

## Interventionist Dynamic Assessment's Effects on Speaking Skills Testing: Case of ELT Teacher Candidates

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### ABSTRACT

EFL learners' oral proficiency plays an important role in the representation of their productive skills. Especially, English language learners' speaking skills are considered as main reflection of their proficiency in foreign languages. Speaking in L2 is accepted as a vital competence for language teachers as well, who are going to teach the target language in the future. The related literature puts an emphasis on the assessment of speaking skills utilizing various techniques. However, the number of research studies, examining how dynamic assessment (DA), especially the interventionist model of dynamic assessment, can be utilized as a technique in the assessment of L2 speaking performance, is relatively limited. Thus, the main aims of the current research study are both to investigate the efficacy of the interventionist model of DA in the assessment of student teachers' speaking skills performance and to figure out their attitudes towards dynamic assessment. The participants of the current research were 29 student teachers, enrolled in the English Language Teaching Department of a state university in Turkey. To collect the quantitative data questionnaire survey was adopted and utilized as a checklist due to the number of the participants. On the other hand, to collect the qualitative data, a written structured interview was administered to the participants. The data were analyzed with the SPSS package and through the content analysis method. The findings of the current research revealed that participants were satisfied with the interventionist model and developed positive attitudes towards this assessment type. The participants stated that the interventionist dynamic assessment provided an authentic, creative and relaxing atmosphere, which decreased the level of their speaking anxiety. It can be asserted that DA can be administered to test foreign language speaking performance in language classrooms. Additionally, it was concluded that the interventionist model sustained and boosted the student teachers' oral skills achievement.

### INTRODUCTION

The 21<sup>st</sup> century skills consist of critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, information literacy, media literacy, technology literacy, flexibility, leadership, initiative, productivity, and social skills. At least seven skills require an advanced level of speaking skills mastery and proficiency. In short, speaking skills proficiency plays a crucial role in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. "English as lingua franca" makes the English language speaking indispensable part of these skills as well. With the advent of communicative language teaching, speaking skills development is more emphasized in language classrooms. There are various definitions of speaking skills in the related literature. However, in the broad term, speaking skills include an interactive process in which learners produce, receive and process information while conveying and constructing the meaning (Brown, 1994). The definition suggests that speaking is an interactive and live process in terms of physical and mental states. Another explanation is made by Richards (2006) about speaking skills process and it was defined as the speaker's use of natural language in meaningful interaction.

Additionally, Richard (2006) puts emphasis on comprehensible ongoing interaction between interlocutors despite some limitations of speakers' communicative competence.

In language teaching, speaking skills assessment process is considered as very complicated and intricate in terms of both assessors and assesses (O'Sullivan, 2006). For this reason, a number of scoring instruments are used for the evaluation of students' oral performances such as the use of checklists and two dominant types of rubrics which are analytic and holistic. Standardized and dynamic assessments are seen as a dichotomy in language pedagogy similar to the field of education. In standardized assessment (SA), which is also known as traditional assessment, learners are provided with a set of items, tasks or problems and expected to complete without any feedback or support (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002). On the other hand, in dynamic assessment (DA) learners receive intervention and interaction, which are in the form of feedback, during the assessment (Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2002). Increasingly, as an alternative or supplement to standardized testing, interest in classroom

assessment has been on the increase (Leung, 2005; Leung & Mohan, 2004). Dynamic assessment as one of the major type of classroom assessment has different models. Interactionist and interventionist models draw more attention to scholar than other models of DA. One of the main differences between interactionist mediations, by way of differentiation from interventionist approaches, is the examiner's preparation as well as the examiner's understanding of the learner's ZPD, they are the mediations devised at the moment (Lantolf & Poehner, 2004). The main features of dynamic assessment are described by Lidz as follows (1991):

- 1) The assessor should actively work to facilitate learning and induce active participation during the assessment process,
- 2) The assessment should focus on process rather than product – in this case, the process of metacognition, and
- 3) The assessment should produce information about learner modifiability and the means by which change is best accomplished.

As it was mentioned before, the standardized test does not include mediation, scaffolding, peers' and teacher's feedback and collaboration, these tests cause stress on English language learners, especially in speaking situations. Horwitz et al. (1986), one of the first scholars dealing with the anxiety concept in language learning, investigated the speaking anxiety in relation to foreign language anxiety which is defined as "a distinct complex of self perceptions, feelings and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process" (p.127). The related research studies showed that speaking anxiety causes stress, unintended performance and sometimes failure among language learners (Yahya, 2013; Sadighi & Dastpak, 2017). Similar findings have been reached by Liu (2007), it was found that the majority of the students felt somewhat anxious about oral English tests and that the more proficient students tended to be less anxious. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the interventionist dynamic assessment's effect on the English language teacher candidates' speaking skills development and assessment. The number of research studies based on the implementation of an interventionist dynamic assessment to assess speaking skills of Turkish EFL learners and their attitudes towards interventionist dynamic assessment is very limited. For this reason, the lack of research studies, shedding light on the issue, made the current study more precious. Thus, the prospective teachers of English were selected as the participants of the present research study within which the dynamic assessment provides both instruction and assessment in an interwoven way. The current study is designed to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent does DA assist EFL undergraduate students to improve their speaking skills?
2. What are the students' attitudes toward DA?

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are certain studies exploring the dynamic assessment's effect on foreign language learners' speaking skills development and assessment in the field of language pedagogy.

Both qualitative and quantitative research have been carried out to investigate whether the dynamic assessment is an effective way for both instruction and assessment of speaking skills which are productive and accepted as one of the challenging language skills. This part of the study provides a deeper understanding of the related research of dynamic assessment's interactionist and interventionist models. A research study carried out by Farokhipours (2016) attempted to investigate both models' effects on intermediate learners' speaking skills development. The participants were five intermediate language learners of English. The results showed that interactionist DA helped the learners to gain mastery over speaking problems and perform better through negotiated interaction with the teacher. Another research was carried out by Ahmadi Safa et al. (2015). 40 advanced level English language learners participated in their study. Three groups were created and each group was exposed to a different type of assessment. One group was instructed and assessed with the interactionist model of DA, another group was exposed to the interventionist model of DA and the third group was assessed with the non-dynamic assessment. The results of the study showed that (a) the interactionist model of DA had a statistically significant positive effect on Iranian EFL learners' speaking ability; (b) the interventionist model of DA had a statistically significant positive effect on Iranian EFL learners' speaking ability. Furthermore, the results of ANCOVA indicated that the three groups, namely interactionist DA, interventionist DA, and non-DA, had statistically significant effects on Iranian EFL learners' speaking ability with the interactionist DA group outperforming. The findings showed that dynamic assessment models were more effective than the traditional speaking skills assessment when three types of assessment were compared. Another research was carried out by Ebadi and Asakereh (2017). They investigated the case of a beginner and an advanced learner of English in terms of their speaking skills. The participants narrated a set of picture stories, and while narrating, they received mediation based on their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The researchers utilized micro genetic, thematic analysis and private speech to identify any possible changes in participants' cognition development and self-regulation abilities. The findings revealed a significant development in the participants' cognition and their movement toward further self-regulation. Furthermore, the results of the thematic analysis of unstructured interviews showed their satisfaction with DA. One other research was carried out by Hill and Sabet (2009). They investigated the impact of DA on language learners' speaking skills. The results showed that DA could contribute to the development of language learners' speaking skills and cognition. In addition, it was found that DA was an optimal way of assessing the development of language learners' speaking skills. Yılmaz Yakışık and Çakır (2017) investigated the dynamic assessment's effect on ELT students of a well-known state university in Turkey. Their experimental study included both qualitative and quantitative findings. The results showed significance differences in the performances of control and experimental groups after the treatment program implemented for the latter group. Another research was carried out by Weisgerber (2015) about the role of dynamic

assessment (DA) in improving the oral proficiency skills of English-as-an-additional-language learners. In this exploratory study, the researcher focused specifically on speaking test scores and the use of language learner strategies. Seven participants were tested through IELTS speaking part with DA and non-DA tests. In terms of test scores, the results showed no holistic differences but did show differences in fluency, grammatical range, and lexical resource scores. The scores for grammatical range and lexical resource were higher in DA, while scores for fluency were higher in standardized assessment. The related literature showed that dynamic assessment was researched with different samples in terms of speaking skills development. Overall interpretation for the above-mentioned studies is that different model of DA has a significant impact on participants' speaking skills. However, it might be suggested that there is a bulk of research addressing DA based reading, writing and listening skills it seems DA has not sufficiently been employed to enhance language learners' speaking skills (Ebadi & Asakereh, 2017). However, related research indicated that research on interactionist dynamic assessment' effects on student teachers of English have not been investigated and there is a gap in this issue.

## METHODOLOGY

The current study consisted of both qualitative and quantitative components in which participants were chosen using the convenience sampling technique. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) was used to investigate students' language anxiety concerning communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1991). Due to the limitation of participant, questionnaire was turned into a checklist with three items which are 'agree', 'disagree' and 'undecided'. Additionally, a written structured interview with six open-ended questions was utilized at the end of the interventionist dynamic assessment process. Totally, 29 English language teacher candidates, who were the first graders enrolled in the Department of English Language Teaching of a state university in Turkey, participated in the data collection process. Their ages varied from 19 to 21 and they all were supposed to have the same educational background. 20 of the participants were females and 9 of them were males. Three assessors, the teachers of the students and experts of the field, participated in the data collection process. Quantitative data were analyzed with the SPSS package and qualitative data were analyzed through the content analysis method. Themes and codes were created and used while analyzing the qualitative data collected through the interviews.

## Procedure and Materials

Before the administration of the interventionist model, a setting was designed suitably for the assessment procedure. The process took place in the office of an assessor. Totally, 11 tasks and speaking techniques were chosen and printed in colored papers to draw students' attention and to direct them during the assessment. The students were grouped as four or five and each group was supposed to watch a video before

the test. Related vocabulary was pre-prepared and written on the keywords chart and presented to the students before their performance. By this way, meaningful background information was provided before their speaking skills performance was assessed. After watching the video, 10 minutes was allotted to let them think about the tasks. Totally, seven videos were utilized for groups.

## Speaking Aids

Speaking aids were utilized to foster student's speaking performance, to provide background information about the topic and to decrease the level of anxiety. Students were allowed to use dictionaries before the oral performance to check words which were not included in the keyword chart. As it was mentioned in the procedure and material section, speaking tasks were utilized to guide students about shaping their performance. These tasks included 'conduct an interview', 'support an opinion with reasons', 'ask a question', 'give an oral report', 'create a story', 'do a role play', 'answer to questions', 'look and describe', 'explain and give examples', and 'summarize'. Totally, seven videos were used before the assessment process. The topics of videos were farming, nature, buildings, shopping, family, food and cooking and festivals. Another speaking aid was the keyword chart which presented related and mostly used words in the chosen topic.

## Preparation Phase for Oral Exam

This phase was designed for specific purposes that were suitable for the nature of dynamic assessment. By providing speaking aids, students were able to organize their ideas about the given topic. In high stake tests, this kind of preparation phase does not exist and students are expected to speak without preparation. Generally, this results in stress and anxiety among EFL learners. However, the preparation phase makes students ready for the performance, decreases their exam anxiety level and provides an opportunity to organize and think about the tasks and topics. As dynamic assessment is accepted as an assessment type which includes both assessment and learning, the preparation phase fosters students' language learning process. The videos provided meaningful context and new vocabularies, grammar structures, pronunciation and useful information for speaking tasks. By this way, students' language learning could be supported indirectly and incidentally. Another important aspect of the preparation phase was its facilitating effects on students' foreign language speaking performance. Thus, this phase provided the necessary meaningful content and vocabulary to students.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Speaking exam checklist included 26 items with three options which were "yes", "no" and "undecided". These items were adapted from the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1991). The items were grouped in three subcategories during the analysis of data. These categories are "speaking anxiety when assessed individually in high stake tests", "assessment of speaking

as a part of a group in interventionist dynamic assessment (IDA)" and "speaking aids utilized in interventionist dynamic assessment (IDA)". The first category included four items and the results were presented in Table 1.

The checklist included four items related to the first category. These items were 1, 6, 4 and 24. As the results showed, "when I am alone in the speaking exam, I feel nervous" has the highest mean score among other items with 2.07. The results indicate that English language teacher candidates as English language learners feel nervous and anxious when their oral performance is tested individually. Nearly all of the students expressed being alone in the assessment process causes stress and anxiety. The fourth item of the category which is "I prefer to take an individual speaking exam" has the lowest mean score with 1.54, which means that EFL learners feel more comfortable in oral examinations when they are part of a group. The second category is determined as "assessment of speaking as a part of a group in interventionist dynamic assessment (IDA)". The results for the second category are provided in Table 2.

The second category included 11 items which questioned whether students feel comfortable or not when they are assessed in a group. Additionally, the items questioned whether they feel relaxed and less self-concerned when they are assessed in interventionist dynamic assessment (IDA). The first item "when I speak as a part of a group in the speaking exam, I feel comfortable" has the highest mean score with 2.76 that confirmed previous subcategories' results. Thus, the participants expressed that being alone during speaking tests made them feel more nervous and anxious. This result suggests that they feel more secure when they speak as a part of a group. Additionally, each group was expected to accomplish a given task related to the given topic instead of just speaking. Moreover, the students thought that taking an oral exam with their classmates made them more fluent and they were satisfied with being a part of a group. However, few of the students stated that they had had less chance to speak in the exam when they were a member of the group. Another finding of the second subcategory was that the students felt less anxious and nervous when they spoke with their classmates instead of speaking to assessors. Items 5, 3 and 9 indicate that result. It was also found that the students easily concentrated on the topic and task in the interventionist dynamic assessment process because they were a part of a group and the tasks were provided before the examination. Item 19, which focused on the issue, has the lowest score with 1.24. The third category is determined as "speaking aids utilized in interventionist dynamic assessment (IDA)" which included eleven items. The items are related to the preparation phase and its effectiveness. In other words, speaking aids' effect was examined through these items. The results for the last category are displayed in Table 3.

The results indicate that nearly all of the participants think that speaking aids affected their speaking performance in a positive way. Item 11, which is "speaking aids (videos, task guide and key vocabulary chart) make easier to speak in oral exam", has the highest mean score with 2.97. In addition, the students thought that speaking aids contributed to their fluency during the oral performance in English. Thus,

they saw the tasks on the wall as well as had the keyword charts during their performance. Another result, which the mean score of item 18 suggests, was that each student decided on the task as a group member and collaboratively talked about the theme. This item has one of the highest scores with 2.83. It was also found that nearly all of the students found speaking aids useful and effective in facilitating their speaking performance. Items 13, 12, 16, and 23 have lower mean scores when they are compared with other items of the category. This result indicates that students are highly satisfied with speaking aids.

**Table 1.** Results for speaking anxiety when assessed individually in high stake tests

Item		N	M	SD
1	When I am alone in the speaking exam, I feel nervous.	29	2,07	,998
6	When I am alone in the speaking exam, I feel anxious.	29	2,04	,999
4	When I am alone in the speaking exam, I feel comfortable.	29	1,83	,928
24	I prefer to take an individual speaking exam.	29	1,54	,838

**Table 2.** Results for assessment of speaking as a part of a group in interventionist dynamic assessment (IDA)

Item		N	M	SD
2	When I speak as a part of a group in the speaking exam, I feel comfortable.	29	2,76	,636
10	Because of my classmates' presence in the speaking exam, I feel eager to speak as a group.	29	2,76	,636
25	I prefer to take a group speaking exam.	29	2,66	,721
20	My group friends and I speak fluently thanks to group speaking.	28	2,57	,742
7	Speaking as a group gives more chance to speak freely in the speaking exam.	29	2,48	,871
21	I feel less anxious in the speaking exam if I am not the only person speaking.	29	2,41	,867
8	Some students speak more than others in the group speaking exam.	29	2,03	,865
5	When I speak as a part of a group in the speaking exam, I feel anxious.	29	1,45	,783
3	When I speak as a part of a group in the oral exam, I feel nervous.	28	1,39	,685
9	Speaking as a group makes me shy because of my classmates' presence in the oral exam.	29	1,31	,660
19	I can't concentrate on the group's speaking topic because of my group friends.	29	1,24	,636

**Table 3.** Results for speaking aids utilized in interventionist dynamic assessment (IDA)

Item	N	M	SD
11 Speaking aids (videos, task guide and key vocabulary chart) make easier to speak in the oral exam.	29	2,97	,186
15 I can easily continue to speak thanks to speaking aids.	29	2,86	,441
14 Speaking aids help me to organize my ideas about the exam topic.	29	2,83	,539
18 I can use speaking aids effectively thanks to my group friends.	29	2,83	,539
26 Speaking aids facilitate speaking exam process when I take an oral exam with my classmates.	29	2,83	,539
22 I am more willing to speak in the speaking exam when speaking aids are included in the exam.	29	2,72	,649
17 I can easily speak without speaking aids.	28	1,79	,787
13 Speaking aids are useless.	29	1,31	,712
12 Speaking aids make me confused.	29	1,21	,559
16 I forget what I say because of speaking aids.	29	1,21	,559
23 Speaking aids do not help me in the speaking exam.	29	1,14	,441

The qualitative data were collected through written structure interview which had six open-ended questions as well. The first and second questions aimed to find the reasons for students' anxiety in speaking exams and whether they are afraid of making mistakes during their oral performance. Additionally, these two questions investigated students' solutions towards their anxiety of making mistakes in speaking exams. The third question was asked to find out participants' ideas about interventionist dynamic assessment which had been administered as a new assessment type for them. The fourth question was asked to make students a comparison between traditional speaking assessment exams and interventionist dynamic assessment exam. The fifth question was aimed at investigating the students' suggestions about the administration of the interventionist dynamic assessment. Thus, the whole testing process is new for them and it was different from the previous speaking exams. The last interview question was asked to figure out the new assessment's effects on students' anxiety and to understand students' attitudes towards it.

The first question was "What are the main factors that worry you in English speaking exam?" Students' answers varied in terms of content knowledge, psychological conditions and academic achievement.

The reasons for students' anxiety in speaking exams are divided into above mentioned three categories. The results for the first questions and few of students' responses are provided below:

1. Reasons related to content knowledge
  - a) anxiety about making mistakes in the grammatical structure of utterances (MGS- 6 repetitions)

- b) possibility of forgetting planned sentences (FS-9 repetitions)
- c) possibility of forgetting, not remembering or unknowing necessary vocabularies (FV- 11 repetitions)
- d) insufficient knowledge about the topic and misunderstanding (IKT- 14 repetitions)
2. Reasons related to psychological factors
  - a) the first encounter with the speaking assessment during their education (FE- 1 repetition)
  - b) being alone in speaking exam (BA- 1 repetition)
  - c) the existence of assessors in the speaking exam (EA- 2 repetitions)
  - d) inability to lessen anxiety (ILA- 8 repetitions)
3. Reasons related to academic achievement
  - a) Grading (G- 2 repetitions). Few students expressed that being graded during the speaking exam causes stress and anxiety on them. They stated that the exams will affect their academic achievement. Some students' responses are provided below:

Students' responses:

- S1. In the beginning, I don't know what I am going to say and I don't remember the vocabularies. There are lots of things in my head that I want to tell but I couldn't tell because of excitement. I want to talk but when I stop and can't remember the things that I am going to say, I feel as if I can't talk anymore.
- S2. I have worries about making incorrect sentences during the speaking exam. Moreover, I couldn't express my ideas properly.
- S3. Generally, I feel anxious when there are foreign people around me during my speech in English. There are teachers in the speaking exam that make me worried.
- S4. The first reason which makes me anxious is that I can't lessen my anxiety and I am a bit obsessive about the correct grammatical structure of my sentences during speaking.
- S5. I worried about speaking topics. If I had no idea about it, I couldn't say even a sentence.

The second question was about whether the idea of making mistakes makes them anxious and what students' solutions to their anxiety are. The question was 'does the thought of making mistakes in the English speaking exam worry you? What are your solutions to reduce these concerns?' Nearly all of the participants have worries about making mistakes in their speaking performance. Just a few students don't have this kind of worries, who are more competent students in terms of speaking skills. Students' responses are coded and provided below:

1. Thought of making mistakes in speaking exam causing anxiety (23 repetitions)
 

Students' solutions;

  - Learning more vocabulary (2 repetitions)
  - More practice in speaking (10 repetitions)
  - Group talk in an oral exam (5 repetitions)
  - Trying to relax and self-praise (4 repetitions)
  - Mistakes are inevitable, we learn from mistakes (5 repetitions)
- S1. Yes, making mistakes during my speech in English makes me anxious and worried. I am focusing on my

clothes or hands to distract my attention and relax. My solution is making more speaking practice. Moreover, I think that speaking with mistakes is better than not speaking. I am trying to remember this.

- S2. Generally, making mistakes worries me but this type of speaking exam decreased my fears.
- S3. Yes, it does a lot. I play with my pen to lessen my anxiety and it makes me feel relax.
- S4. I think making mistakes is not an obstacle to speaking. I don't worry about mistakes because we need mistakes to speak better.

Students expressed that the idea of making mistakes in oral proficiency exam causes stress on them. During the examination, it is observed that students needed extra time for planning and thinking about their ideas and their relationship with the given topic. The mediation and facilitating questions helped students to organize their ideas in a planned way.

The third question was asked to find out participants' ideas about interventionist dynamic assessment which had been administered as a new assessment type for them. The third question was 'what do you think about the new speaking exam'. The fourth question was asked to make students a comparison between traditional speaking assessment exams and interventionist dynamic assessment exam. The fourth question was 'when you compare previous speaking exam and the new speaking exam, what are positive and negative sides of the new one?' Results for these questions are provided below:

1. Positive attitudes towards interventionist dynamic assessment as a new assessment type of speaking exam (PA- 38 repetitions)
  2. Positive attitudes due to classmates' collaboration or group performance in speaking exam (PC- 33 repetitions)
  3. Positive attitudes due to speaking aids in speaking exam (PM- 13 repetitions)
  4. Positive attitudes because of time to think before speaking in group exam (TTG- 5 repetitions)
  5. Negative attitudes because of less time to talk in the group exam (LTG- 3 repetitions).
- S1. I think this exam type is better than the previous speaking exams for me. In previous exams, I was alone and didn't know how to continue my speech when I got stuck. However, I believe that I spoke fluently with the help of my classmates in this new type of speaking exam.
- S2. I like the new exam type a lot. I was alone in the previous exam but this exam type made me feel relax and the atmosphere was cozy.
- S3. In my opinion group examination with extra materials is effective than the individual speaking exam. When we are tested as a group, one student speaks and others have time to think about their ideas and easily organize their speech.
- S4. New speaking exam made me feel very comfortable because group speaking assessment decreased my anxiety and I could easily express my ideas. For this reason, the group speaking test is more effective and helpful than the individual test.
- S5. It was quite enjoyable and teachers can realize that students are really capable of doing great things.

S6. I really enjoyed the new speaking exam because we talked in a more productive way. When I was alone in the speaking exam this makes me feel more anxious and nervous. However, other students helped each other and complete the missing part in the new exam.

Students' responses to this question revealed that nearly all of the students prefer interventionist dynamic assessment to static tests. Thus, the participants had been tested with a static test before the research in their preparatory classroom and previous speaking exams. Students had been tested alone in a given topic and time. They made a comparison between these two types of exams and concluded that the new model is more effective and informative for them.

The fifth question was 'what changes should be made in the new speaking exam? Write with reasons'. Findings for the fifth question revealed that 21 participants of total participants are satisfied with the interventionist dynamic assessment for speaking skills. Additionally, they are quite pleased with the speaking aids, group testing and testing environment. Other 8 participants mentioned about time constraints in the exam. Thus, each group was limited to 40 minutes for their oral performance. The groups used 15 minutes for preparation phase before their speaking exam by preparing with speaking aids. Few students suggested that assessors' number should be decreased. One of the assessors was their teacher for their oral communication skills teacher. Others were teachers at the same department which is ELT at a state university. It is figured out that two more competent students prefer individual assessment with interventionist dynamic assessment model for speaking exams. Some of the students' responses are provided below:

- S1. I think this new speaking exam is perfect because there is a video and we speak as a group. Teachers help and guide us when we have difficulty in our speaking performance. We can talk and discuss videos. Group assessment didn't make me anxious. On the contrary, it decreased my excitement.
- S2. It was a good speaking exam style. I don't have an idea about changes.
- S3. We could have more time to think about our tasks but except this everything was fine.
- S4. There was nothing negative. I felt quite relaxed.

The last question was 'what are the effects of interventionist dynamic assessment on your anxiety?' Nearly all of the participants answered that they felt not anxious due to interventionist dynamic assessment. Additionally, they stated that group assessment which included their classmates made them feel safe, relaxed and good. Few of students emphasized that students didn't use exam duration equally during their oral performance. However, they are satisfied with the new exam model. Some of the students' responses are provided below;

- S1. Before the speaking exam, I had thought that I was going to have a heart attack. Even while watching the video I was hopeless but I felt quite relaxed after I started to speak. When I stopped other group members started to talk and this phase I prepared my sentences in my mind. I expressed my ideas better.
- S2. Generally, I have worries about speaking exams. The existence of group members could have made me feel bad

if I hadn't talked well but I did not think like that. On the contrary, they helped me during the speaking exam. We helped each other about vocabulary remembering.

- S3. It decreased my anxiety. Teachers lead us about the task and talked like our friends. Even they made jokes and there was not an exam atmosphere.

The overall results suggest that participants are satisfied with the interventionist model of dynamic assessment. Various parts played an important role to decrease students' speaking anxiety level and made them feel relaxed, comfortable and safe during the speaking exam. Additionally, participants stated that IDA (interventionist model of dynamic assessment) is more effective for group assessment which is a useful way to test students' speaking performance. A few of the participants suggested that group members can be decreased to two students. Few of the participants complained about the number of assessors. However, at least two assessors are required to provide inter-rater reliability for speaking assessment. Siwathaworn and Wudthayagorn (2018) suggested that competent and capable students who would get stuck in test due to affective and emotional can be equipped with direct instruction, effective strategies and guided practice. So, they can handle difficulties of test anxiety. As it is known that mediation is one of the vital components of dynamic assessment, which includes reminders, leading questions, hints, directing student's attention to the task. Additionally, students' active collaboration with assessors who act as mediators in the test is another important issue (Siwathaworn and Wudthayagorn, 2018). Mediation took place in two parts of oral assessment in current research. Before the test began, students had been encouraged to use hints, speaking aids, and tasks to prepare their collaborative group performance in an organized and planned way. Mediation was provided through both materials and guidance by assessors. Leading and directing questions were provided in the preparation phase. During the speaking test, assessors asked leading questions and provided some directions when students got stuck in speaking. As the results suggest students are satisfied with the test atmosphere, interventionist dynamic assessment and collaborative group assessment. Another finding of the current research is that students who have poor performance in terms of speaking skills in classrooms performed better than their general speaking performance. It can be related that mediation is not provided in a given task during lectures. Students are expected to complete the task individually or with his/her peers. However, students had mediation in two different phases and completed the task with at least three group members who were his/her classmates. Dynamic assessment focuses on individual empowerment during the assessment that each student are supported and mediated for better performance. In the current research, empowerment was the core of the application and it provided with various components. In speaking situations, foreign language learners are often anxious about their ability and performance in a foreign language especially when they are tested (Karatas et al. 2016). Additionally, foreign language anxiety can have a negative impact on learners' performance (Saito & Samimy, 1996). In current research interview questions investigated students' attitudes towards speaking exam

and its relation with their anxiety. Nearly all of the students mentioned that speaking exams causes stress, anxiety and negative emotions in students. They also stated that these negative feelings effects directly or indirectly students' oral performance during the assessment. On the other hand, the interventionist dynamic assessment provided more positive influences on students towards speaking tests. This result is elicited students' responses to question three, four, five and six of the interview.

## CONCLUSION

Speaking skill is perceived as one of the challenging skill in the foreign language learning process and it is generally neglected in language classrooms by teachers and students due to various factors (Çetin Koroğlu & Çakır, 2017). Students' speaking ability is affected by physical, psychological and environmental factor, and these factors affect students' oral performance positively or negatively (Çetin Koroğlu & Utku, 2018). In traditional tests of speaking skills, the student is expected to talk about a given topic in a given time. Assessors evaluate student's speaking skills using pre-prepared criteria. The related research studies suggest that standard speaking skills assessment test causes anxiety among foreign language learners during the assessment (Liu, 2007; Gao, 2010; Zhang & Liu, 2013; Wolf & Smith, 1995; Young, 1991). Another drawback of the static test is to assume that all the students have the same educational background and experiences, which is proved far from the truth in many settings (Pohner, 2005). At this point, the dynamic assessment which dated back to its root in Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory provides mediation and scaffolding to language learners and combines assessment and instruction (Vygotsky, 1978). Some of the studies found that integrating assessment into the process of language instruction can be effective (Kinginger, 2002; Lantolf & Poehner, 2004; Poehner, 2005). The same idea was also supported by Anton, 2009; Brown, 2009; Ellis, 2009a and many other researchers and theorists who carried out research studies and studied on new concepts to shed more light on this almost recently born approach. As suggested by Huang (2010), through dynamic assessment, language teachers provide necessary, helpful and meditational tools during assessment, which enable language learners to reveal their actual potential during their speaking performance. In relation to this, language learners are able to take full control of using the target language in the oral examination. Related literature showed that DA and especially IDA have not been fully investigated in foreign language speaking skills' teaching and assessment in Turkish context. For this reason, the current research was designed and carried out to find out effectiveness of interventionist dynamic assessment on student teachers' oral performance in English. Moreover, it was thought that as future teachers of English, implementation of IDA enabled student teachers to develop a new perspective towards speaking skills assessment. Hence, they are going to test and assess their own students' oral performances in the future. For this reason, the present research is quite valuable in terms of its findings and as a teaching tool which reflect the nature of dynamic assessment. The current study revealed that student teachers, having upper-intermediate level of

proficiency in the target language, had speaking anxiety and static test anxiety. In addition, the findings showed that speaking anxiety and static test anxiety affect their oral performance negatively. Another important finding of the study was that interventionist dynamic assessment decreased student teachers' anxiety level, and provided more positive test atmosphere with mediation, facilitating aids and scaffolding during speaking skills assessment. It can be concluded that dynamic assessment can be a more effective and humanistic assessment type for language learners, especially regarding the assessment of productive skills. For further research, other language skills may be investigated with different sample groups.

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