have, what was it, mirroring, it's another kind of exam that can be used, or other types of exams, you can use all of them in a semester. It's like a portfolio assessment, but the portfolio is not prepared by the student, but also by the teacher as well. You can have a folder for each student and you know that your student is not good at interviews, but you know that she is good at mirroring activities, because she likes working on her own. You can't assess her by just one format of assessment, you can offer her what she likes most, because she should be prepared to be in any context. If you just chose preferred assessment technique and if you just use it, you will never meet your students' improvement. She just likes it, but she doesn't like other, so, she just improves in one way. You should force them to prove themselves, but you shouldn't look like a punisher.

Do you admit that teaching speaking is not like teaching other skills, right?

First thing is that you should improve yourself, you are non-native speaker, you are in EFL context, you are an EFL student as well, because you are still learning the language thought you are teaching it. And the second problem is the assessment issues. For example, you are teaching grammar, you are just asking questions, you just understand whether they know or not. You are just teaching listening and you can assess them according to their answers, reading at the same time. Writing is a little bit different, because it is a production force, but still you might have some criteria, the criteria that are easily checked, reading the scores of, you are reading the tests, scoring the test, let's say. But for speaking it is difficult, because it is deeply psychological issue. May be I assess the student, and she was talking very slowly in Turkish as

well, and she cannot improve her intonation, because her intonation is worse in Turkish as well. How can you do? Speaking is very personal in L1 too. And maybe you may not say that ok, we haven't had any speaking, just use these rules, ok, they will use these rules, but still they will speak like they speak in their first language. You can't improve that part of their speaking. It's very difficult, you should be very sensitive about psychology and also about sociology. You should read about these issues, you should be open-minded, you should know about individual differences, you should think about the psychology inside of the learner. You know, we have psychosomatic perspective, you know, they physically show that they are anxious, you should learn about these issues (…) also, while you are reading, you understand that you have enormous amount of technological improvement that you can use while testing and teaching speaking.

Do you think that the materials for teaching speaking are sufficient enough?

No, I don't think so because you can teach speaking in a course, the learner should have an autonomous need for it, you can just teach some part of it, but you can not teach it whole. First of all, the first component of speaking course should be is teaching students to be autonomous learners of speaking. But we don't have such an objective in courses. But I think it is one of the most important part of it, because you can't teach at the course. And the second thing is that they aren't enough, they aren't sufficient because each teacher has his/her own style. Some people think that if they allow students watch films in the courses, then they will learn it. If they allow, you know, like total physical response, do the repetition exercises, they will learn it. In a way, they penalize their students to learn in such a specific approach. So, it's not sufficient because they wouldn't learn it. Some people think that ok, Internet source for materials, ok, it's good, but you should find the one, which works for the aim of the course. But they just don't do it, they just find it and they just use it. They aren't for the preparing of materials.

What do you think about the material provided nowadays by Cambridge University Press, Oxford English etc.?

Actually, the content of speaking is determined by the approach of the book. You know, is it thematic, is it content-based and bla-bla-bla. So, the book determines the way the teacher teaches it. It's not sufficient, because I haven't seen the mirroring activity in the text book, for instance, but I think mirroring activity is very important for improvement, because the student is trying to imitate the native speaker model that you preferred. It can't be a native speaker, but they just trying to imitate. You know, they are trying on their muscles. Muscle building is a very important speaking course, but we don't have any muscle building exercise in books, you know. If the muscles are not working, if the lip doesn't know where it should go, then of course the student will not be able to produce the sound as you expect him or her to produce it. So, these are so simple exercises, we don't have them in these books.

You know, for speaking, either they just focus on segmental sounds or they try to focus on supra-segmentals but they don't focus on the learner, because the learner is not ready to do it, and in this book they don't focus on learner, they focus on the language skill.

Do you think the solution for these problems exists?

Both yes and no. No, because we don't have a general solution, it's impossible because the learning is something localized, you know, we all discussed about these issues, not country-based, even classroom-based, you are supposed to be teaching 2 different classrooms, but you should adapt yourself to the lesson, to these 2 different classrooms, so each classroom has its own dynamics, so, we will not have a standard,

general solution for all classrooms. But if you are a clever teacher and you are working and thinking on the issue, you will have solutions for yourself. As you get experience on the issue, on teaching speaking skill you will have different solutions for the problems in time. So, after 4 or 5 years you will just find the solution on your own, so, this is "yes", the first one is "no".

How did you prefer to deal with the problems in speaking assessment in your classroom?

Actually, I love teaching and from my childhood since I was 5 years old I have been thinking on teaching because my parents are teachers and I have been thinking on lesson plans and the issue how can I teach them, bla-bla-bla. Therefore, I am lucky, I can find the answer on my own. Sometimes, I have a look at the book for management problems, but I look at the book of teaching problems, how can I teach this issue and I search the literature for the answer to these questions. As for classroom management problems, because in speaking we generally have classroom management problems and intuitively, and my observations, my learner observations…Of course as a learner I observed my instructors while they were teaching and I remember: "Oh, that instructor used that one when I was a student. I can use it, it works". And the third techniques is that I just try to think like the students. You are lucky, because the students don't think that you have a kind of opportunity to understand their beliefs and their ideas. They just think you are just 2 separate people and you don't know each other. So, if you just try to hypnotize their ideas they in a way appreciate you and you don't have management problems. If they understand that you are thinking on the issue, you are just trying to teach something, you don't have management problems. It is important not to lose the ability to learn.

What do you think is the good quality speaking test process?

Actually, a good quality speaking test procedure is first to understand the needs of the learners, so, to understand the identity of learners, to understand the…let's say, to understand your learners. According to your understanding you will chose the test type that you will use. Or different test types that you will use. May be you won't have a chance to ask this question to your students because before the semester you should prepare this testing staff and bla-bla-bla. But you can use your observations in the previous semester or from other classrooms that you were teaching. And then, according to the general idea about the students you can prepare the test item, or you can select the one that is suitable for you or the type of the test you will use with the students and then, the students should know it beforehand. And before you exercise the test, you should have a pre-test, which is not graded. For example, I have a test, mirroring test, let's say, they will be graded, but before that students will have a mirroring project so that they wouldn't be anxious when they are working on it because they wouldn't be graded as a test from this mirroring activity. But this is just a project of the learners, this would be evaluated together with the learners. We will look at the difficulties that they experience, we will look at , let's say, how may be we could give some feedback to the students, we can videotape them and we can allow them to see themselves in this situation and you can find the difficulties and the solutions together with student. So, if you work on the issue together with the student they will be relaxed. And they know the test, because they are familiar with this mirroring issue and then we will have the real exam, mirroring exam, let's say. So, relaxation and the confidence of learners is the key issue for test procedure, we should prepare the student for this confidence by this way, but it's time consuming and generally people don't prefer it, it is really time consuming, but it really works. And then, in the test, you should confirm that the students are not so anxious, because they don't have…because they have both test anxiety and language anxiety. Poor students. So, you should be a smiling person, you should make them feel like relaxed. May be you should

give them the second time to give the test. It's right, because you are trying to evaluate speaking, you are just taking some segment and say: "Ok, she is always talking like that". It's impossible. Even in our native language we couldn't say that just 5 minute segment showed all the proficiency of this person. You are in exam situation and you are anxious, even talking in mother tongue is difficult in such a situation and you expect your student to speak like a native speaker, to speak like a person you want them to speak. We should be careful about these issues, as I said before, the most important kind of this speaking test teaching and testing it is psycho-social part of it. Not skill itself, but the psycho-social part of it and we should see it in testing part of it as well. You should be aware that your students are human beings, speaking cannot be evaluated in 5 minutes, in anxious environment, you should give them chance to show themselves. If they like ,they can record themselves and then can bring it, it is ok, you can give the same…let's say, you can offer the same exam, for example, mirroring exam, but you may ask students to record themselves if they like at home. If they like they can come to your office and they can speak to you, you can record it.

Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 11

How long have you been teaching speaking?

In our department I didn't have ant teaching speaking experience, but previously I worked on in, before Hacettepe University, in Cankaya Universty.

What area do you think is the most problematic in speaking assessment?

Learners, I guess, the most important problems in terms of pronunciation. Because, you know, the structure of the English language and the Turkish language are not similar, especially since English language is not a perfected language. It is a little bit difficult for them to get accustomed to the way some sounds are produced, after reading the word they have difficulty in articulation of the words. Since our learners are not accustomed in the same way to produce the sounds which are found in the target language but not in Turkish, they have difficulty, but especially in these sounds like "ing" sound, "th" sound, voiceless, voiced, it doesn't matter, sounds.

How do you prefer to deal with this problem?

Now, we can start may be with the diagnosis of the problem, defining problematic areas by considering complete class, so that we may work on the individual sounds, but we may not need to work on the sounds individually throughout our lesson. Ok, we can work on the individually in some of our courses, like Pronunciation and Articulation course, which is also possible to get. But in other courses, in speaking courses, may be we do not need to work on the individual sounds, but more on the complete sentence, and Audio Articulation methods can be used, which is based on hearing and repetition, a bit seems like Audiolingual method, but we can get some parts of it and use them in our classes. Especially we can use intonation patterns, the teaching of intonation patterns and repetition of some problematic sounds in sentences, also in words, they may help.

What do you think about the anxiety issue?

Anxiety may be one reason, but I don't think it is one of the important reasons, because when you start talking to somebody the first time may be you felt a bit nervous in this situation, but later on as you focus

on the content of the speech. I don't think that anxiety is something important. This is more than anxiety, you are not accustomed to speak a lot. We are learning English, we are teaching English and our learners learn English, but they do not use it to communicate. They're just learning the rules, may be they need to pass some exams. I don't mean only ELT students, but also the learners in other departments, they just learn them to pass the class, to understand the passage, reading comprehension, to write something, but the main focus is not in oral communication, it is a bit neglected may be. That's why I believe that this is an important reason, and compared to nervousness, this is a bigger problem.

Some previously interviewed teachers said that to get rid of anxiety they give their students the voice recorder for them to record their speech in the comfortable atmosphere. Do you think it is a way?

Sure, why not? Because while the student is talking, you may not be able to concentrate on some points, he may, make some mistakes and he may not be aware of the mistakes, and when the voice is recorded and listened again, it is a good chance to check, to evaluate yourself, because it is easy to evaluate somebody else, but it is not easy to evaluate yourself all the time. Recording voice is a good chance for them.

Have you ever had any problems with the students who are not happy with their mark?

Yes, sometimes it happens. May be they are not aware of our evaluation system or maybe they are accustomed to they way they are evaluated during thir prep classes. Or they are still under the influence of their high school years. May be at that time the evaluation was not focusing much on the pronunciation, it was based on the content more. So, if they can say something, if they are to the point, it is ok. But here we need to deal with stress, intonation, juncture and many different things. As well as using different vocabulary and necessary, relevant vocabulary, ignoring some unnecessary parts, redundancy. So, since they are not aware of the evaluating system, we may have some complex, but when we say them about the importance of such topics, may be when they listen to their voice again they may say:"Oh, what a mistake! I didn't realize that before".

But if the student comes to you with this problem, how do you prefer to deal with it?

You know, sometimes we don't have the chance or we do not record their voice, then I take notes, and i show them the notes, the words, problematic words, may be intonation problems, all written, because we need to have something at hand about their evaluation, after listening we cannot say that I'm giving 90 or 40, this is the decision of mine, and we cannot stop it there. That's why we may need to work on such notes together with the learner so that they are proceeded. And of course here more than procession on such methods, intention is important. May be the attitude towards the learner, the friendly atmosphere, if we can form it in the class, may be they will understand: ok, he is not on the other side, he is with me, he is trying to help me. If they understand, I believe, they won't have important problems. But this is subject matter.

Can you describe the good quality speaking procedure in your opinion?

Now, first of all, in speaking the basic point is communication. If they can code meaning, if they can tell what they are trying to say, it is ok, for the start, later, after breaking the problem, breaking gap about communication, we can pass to some detailed points, just like pronunciation of single words and the intonation, juncture, pitch, all the other things are important. They are complementary to the basic part.

What procedure do you prefer to use in your class?

It is difficult to say a single thing about this, actually, or it is difficult to focus on single approach or method. That's why the general tendency, I believe, that most of the teachers giving the same messages, like I am using eclectic way, this is the easiest way, may be, to answer this question. However, actually, it is right, because sometimes we need to deal with some learners in terms of repetition, we may use audiolingual method. Or such activities, or such exercises, but sometimes we need to focus on conveying the meaning, sometimes we need to focus on the content as well as fluency, it depends may be on the learner's needs, this is the keyword for their purpose. So, it is really difficult to say something, but I believe that plan speech, presentations, impromptu speech – they are all necessary and they should be carefully arranged.

Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 12

What is your experience in teaching speaking?

In fact, I am teaching English for about 24 years, but I taught speaking course 3 or 4 times in my life. It was may be 10 years ago I had a course here "Advanced Speaking Skills" and 15 years ago I had a course "Speaking Skills" in Gaziantep University.

What area do you think is the most problematic in speaking assessment?

I would like to talk first of all about proficiency test. First of all, on what criteria should teachers, should speaking teachers depend on their oral proficiency test. The aim, what you are going to measure, ok? If you are going to measure fluency or accuracy in the speech process, then criteria you are going to consider to measure? Is it easy in the speaking process? Of course not. Are you going to use some checklists? Possible, yes. Observation? Of course. Possible. If you are using checklists, when are you going to complete your checklist? After the speech process or during the speech process, during the communication? When you do it during communication process, then…so, you may miss some of the parts of communication. If you do it after the speech, after the speaking activities, speaking activity, then you may ignore, you may not recall some of the points, ok? Which you think are important. And the rating scale, what kind of rating scale are you going to use? Liket scales are saying that ok, I agree, I totally agree, I am not decided, I disagree, let's say. In the speaking process to me there is not any clear cut distinction, which on the above side of the line…I don't think to say: "Ok, this is good" or "This is bad, below the line". You can not clearly distinguish the speech process. Speaking tests…sometimes are observed here, here in our department. Speaking skill teachers use some written tests, but how can you measure someone's speaking ability in a written test? They say: "Ok, we asked them a kind of discussion question". Observations, may be, recording your students and watching your videotapes after the speaking activity. May be you will decide on what area your students need improving and in what areas they seemed to have improved their speaking abilities.

Interlocutor interaction and rater training…In the speaking process, are you going to measure your students' individual, let's say, the tasks they are individually responsible for perform, or you are going to allocate the group or pair work, projects, you know, group projects or joint projects. Then, how much their contribution to the project – you can not measure it. Sometimes one student is dominant in the group and the others are passive. You may not know it as a language teacher, as a tester. Then what you should do to solve this problem, may be you are going to assign some roles, ok? To the members of the group and

according to the roles they are expecting to take, according to their performance, in regard to their roles, then you can measure them. But to me oral proficiency tests are not easy to construct. What are you going t observe, it depends.

To what extend do materials used in schools focus on speaking proficiency?

For example, pictures trip stories is one of the effective language teaching materials why, because you have a story there and the story may be presented through 6 pictures, very shortly, let's say first 2 pictures are about the introductory part and second 2 pictures are about body part and the last 2 are about conclusion. And you may give them, you may share the pictures with the mixed order with your students. And you may have a chat with your students about the pictures and you may ask your students to correct the pictures, to put them in the correct order and to see the whole story relying on their discussions at the end. And they may create their own story, you know, this could be a good way to help them to express their own opinion, their own feelings. May be they are going to put themselves into the shoes of that story because they have their contextual clues pictures and at the end you may ask them to pretend as if they were directors and act it out, so, pictures can work best, videos, ok? Using video to improve our students' speaking skills, and we have different techniques there. For example, you may nap on the picture, but nap to the sound, and then you have a watcher group, listener group. Listeners only listen to the video and watchers only watch the video. And then you may have your students work in pairs – listener and watcher. One listener, one watcher. They are going to retell the story and they are going to make up the story as a whole. And at the end you may have your students watch the story to see if they share their..ok? Pictures, videos can be use.

What about the text books?

For example, in out department speaking course here, our teacher was using his own course book which was about only intonation patterns, ok? But to me, to me using this book. .."Suprasegmental elements" he was using only these suprasegmental elements in speaking classes. And he was trying to teach the students the intonation patterns, junctures, etc. But a real speaking lesson or speaking skills course should not be focused only on this criteria, you know, ok? In speaking skills there are other things to take into consideration and it is not easy to talk about the topic, what you should do, you should see what your students would like to talk about. May be before your instruction you may give them a kind of survey asking them what topics they are interested in, and they like and they like to talk about in the class…to make a project and to present it orally in the class, ok?, to discuss it with the others.

Do you think that the solution for these problems exists?

The solution, but I prefer late correction techniques in the speaking process, not the immediate ones. Because the immediate correction techniques breaks down the communication process. When students are hang on performing their tasks using the language, ok, orally, and when they are communicating, if you try to correct their errors then it may increase their anxiety level. They may get frightened, anxious, and when their anxiety level increases, it is likely that you may have more problems to deal with. So, the late correction technique is preferable, I think. But in the late correction technique are you going to explicitly deal with the problems or implicitly deal with the problems, that's another point, you know. I prefer implicit correction

How long have you been teaching speaking?

Even though I have a great deal of experience in English language teaching, I must say that I haven't had extensive experience in teaching spoken English. Well, I have taught several speaking courses so far, I taught 2 speaking section courses at a private institution, adults mostly. Then manly with different activities such as role play, simulations and guided conversations. But they are also small group actually, about 10 – 12 people. Later on at university level I taught spoken English, but the institution where I worked aimed to improve students' proficiency level, so that they could pursue their academic studies. So, spoken English was not the major issue, actually, so, it was mostly neglected, that's why. And we don't have a separate slot for the speaking practice per se in class. However, we had some tasks to do each week, so, again, that was a variety of tasks we had ranging from discussions, role plays and simulations again, but I must say that usually learners of Turkish, they are so motivated to speak English, I mean, in general, and we had nice interactive classes with them, and they were really motivated, the majority I mean, to speak English. But the assessment of speaking was really problematic in the institution. Actually, I remember while the spoken component was inserted only 2 or 3 years ago, and we don't have a proper spoken English syllabus, actually, all we did was a series of tasks, ok, throughout the semester, but we don't have a proper assessment, I can say. Well, I remember I was involved in one assessment session and in this session we were working with some rubrics, but these were actually, but as far as I remember, it was analytic rubric, we had different points from 1 – 5 or something. And we had 2 assessors there, but the problem is, the examination time, assigned to each student was short. For instance, well, it was long time ago, it has been 3 years or something, so, I am trying to remember.

Well, we first started with some simple question, we asked them to describe themselves and give information about their family background, educational background, the place they live etc. And then we have more structured questions, such as more debatable ones, and then we had actually at that time, we had 2 examinees at the same time, and they were supposed to be engaged in a dialogue. And then we also asked them to do a kind of mini debate. And that was all, and it was not very objective assessment in my opinion, because there were only 2 of us, even though we recorded the conversation, we were not asked to go back and listen to them again, so, in that class I doubt about objectivity.

What about the personality problem? If 2 students are speaking in pairs, have you noticed that the levels of each other influence them?

Exactly, actually, I mean usually, most often the case that one peer was more talkative or he/she was more proficient than the other one. Some peers try to be dominating, o, trying to control the other speaker. And if the other peer was more talkative, or if he seemed to have higher level of linguistic competence, then the other one just seemed to retreat. So, in that sense, not all the pairs seemed to be functioning properly. So, the balance didn't strike, actually, appropriately. Well, in that sense, in those cases we tried to kind of provide some prompts to the speakers.

What do you think about text books used for teaching speaking? Do they separate enough space for the development of speaking skills?

Well, not really. Actually, if you look at recent editions, I mean, you will apparently see that there is room for speaking activities. There is, I can say, much more emphasis on speaking than ever. But I think that what matters is not the existence of such activities in the book, but the way the teacher handles these, organizes these. Because in the EFL contexts these activities are the first ones to be skipped, I mean, in case of time pressure. Or somehow, even though teachers don't confess that, some teachers, especially in

Turkey in EFL context, they give much more importance to teaching structural elements as opposed to spoken or phonological elements, so, that's why in my opinion, they are neglected or they were not done properly. Or sometimes, I mean, the book doesn't provide any prompts. I mean, the activity was only explained in general and it is up to teachers' experience or kind of creativity, you know, to adapt these activities, so, some of them, I believe, require a lot of adaptation, so, teachers should be really good at materials adaptation. And these are, actually, the most common problems. Sometimes, students may not like the activity, I mean the activity doesn't leave up to the teachers' expectations.

Do you think there exists a solution for these problems?

Well, I am doubtful about that, but it really needs good organization, and I think speaking assessment should be organized within a group, I mean, a mixture of native and non-native teachers, I think. Because both parties should be involved, I think, in the assessment. Because, I mean, it is the common practice to have only native speakers, actually. Or sometimes rubric is a problem. Because in high state tests, for example, so, this issue is already solved, but you know, institution based tests, actually. I really doubt that, I mean, actually, really effective or functional rubrics have been prepared yet. And also may be some descriptors, like, for example, rubrics are fine, I mean, sometimes they are prepared in great detail, but may be putting some videos, showing, reflecting that that may be more useful and might give us more realistic picture. Also, the standardization is a big issue, I think, and those trainees or the assessors should be trained first, actually, because if you are given the rubric and if somebody explains, you know, some time. So, that's not actually very very efficient. I've been through such training, but, you know, it was not systematic enough. So, I didn't benefit much.

Do you think that it is a good way for every teacher to develop a separate rubrics for the separate class he/she knows?

Actually, it depends on your purpose, if you are just assessing speaking locally, for, let's say formative purposes, there's actually a more feasible solution, ok? For the teacher, because, I mean, because teachers are usually very busy people and they know their context much better than the other assessor, so, in that case, I agree with that. But if it is a high state institution, where there is testing that you are concerned with, then I think, that should be more than that. Or maybe what we can do is those teachers who just prepare their own rubric, they can get together, and they can, you know, collaborate, and work on that, and they can create institution based rubric together, but also it may be an expert view by the native speakers which may also be useful.

Can you describe the good quality procedure of the speaking test?

Actually, it depends on the context again, I think it depends on learners' purposes as well, actually. If you are talking about a high state test then the issue would take a different direction. So, because, in this case we need to have a standardized test, and you know, things are pretty much the same for everywhere. But if you are doing it locally, like, if you are testing your own students, your own class, then may be you could have both the...we could also ask students to assess themselves. I think this is also an important point, it is met cognitive aspect. Because if the only once the teachers doing the assessment, then, in my opinion, it wouldn't be much use to the learners. Because may be sharing the rubric with them, may be trying to create, you know, having at least some kind of involvement in the creation of the rubric or if it is not possible, sharing with the rubric with the students. And also guiding them how, for example, to assess themselves. That should also be a part of the picture, I think. And there should be the variety of tasks, but they should be in line with the learners' purpose of learning English, for example. İ think the guidelines

we should observe is that the test shouldn't have a negative backwash effect on the learning process, or they shouldn't discourage students, ok, from speaking. The test that you prepare should be in line with the activity that you do in class, actually. That's one thing, and there should also be given to the realistic purposes, for example, if your training students, who would be, let's say, would work in the tourism sector, for example, so, the examples, the conversations you chose, should just reflect that context (...) And possibly you should have some audiotaping and some videotaping and also, that should be in way, that should be monitoring students in the learning process, for example, students should also be given some duties, for example, let's say, a favorite TV channel or their favorite serial, and may be they could take some notes, or they just could be ostentatious of different uses of different ways of pronunciation, for example, differences in pronunciation, ok, they might be asked to take these instances or they may be asked to read something and record it. And then, there are also some speech detection programs, like PRAT, for example, so, you just repeat the utterance and then they give you feedback, ok, such programs could also be incorporated to the listening and speaking skills program. So, this way students can also assess themselves. Because I insist that should be the part of the picture.

Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 14

How long have you been teaching speaking?

I've been teaching in this department for the last 10 years, and during 10 years I have taught the speaking course, one term or the other. That could be the first year courses, now, for example, I am teaching 218 Public Speaking course, so, I do it a lot, I do it all the time, I teach speaking.

What areas do you think are the most problematic in speaking assessment?

My idea of assessment is not a one way kind of thing where I assess and they are being assessed, so, what I try to make them do is to assess each other as well as themselves. So, when I set up any task as a requirement for any speaking course, I make sure that one of them is a task where they are graded by me, in some others they receive grading from some other peers in the classroom. But the most problematic thing for our learners is for them to do self-assessment, they have either very high ideas about themselves, or very low opinions about their ability. So, reflection in the area of speaking assessment I don't think works unless you want them videotape their own speaking performances and then talk on that. If you are just ask them to say: "Assess yourself on one of these rubrics, how well you did and participation", and you'll get very superficial results if you do that. So, they need to back up their opinions about themselves with real actual data again coming from themselves. That's what I think. So, the most problematic bit is for them getting them to notice what they are not doing right. The second phase is even thought, you know, they realize, they cannot correct it. So, as the assessor, what are you going to be grading, are you going to be grading their awareness? You know they know that they cannot pronounce it. Or performance? A lot of time, 80 percent of the time, however many times you are talking about certain pronunciation of words, it is not going to happen for them. Unfortunately, they will not be able to perform it as accurately as you want them to. This is due to, you know, the background education, and the fact that we're not the second language speaking community, it is a foreign language for us, so, they don't have enough exposure outside the classroom.

Do you think that the students' opinion of their own speaking is always better than the teachers' one?

Exactly, because they cannot differentiate as well as you can between the fluency and accurate speech, unfortunately. So, even though you provide them a very good examples, you need to do very detailed analysis, work in the classroom, so that, you know, they can see the difference. It is not enough to show the "sheep" or "ship", the difference of the "I" sound, because this is just a very minute detail, a very minute speaking skill. So, they need to really see it in the more global fashion to notice the big discrepancy between what we want them to do and what they do in reality.

What do you think about the materials for development of speaking skills?

They were not so helpful in the beginning of my career, because they weren't really backed up with a lot of audiovisual materials, I can show you a few of them here. A 500 page book about speaking skill without any video material won't mean anything at all. The medium is reading. That's why in the later years of my career I've looked at those books that have the domain, that has video back up. And I found a pretty good one about presentation skills, I use the Lucas 2007 book "The art of public speaking". It comes with a lot of material where you can show the professional speakers and students speakers giving a speech. Then you can dissect them into little components to show them what makes a successful speaker.

Do you believe some day there will be found a solution for the problems in the area of speaking assessment?

That's impossible, because as many teachers there are, as many students there are, as many problems there are, there is no way that you can show them all at once. But more sound rubrics obviously would help, those rubrics, however, need to be accompanied with good examples so that we can show the students what something on a scale from 1 to 5 means in reality with the real example.

How do you prefer to solve the problems in your speaking class?

When I come across the students who are having hard time, you know, realizing the aims that I set for the course, I start doing one to one raining, rather than you know, speaking to 30 people about their problems, I do student-teacher conferences, when they come to me after class, after presentation and we discuss strengths and the weaknesses of that student and what we can do, so we try to individual problems, rather than, you know, talking to the class about that. This is one to one cooperation, rather than, you know, teacher to all the students cooperation and the interaction in the classroom.

What about the personality problem? If 2 students are speaking in pairs, have you noticed that the levels of each other influence them?

You don't set up a corporative classroom, if your classroom atmosphere is not positive and it is channeled against finding weakness all the time, then I think it will be a problem. But in the beginning of all my classes I actually say: "Don't be offended when someone say: Try to perfectify "this" because we are trying to help each other. All of us have problems as foreign language speakers. If you can the people realize that the classroom atmosphere is a positive one and we are not looking for errors to hunt, but we are looking for the ways to help future language teachers, then I don't think it will be a very big problem. Will be a problem though if the person who assesses the other student doesn't know what that parameter means. So, if you are looking for fluency, if they won't have a very sound knowledge about it in assessing fluency, if they haven't been trained by you, then the feedback they give to other student won't be that beneficial at all. So, it always starts with good training, training your students to become good assessors.

What do you think a good quality speaking procedure is like?

Well, it will obviously depend on why your learners do speaking. For people, who are going to become teachers…in the past we have done final exams in speaking, but nowadays we stopped doing that. Because it is a very unrealistic atmosphere, you call a student into your office, ask them a question, they reply. This is not how the things happen in real life, you know. You have time to think about things, you have option of not speaking. It is very very, you know, it is not authentic at all. What we used to do was to draw a word out of a ball, give it to them and say; "Pronounce it!". And 80 percent of the time they are going to pronounce it correctly because it is an isolation. But as soon as you put this word about the stretch of discourse in their real life, they won't be performing it in the same way. So, it doesn't really give you a good image of what their capacity and capability is. So, I am talking about the things not to do rather than thing to do because there is no, you know, an easy answer for this. But I think speaking skills, test procedures, you need to test things, like this, very productive skill like speaking. Within a listener and speaker transmission stage, you know, being the process itself rather than taking this person out and saying, you know: "What is your favorite book? Talk to me about it for 20 minutes" you know, how TOEFL does it, for example. Because they are doing it to millions of people they are, you know, they… it is justifiable, but for our purposes I think it really lacks reality. So, for me, I am for multiple test procedures, for my classes also I have at least 4 things. I think they all contribute to my general idea of what is speaking, you know, course should be about, and then I grade them differently, they all look into different aspects of speaking.

Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 15

How long have you been teaching speaking?

I only taught 1 year of speaking, I prepared the whole course, the syllabus, and I u=instructed that course for 1 year only, so I am not really an expert on speaking.

What area do you think is the most problematic in speaking assessment?

If you ask me, the "what" question is very important, what to assess in speaking, because there are many issues coming into play when you evaluate or assess students' performance in speaking. As one of your questionnaire questions asked. Should we focus on how student uses grammar? Or his selection of the lexis, or his pitch, tone, intonation or fluency? Or even to what extend your student answers your questions? In a very relative manner. You may ask one thing, the student replies another, you know, the student starts explaining or giving answer. There might be a mismatch between what you want and what your student answers. So, you need to clarify yourself and etc. So, basically, it is a two way process, that is why it is difficult, and also what you instruct formally is very difficult to assess. For, let's say, 1 semester you have focused on intonation, then you can assess that, but you know, within 1 semester you just teach, you know, so to speak, coding code, and intonation and fluency and let's say, what else, politeness, etc. And then you are going to assess that part. However, if your student does too many grammar mistakes or errors, then you know, the student might have used the intonation well, however, still there may be some serious problem. It has way of passing the message to you, so, it is very difficult, as far as I taught that course like in 2002, it has been like 8 year, so, it is what I can remember so far.

What is your solution for the problems you mentioned?

What I mean is that intonation can be one course, or intonation can be a module and students should be taught all aspects of intonation, and they must be provided with adequate intonations and recourses, self study materials. And then, rather more analytical evaluation, or assessment can be provided. So, modules, and students must be aware of the intonation in all aspects of the language they are learning: films, cinema, daily language, internet, charts, face to face conversation, phone conversation, formal presentations, whatever they are involved, whatever they do. So, basically, students must have first of all, accurate criteria of what they are taught and what they are to be assessed, that is my solution.

Do you think the material for teaching speaking are sufficient enough?

I wasn't really prepared for that course, I was not educated as a PhD student to teach specific speaking courses, I did my best and this is how I feel right now. But as I said, I was not empowered by such resources. I was not aware that such recourses existed, this is how I feel right now. But I like those materials and I needed those materials and give it a chance, I would restructure these courses as such.

So, you think that special training is necessary for the teacher, who is going to assess speaking?

And in PhD available courses, students must be asked to or instructor towards create such materials and such syllabi, if you ask me.

What do you think about the rubrics that are provided for all the universities of the country, for example? Do you think teachers should develop his/her rubric?

If you ask me, I haven't seen anyone in this department, who uses standardized rubrics or personally prepares rubrics. I asked students about it and they told me that they have never been given such reports based on rubrics. So, we don't use rubrics here. I myself used rubrics for formal presentations, but they were not rubrics, they were more like checklists. Do the student use that, did the student do that, did the student, you know, the students' eye contact was good, ok, bad. You know, something like that. These are not rubrics, rubrics are more analytics and professional. Of course there should be some standardized national rubrics, but they must be considered contextually as well. So, the context is an important factor because first of all, students' levels, students' interests, students'…just about anything. And your instruction, your syllabus has an effect on specific rubric assessors.

Have you had any conflicts with the students who were not happy with their marks?

Of course, especially pronunciation. I remember getting into arguments with my students. First of all, students were complaining that…Ok, I have a habit of not accepting cruel pronunciation mistakes, such as "dis" instead of "this". If you ask me, you don't have, the teacher doesn't have to pronounce the word "hegemony" correctly, I can understand that. However, most of our prospective teachers become teachers at primary schools and they are supposed to teach the words "this" and "that" , "these" and "those". My students, I am telling my students: "On the very first day you will start teaching "dis", ok, think about this". This is one of the most simple words you have to use and teach and you are teaching it wrong. I don't want to think about the rest. What about two syllabi, three syllabi words, what about intonation, what about fluency, whatever. So, this is a major concern.

Please, describe a good quality speaking test procedure in your opinion.

Naturalness, as long as 2 individuals talk, respond to each other, they understand each other, they do not hurt each other's feeling, they do not cause serious, heartbreaking or confusing, too confusing feeling, as long as they pass their messages across. It is a perfect conversation, a perfect presentation, or a perfect speech act in other words. Assessing this should be based on to what extend the students did that. Carrying out a normal conversation in a meaningful way and in a positive manner – this is what counts, if you ask me. This is the holistic evaluation, assessment of speaking. Of course it should include some sub-units such as to what extend the student used grammar, to what extend the student used intonation. Well, if ask me all in all, just as long as, you know, you receive an answer to a question, and if your student fulfills what is expected from them, that is what counts as a correct assessment, so, that is what should be assessed. Naturalness in conversation, that is all, as in daily life.

Transcript of Semi-structured Interview for Academics - 16

What is the most problematic area in teaching speaking?

The most problematic part in speaking assessment is the subjectivity inherent in such assessment procedures especially student-interlocutor interaction. It is very hard to be consistent in scoring across classes, different condition, time etc.

What do you think about the material for the development of speaking skills?

They emphasize speaking, but the activities are not adequate to encourage students to speak and practice. Even if there are activities, these so called communicative activities do not require real life creative language use. They are generally either imitation or controlled role plays etc. students do not produce real language output.

Do you think there exists a solution for problems in speaking assessment?

Yes, but only to some extent. Training raters and carefully preparing rubrics may help.

How do you prefer to solve the problems in your classroom?

I do not assess my students based on one single occasion, I observe them throughout the semester and give a mark at the end of each lesson and take the average at the end so that I can increase the validity of assessment.

Can you describe the good quality procedure of the speaking test?

It should be rated by multiple raters to reduce subjectivity, different topics should be given to reduce the topic effect, the anxiety level of the person should be decreased by starting with easy personal questions, the tester should be friendly and not threatening.

Transcript of the Semi-Structured Focus Group Interview for Students

Focus Group Interview with Students - 1

What is the speaking lesson like in your class?

We have materials, we have papers in class, and we are studying on them. There are general question on them, what I mean is "Are you doing like this in your daily life?". There are questions, we are answering them, but not..

It is argumentation and disargumentation and we think about them, then our teacher take us to class, one by one.

We start lesson with listening, and then in the situation in listening, there are like that situations, we have some roles and dialogues, in texts, in the sheets teachers gave, and we talk about them.

Can you choose your peer for the dialogue?

No, our teacher assigns.

Are you satisfied with that? Would you like to be with other peer?

Sometimes I… my teacher pair me, person I don't talk generally. In the speaking we don't speak very much…very well. If I chose my peer, maybe I can speak more relaxed, because we have more common things, so, we can speak more.

How does your speaking exam look like?

Before invite for the exam she gives us some sheets, reading passages, there is a text and next to it – argumentation and contrarfgumentation. We think about them and then teacher takes us to the class. And then teacher invites us to class, 5 people. And we answer here, she answers one by one. There are 24 argumentation and 24 disargumentation, contrargumentation, and she can ask what she choose. You should explain it, right? She gives us 10 minutes for 5 people. I think it is a short period because, for example, we can speak in more time, but we get excited in a short period. For example, if we can't speak, find a word, we get excited, we stop and the moments she gave us finished. She passes the other.

What makes you anxious at the lesson? What do you do to calm yourself down?

Time is not enough.

Imagine the situation that you are having a dialogue with one of your classmates and your teacher is listening to your performance. You feel that your classmate's English is much better than yours. How would it make you feel?

It is not important for me he speaks better or worse than me, I just try to speak.

I think it affects all of us, for example, one of our classmates, she is a native speaker and none of us speak with her because we are afraid of speaking.

It is not about us, she is not speaking to us. If she speaks to me, I will speak to she, she comes and goes.

Imagine the situation that you are having a dialogue with one of your classmates and your teacher is listening to your performance. You feel that your classmate's English is much worse than yours. Would you try to help her/him by speaking more etc.?

I will try to help if he or she doesn't know the word, may be, I can help. And say, this word is so.

And i can paraphrase it, if I can do to make him understand.

When you forgot the word suddenly during your speech, what do you do?

We just stop.

Sometimes I say in Turkish.

Our teacher helps. Usually we stop when we don't know the word, we are trying, but generally, we fail. Then the teacher helps us.

Are you usually satisfied with your mark?

I don't think so, because I don't deserve this mark. I can't speak good, well. But I always take it.

Do you know how you should speak for 'excellent'? ,'good'?

Pronunciation, may be, fluency.

Are you provided with the criteria before you speak?

No.

What do you like most of all in your speaking class?

We have conversations with the peers, the teacher asks about the texts that we learned on the lesson or something.

Do you have oral presentations?

Yes.

Do you enjoy them?

Yes.

Individual interview?

No.

Teacher appoints who will speak in discussion?

We feel nervous, because if we want to speak we say something. It is better, I think.

If she doesn't chose, we are not participating then in class.

If you had to change something in speaking class, what would it be?

I would change the materials we study. I would add topics on agenda.

Focus Group Interview with Students - 2

What is the speaking lesson like in your class?

Generally, little questions and small talks will be enough and tests, our exams and speaking courses. We are in a group and speak and your time will be even not a minute. Sometimes, may be…sometimes, may be more than a minute, but approximately.

It is not enough for you to express your thoughts?

Exactly. And teacher's evaluation is not objective. We are given some articles beforehand, so, we have to use the words which are in the article, so, this is a bit hard for us. Because we want to use our words in speaking, but we have to focus on the article, so.

During the course we do not so many exercises for speaking. Generally, we listen. She asks some questions about article, what do you think about this and this, for example. Like this questions, and we answer them.

Do you have role plays in your classroom?

Sometimes, just sometimes. You are at a party, or at shopping mall.

Do you have individual presentations?

Yes, we talked about our parents, something like that.

Are you always satisfied with your marks?

No, if I speak my own words I can speak more fluently, may be, but I have to think about the words in the article. Actually, we memorize the article to be able to use that vocabulary.

What do you like in the speaking procedure in your class and what don't you like?

In class we have much to do listening, after that we talk to our partner about what we just heard. And that all, without speaking.

And we are at the University, we need some more difficult exercises but we are doing high school things. Most of the time we listen, not enough speaking.

I like talking about some topics freely. I have to discuss one topic in the classroom, we all discuss, deeply discuss. Not general truths or our things.

What type of these procedures makes you more nervous?

May be the exams that make us nervous. Others don't affect us that much.

In the exam you have to talk 1 minute, you have to use the words and this makes you nervous, not speaking English.

Subjectivity of the exams really makes me nervous.

If you had the chance to change something in your class, what would you chose?

I would bring some recent topics and made my students discuss about them and make them more relaxed.

I would bring the topics the students are interested in these days.

Not about media or illnesses.

In class we have discussion between two people and they might not be speaking, they might be speaking like a couple words, so may be if we have the whole class to.. the class discussion, class debate, where you prepare the arguments.

Or at least 5 – 10 people.

Does your teacher appoints your peer or you choose him/her?

Randomly. It mostly according to the lists of group.

Your partner will always be the same. And to contact with your partner you have to do it until this semester. So, I couldn't contact with my partner, I couldn't speak.. she couldn't have speak to me. And teacher asked her, and she said she wasn't interested in her course. I wanted to speak, but it was impossible because of …hard.

Imagine the situation that you are having a dialogue with one of your classmates and your teacher is listening to your performance. You feel that your classmate's English is much worse than yours. Does it confuse you?

Of course.

Imagine the situation that you are having a dialogue with one of your classmates and your teacher is listening to your performance. You feel that your classmate's English is much better than yours. Does it confuse you?

Our teacher suggests that don't dominate on her conversation. She always says it.

Do you always agree with the mark given by your teacher?

No.

What would make you understand why you got that mark?

If I said something wrong in the exam or in our course, then I would understand if she gave me a lesser grade, but if I think I've done good and there is, no mistake or anything, I express my opinions, subject, then I don't see any reason why she should give me minus any points.

Focus Group Interview with Students - 3

How does speaking procedure look like?

We do presentations, individual presentations. Last time we recorded our voices.

We did some role plays in class.

Do you have paired interview?

No.

Do you have English exams?

No.

Did she give the mark to you according to your performance in the classroom?

Yes.

What activities did you like most of all?

Role plays. I felt more relaxed because they were friends and they are doing the same thing. I felt more comfortable than when I was doing the oral presentation.

When we are a group of people we feel more relaxed than during the oral presentation.

Because we are linked to each other and we prepared for the role play. Before, so it is better.

May be if we forget something it is not that important because a person that is supposed to say things after us says them anyway and your mistake doesn't take much attention.

Role pays. Preparing before and not being alone…

I like role plays most, but I don't think it is so useful for us because we just memorize the words and teacher doesn't allow us to make our own clauses. So, I think class discussions are best. We can make our sentences,

Listening exercises. We were listening the song and we feel relaxed. I love music, so, I enjoyed it.

I think if we debate in the classroom it would be more helpful for us.

What topics do you like and which don't you like to talk about?

Global warming is terrible.

Movies, music we our favorite topics.

Are you always satisfied with the mark you receive for speaking?

Last semester we had a teacher, we were recording our voices and sending them to a teacher. And for each assignment she was writing comments in addition to the grade. For example, if it is 80 out of 100, for example to me she wrote: "You should work more on the pronunciation that word, but that word was good, but in 4 of my assignments she didn't write anything and she gave a bad mark. So, I think I deserve more.

Imagine the situation that you are having a dialogue with one of your classmates and your teacher is listening to your performance. You feel that your classmate's English is much better than yours. How would it make you feel?

It wouldn't be a problem for me. I can't improve my English.

I would be shy, but I would talk more.

Imagine the situation that you are having a dialogue with one of your classmates and your teacher is listening to your performance. You feel that your classmate's English is much worse than yours. Does it confuse you?

I would make simple sentences, more simple sentences to make him confident.

Focus Group Interview with Students - 4

What is the speaking lesson like in your class?

Firstly, before some weeks ago she gives us some topics and prepare on these topics at home, then after some weeks we came our class for this topic speech. And we give some speech about this topic.

Do you have role pays?

No.

We don't like because we can't find anything to say. So, if we prepare at our home we can spend some time more easily that other one.

Actually, we had advanced speaking lesson and we can speak spontaneously, but we need to prepare for our pronunciation.

What topics do you have to speak about?

About a film. Today we will speak about what should be done before the marriage.

Have you had a situation when your teacher doesn't give you a mark that you deserve in your opinion?

We are at the university, we didn't practice. Our teacher don't like speaking in class. In Turkey everywhere is like that.

Imagine the situation that you are having a dialogue with one of your classmates and your teacher is listening to your performance. You feel that your classmate's English is much worse than yours. Does it confuse you?

Only a few people, I think, fluent in this classroom. For example, me, I am not fluent.

I'll be annoyed because it is like speaking to a wall.

Imagine the situation that you are having a dialogue with one of your classmates and your teacher is listening to your performance. You feel that your classmate's English is much better than yours. Does it confuse you?

I feel anxiety when my partner speaks American English. I can't speak and listen American English.

Focus Group Interview with Students - 5

What do you usually do during your speaking class?

We do some class discussions.

A convenient environment should be provided, and teacher should make students less nervous.

Do you have a speaking test?

Before semester we had, but now we don't have. Every week we have sometimes.

Do you have role plays? - No.

Would you like to have them? - Yes.

Do you have individual presentations? - Yes.

How do you feel about it?

We are nervous.

Are you satisfied with topics teacher gives you to discuss?

They are interesting topics, for example, I talked about UCOS and it was interesting for me also.

As future teachers, can you tell me what would you add to the speaking lesson that you have now?

I would make group discussions.

Are you always happy wit the mark for your marks for speaking?

I the first term I thought that teacher's mark because of my thoughts. I asked him, but he didn't answer.

I think there is not a specific criteria for teachers, our marks depend on them.

I guess our names affect our marks.

Would you like to have criteria of your speech before your speech?

Yes, had it in the prep class last year and I think it was very good for us. We got mark and then we saw the list.

And we know what we should do.

Imagine the situation that you are having a dialogue with one of your classmates and your teacher is listening to your performance. You feel that your classmate's English is much worse than yours. Does it confuse you?

I would try to help him or her. Because if I don't help he or she get low mark.

We should help each other.

If you peer's English is better?

I feel nervous, yeah.

The teacher compares us.

Focus Group Interview with Students - 6

What is the speaking lesson like in your class?

We have oral presentations and some discussions to test our speaking skills.

And we had role plays too.

Which one do you enjoy more?

Role plays is more enjoyable, and drama.

We decide our own dramas for ourselves, not teacher .

I think these role plays improve our pronunciation and not only oral communication. Pronunciation is very important for communication, I think.

What do you like most and what don't you like most in your speaking class?

Actually, I don't like presentations so much, I feel more enjoyment in drama, but in presentation it changes according to subject.

If I work in groups I enjoy generally, and if I know topics which are told in the classroom, and I will be enjoying the topic because I know what I say. If I don't know the topic, I can't say anything about it and I don't enjoy.

I don't like oral presentations because you are alone, everyone in the class watches you, I feel nervous.

As future teachers how would you like to change your speaking class?

This is not about our teacher, but I don't like the teachers who pick students who will talk. I hate this kind of teachers. I have the right to talk, but I decide myself to talk about something, not my teacher.

But that would be useful, for example, cause if someone speaks, like a group of five people, they do speak, for example, others do not, so, how will they get the chance to speak or to improve their English? That's why, ok, then they have to try themselves sometimes cause they have to take the first step by themselves.

I feel so nervous but.

Have you ever thought that your teacher's opinion about your English is worse that it is?

I think I am afraid of making mistakes. I think people judge me when I make mistake.

I think it is related to classroom atmosphere because I know some teachers and I feel relaxed in their class, but sometimes some teachers' lessons I am so nervous.

Imagine the situation that you are having a dialogue with one of your classmates and your teacher is listening to your performance. You feel that your classmate's English is much worse than yours. Does it confuse you?

In that situation we are 2 people making one people because we are presenting together. And if my friend knows English better than me, I will ask her as a favor to speak more than me. Because we are presenting together. And the important thing is to make a nice thing, like, people will like that, that's why we have to, she has to, actually, speak more than me. And I will just, maybe I will just, I will speak, I don't want to say that I will just stand.

There is no competitiveness in this thing because we are presenting together. Two people, we are trying to make 1 person in that situation.

In this way, I will try…before the presentation we will have talk like, I will do this and you will do. And she will listen to me and I will, like, to correct mistakes, that would be like this.

Imagine the situation that you are having a dialogue with one of your classmates and your teacher is listening to your performance. You feel that your classmate's English is much better than yours. Does it confuse you?

I'll try to speak less.