PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS AND PREPARATORY STUDENTS TOWARDS TESTING SPEAKING COMMUNICATIVELY IN THE SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AT PAMUKKALE UNIVERSITY

Devrim HÖL

June, 2010

DENİZLİ

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Pamukkale University
The Institute of Social Sciences
Master of Arts Thesis
English Language Teaching Department

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June, 2010
DENİZLİ

YÜKSEK LİSANS TEZİ ONAY FORMU

İngiliz Dili Eğitimi Anabilim Dalı, İngilizce Öğretmenliği Bilim Dalı öğrencisi DEVRİM HÖL tarafından Yrd. Doç. Dr. Turan Paker yönetiminde hazırlanan "Perceptions and Attitudes of the English Language Instructors and Preparatory Students Towards Testing Speaking Communicatively in the School of Foreign Languages at Pamukkale University" başlıklı tez aşağıdaki jüri üyeleri tarafından 24/06/2010 tarihinde yapılan tez savunma sınavında başarılı bulunmuş ve Yüksek Lisans Tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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Pamukkale Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Yönetim Kurulu'nun 10/08/2010 tarih ve 12/10 sayılı kararıyla onaylanmıştır.

Doç. Dr. Bilal SÖĞÜT
Müdür

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Bu tezin tasarımı, hazırlanması, yürütülmesi, araştırılmalarının yapılması ve bulgularının analizlerinde bilimsel etiğe ve akademik kurallara özenle riayet edildiğini; bu çalışmanın doğrudan birincil ürünü olmayan bulguların, verilerin ve materyallerin bilimsel etiğe uygun olarak kaynak gösterildiğini ve alıntı yapılan çalışmalara atfedildiğini beyan ederim.

İmza   :

Öğrenci Adı Soyadı :   Devrim HÖL

ÖZET

PAMUKKALE ÜNİVERSİTESİ YABANCI DİLLER YÜKSEKOKULU İNGİLİZCE OKUTMANLARININ VE İNGİLİZCE HAZIRLIK ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN İLETİŞİMSEL KONUŞMA SINAVINA İLİŞKİN TUTUM VE ALGILARI

Höl, Devrim

Yüksek Lisans Tezi, İngiliz Dili Eğitimi ABD

Tez Yöneticisi: Yard. Doç. Dr. Turan PAKER

Haziran 2010, 105 Sayfa

Bu çalışmanın amacı Pamukkale Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulunda 2008-2009 Akademik Yılında Hazırlık sınıfı öğrencilerinin konuşma sınavına yönelik tutum ve algılarını, sınav öncesi, sınav sırası ve sınav sonrasındaki deneyimlerini belirlemek, okutmanların sınav sırasında kullanılan sınav ölçeği, materyaller ve konuşma sınavı prosedürü hakkındaki algılarını ortaya çıkarmak ve öğrencilerin konuşma sınavındaki performanslarını belirlemek ve öğrencilerin tutumları hakkında farkındalık sağlamaktır. Çalışmanın evrenini Hazırlık sınıflarında öğrenim görmekte olan Mühendislik, Tıp, İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi gibi farklı fakültelerden 950 öğrenci ve 36 okutman oluşturmaktadır. Orta-alt ve orta düzey olmak üzere 2 seviye grubundan toplam 210 öğrenci ve ingilizce okutmanlarından 32 okutman bu çalışmaya dahil edilmiştir. Veriler konuşma sınavı sonrası öğrencilere ve İngilizce okutmanlarına dağıtılan anketler yoluyla elde edilmiştir. Öğrencilere uygulanan ankette, öğrencilerin konuşma sınavına yönelik algı ve tutumlarını sınav öncesi, sınav sırası ve sınav sonrası olmak üzere değerlendirmeleri istenmiştir. Buna ek olarak, okutmanlara da sınav sırasında kullanılan sınav ölçeği, materyaller ve konuşma sınavı prosedürü hakkında bir anket verilmiştir. Veriler betimsel şekilde analiz edilmiştir. Çalışmanın bulgularına göre, öğrencilerin büyük bir çoğunluğunun daha önce herhangi bir konuşma sınavı deneyimine sahip olmadığı bulunmuştur. Bu tür bir deneyimlerinin bulunmayışı öğrencilerin konuşma sınavına yönelik kaygı düzeylerini artırdığı saptanmıştır. Sınavın bölümleri ve içeriği hakkında önceden bilgi sahibi olmalarına rağmen, bu bilgilendirme onların kaygı düzeylerinin azalmasına herhangi bir katkı sağlamamıştır. Konuşma sınavı, diğer yazılı sınavlarla karşılaştırıldığında en zor sınav olarak görülmektedir. Öğrenciler ayrıca sınav sırasında anlatmak istediklerini tam olarak ifade edemediklerini, ve bu nedenle büyük bir çoğunluğu derslerde daha çok konuşma pratiğine ihtiyaç duyduğunu ifade etmiştir. Diğer yandan, okutmanlar konuşma sınavının uygulaması en zor sınav olduğunu ve sınav sırasında kullanılan ölçeğin yeterli olduğunu belirtmişlerdir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Konuşma Sınavı, Konuşma Sınavı Ölçeği, Tutum, Yeterlik Sınavı, Konuşma Becerisi

ABSTRACT

PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS AND PREPARATORY STUDENTS TOWARDS TESTING SPEAKING COMMUNICATIVELY IN THE SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AT PAMUKKALE UNIVERSITY

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M.A. Thesis in ELT
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June 2010, 105 Pages

This study aims to explore the attitudes and perceptions of the students towards the speaking test and their experiences before during and after the test, and also the attitudes and perceptions of the instructors towards the rubric used, the materials used for the speaking test, and the procedure during the speaking test at Pamukkale University, School of Foreign Languages during 2008-2009 academic year and to yield some ideas to improve the students' speaking performance and get awareness about their perceptions about the test. The participants are 210 students from different faculties such as Engineering, Medicine, and Business Administration and Economics, and 32 instructors of English teaching in preparatory classes. There are two levels ranging from pre-intermediate to intermediate. The data were collected via questionnaires delivered to the students from all levels after the exam. The students were asked to assess their perceptions and attitudes about the speaking test as pre-, while and post-tests. In addition, a questionnaire was also given to the instructors after the test to find out the perceptions towards the rating scale, the materials, and the procedure during the test and the assessment period. The data were analyzed descriptively. In the first part, it was found that most of the students have no experience of any speaking test. The fact that they have had no experience previously makes the level of anxiety higher. Although they had enough information about the components of the test before the exam, it didn't help them to lower the level of anxiety. Speaking test is regarded as the most difficult exam when compared to written exams. Students could not express what they wanted to explain during the exam. After the test, they pointed out that they needed to have oral practice more in the classroom. On the other hand, the instructors claimed that speaking test was the most difficult one to apply and assess, however, the scale was adequate enough to assess the students' oral performance.

Key Words: Speaking Test, Speaking Scale, Attitudes, Proficiency Exam

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

TOEFL   Test of English as a Foreign Language
ACTFL   American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages
TL   Target Language
ELT   English Language Teaching
L2   Second Language
EFL   English as a Foreign Language

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Speaking is one of the most important skills to be tested for the learners learning English as a second language. Speaking skill is being tested in many institutions and universities for the past few decades and although it is one of the most important skill to test, it is also the most challenging part. For this reason, sometimes having the real validity and reliability may be difficult in these kind of tests and may be differences in terms of appliance and assessment. Apart from the other skills to be tested, it necessitates a good organization, companionship and planning. For the test to be fair, reliable and valid, the planning of the test, being in agreement during the test with colleagues and deciding within the same criteria are needed. Owing to the fact that these tests may be tested in a subjective way, there may be some differences among the testers, and thus, it is necessary to use the right and reliable scale. Not only assessing the performance of the candidate, but the preparations before and during the test are vital as well. Naturally, after the performance of the student, the assessing the performance, which must be done with the same criteria and point of view, makes it a 'live' exam as well as the most difficult and problematic exam.

As for the students; oral exams are the most challenging and stressful part of the exams. Both being tested one-by-one or two, and that the ability of the speaking skill can fluctuate due to many factors during the test. Not only the ability for the speaking proficiency and also the other factors such as concentration, confidence during the exam, limited time, the attitudes of the testers during the test are the other important limitations.

As regards to the testers; they may not have enough experience or have no experience about testing speaking and they may have some conflicts with their colleagues to evaluate the test objectively.

As the speaking test is a new type of exam being practiced in our country and it seems the most difficult exam type for both instructors and students. In addition, rather than other skills, it seems as the most problematic exam type which causes anxiety.

Heaton (2003) points out that although testing the ability to speak is a most important aspect of language testing, it is a very difficult skill to test, because it is far too complex a skill to permit any reliable analysis to be made for the purpose of objective testing.

When considering all the factors ranging from the very recent history of testing speaking and the questions about the real validity and reliability, to the attitudes and perceptions of the students and instructors as an assessor and interviewer and also the instructors' attitudes and perceptions about testing speaking made this study inevitable. It would be helpful to find out the attitudes and perceptions of the students, and this will make the teachers be aware of their students' attitudes and perceptions towards testing speaking. In addition, to find out the instructors' attitudes and perceptions towards testing speaking will help the institution to shape their preparatory class program in view of speaking ability and testing speaking.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Testing speaking is widely regarded as the most challenging of all language tests to prepare, administer, and score (Madsen, 1983). That the students have the same problem for the speaking tests is indispensable when anxiety, time limitation, rater's objectivity and other factors are considered.

One of the important problems in foreign-language teaching is to prepare learners to be able to use the language. How this preparation is done, and how successful it is, depends on how the teachers understand our aims. For example, it is obvious that in order to be able to speak a foreign language, it is necessary to know certain amount of grammar and vocabulary. Part of a language course is therefore generally devoted to this objective. But there are other things involved in speaking, and it is important to know what these might be, so that they too can be included in our teaching (Bygate, 1987).

Speaking plays an important role in communication and the objective of teaching spoken language is the development of the ability to interact successfully in that language, and that this involves comprehension as well as production (Hughes, 1989). In addition, new words and curricula have been

around especially for the productive skills such as speaking and writing in many institutions in Turkey to catch up with the communicative language teaching. According to these processes, in many universities in Turkey, there have been some developments in view of testing, materials and teaching materials to meet the needs of communicative language teaching. From that point of view, testing speaking is one of the most important parts of this development.

This study aims to discover about the backgrounds of the students about speaking tests, their periods of pre-test, during and post-test, how they get prepared to the speaking test, how they feel during the test, how they are affected by the testers, their thoughts about the testers' objectivity and their perceptions after the exam. Furthermore, the attitudes of the instructors about testing speaking, their challenges during the exam, their thoughts about the speaking rubric, and the accordance between the assessors were also tried to be found out. Although the students have listening/speaking courses to improve their communicative skills and have some experience to do it, they complain about some problems during the test, partly because of their lack of experience at high school or high anxiety during the test.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study attempts to address the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions and attitudes of the students about the speaking tests?

    a) are there any differences among male and female students?

    b) are there any differences among pre-intermediate and intermediate students?

2. What are the instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards:

    a) the rubric used for the speaking test?

    b) materials used for the speaking test?

    c) procedure used about the speaking tests for the speaking test?

1.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The very recent history of testing speaking puts out a lot of new approach and different methods to test and assess. This study may provide general information about the attitudes and perceptions of the preparatory class students, their experiences before-during and after the test, by finding out the students' attitudes and perceptions, it may help to draw educators' attention to the students' attitudes and perceptions. In addition, it may help to pay attention to the instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards testing speaking, and may contribute to assess the speaking tests in a more valid and reliable way and help to re-organize it. It is also hoped to help the instructors both to become aware of their students' needs, perceptions and backgrounds of the speaking tests, and help them to modify their views. Moreover, the ideas about the speaking rubric used and some physical factors would benefit to the objectivity of the speaking tests and maximize the effectiveness and reliability and validity of the test.

1.5. ASSUMPTIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Our assumption is that the students do not have enough experience about testing speaking. When we regard the curriculum of the Ministry of National Education, speaking tests are not very common in secondary and high schools. For that reason, the students may have difficulties before the speaking test, during and after the test. Not only their inexperience but also their level of English may affect their performance during the test. They may approach towards testing speaking in a negative way because of their lack of knowledge about it although they have studied it for 14 weeks during the class. The second assumption is that instructors may have some problems about the standardization and application of the test; in addition, the instructors' may be inexperienced about testing speaking in a valid and reliable way.

This study is to determine the attitudes and perceptions of the prep class students and English instructors at Pamukkale University, School of Foreign Languages about testing speaking. The school has 950 students from different levels ranging from elementary to intermediate. The students take the speaking test once in a term and three times in a year. This study is limited to 210 students and 32 English instructors. It is a local study and not generalized to other institutions or universities around the country.

Our data are collected by two surveys, one of which is for the students and the other is for the instructors. The cumulative data collecting method was used, as it is more economical (Karasar, 1991).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to investigate and find out the perceptions and attitudes of the students and what their experiences before-during and after the test are and also what the instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards the speaking rubric used, the materials used procedure used about the speaking tests English are at Pamukkale University School Of Foreign Languages about the speaking test and the speaking skill. Also, what kind of backgrounds they have about speaking tests, their ability of speaking as a skill and how they get prepared to the test, what kind of experiences they have before, during and what they feel after the test can be found out. 210 students from pre-intermediate and intermediate levels participated in the study. The students are from different faculties such as medicine, engineering, economics and science and arts. 210 students out of 950 were selected randomly. They were given a questionnaire including 44 questions. The questionnaire was given after the test and the EFL students were required to answer them. Also, of 36 English instructors, 32 of them answered the questionnaire. The questionnaire was given to the instructors after the test, too.

The analysis of the questionnaires revealed the degree of their experiences, attitudes and perceptions about the speaking test. The results were evaluated and reported to the Pamukkale University School of Foreign Languages Material and Curriculum Department to take into account the results of the research and revise the curriculum using the results about speaking attitudes and perceptions of the students and instructors.

2.1.1. Components of Speaking

As Harris (1969) reports "Speaking is a complex skill requiring the simultaneous use of a number of different abilities which often develop at different rates" (p. 81). Six components are identified in the analysis of a speech process as follows:

a. Pronunciation

b. Grammar

c. Vocabulary

d. Fluency

e. Discourse

f. Language Skills

g. Comprehension (Harris, 1969, Harmer, 1992)

These components are examined in detail in the following:

2.1.1.1. Pronunciation

The communicative approach taking hold in the 1980s and is still currently dominant in language teaching holds that since the primary purpose of language is communication, using language to communicate should be central in all classroom language instruction and this brings urgency to the teaching of pronunciation (Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin, 2007). Pronunciation is the knowledge of how to say a word – that is how to pronounce it. This component involves three elements which are sounds, stress and intonation (Güllüoğlu, 2004). Pronunciation can be described as the production of significant sound (Daton & Seidhofer, 2001). According to Hewings (2004), pronunciation is a vital aspect of speaking and listening. Pronunciation addresses many features of the speech stream, including individual sounds, pitch, volume, speed, pausing, stress and intonation (Luoma, 2004).

2.1.1.1.1. Sounds

Harmer (1992) points out that on their own, sounds of a language can be meaningless; on the other hand, they end up with words if we put them together in a certain order. All the words are made up of sounds, and learners need to know these sounds if they want to be understood, and they want to understand what is said to them. Thus, they are supposed to know how to articulate, recognize and differentiate between these sounds.

2.1.1.1.2. Stress

Harmer (1992) defines stress as the knowledge of giving emphasis to a certain part of a word while one is uttering it. According to him, "Students should know how to use rhythm and stress correctly provided that they want to be understood" (1992, p. 11). As teachers, we have to make sure when they learn new words, the students know which syllables are stressed and they are able to utter them with appropriate stress. Moreover, they should know how stress can change the meaning of sentences, questions and phrases (Harmer, 1992). According to Widdowson, "when a word has more than one syllable, one of them will be pronounced with more prominence than the others, called stress" (1985, p. 43). According to Jones (1985), stress is the degree of force, and a sound or syllable is uttered with it.

2.1.1.1.3. Intonation

Intonation can be described by Harmer (1992) as "the tune/pitch you use when you are speaking and the music you use to change that pitch" (p. 12). It is the music of speech in short. Using a high, medium or low pitch and your voice's falling or rising all have to do with intonation. Intonation also indicates involvement of a participant in a conversation. Thus students again should know how to use and recognize intonation. Furthermore, they should be trained what meaning intonation can attach to a sentence, how one can change the meaning of a sentence, question or phrase by using it in different ways (Harmer, 1992). For Cruttenden (1986), intonation has three important features: 1) division of a (dividing) a stream of speech into intonation units, 2) selection of a syllable (of a word), which is assigned to the 'tonic' status and 3) selection of a tone for the intonation unit.

2.1.1.2. Grammar

In terms of speaking, grammar is regarded as 'Accuracy'. Grammar is how a language works, that is, it is the knowledge of putting words together in order to make a sentence. There are numerous rules in English grammar, so it is nonsense to expect students to know all the grammar rules in detail. What should be done is "to ensure that students are communicatively efficient with the grammar they

have at their level" Harmer asserts (1992, p.23). In other words, we should make sure that they can use what they know. Luoma (2004) mentions that learners fosters from knowing a few structure to knowing more and more complex ones, and from making many errors to making few if any at all.

2.1.1.3. Vocabulary

Harmer (1992) suggests one of the components students should know is the lexis of the language. Vocabulary is as crucial as grammar in this respect. Thus, students need to be taught both what words mean and how they are used. The latter involves stretching and twisting the words. If the teachers try to teach students what words mean and how they are used, they should demonstrate how words are used together with other words, in context. At this point, students comprehend that words do not exist isolated and they need other words and they depend on each other. Moreover, if students learn words in context, they are more likely to remember and retrieve them (Harmer, 1992). The knowledge of how words are used covers several points such as collocation, connotation, word formation and literal and metaphorical meanings. As noted before, students need to know which words go with which words. For instance, they should know the noun suicide is used with the verb commit if the meaning is one's killing one's self. Students are also taught how to change the words they learn. For example, they are supposed to know how to make the word interest interesting, uninteresting and interested or how to make possible possibility and impossible. As Harmer asserts (1992, p. 14), "students should also know that the words they learn have both literal and metaphorical meanings", which requires an advanced level of knowledge for EFL students.

2.1.1.4. Fluency

Fluency is the ease and speed of the flow of the speech. Fluency does not exist when there are a number of hesitations, repetitions and pauses in a speech. The less hesitations, repetitions and pauses take place in one's speech, the better one's fluency is. It is of great importance to remember that being fluent promotes interaction and hence speech. It is a great mistake to expect our students to be fluent in English all of a sudden. Even the native speakers cannot be fluent at times. To conclude, "fluency needs practice and time to improve" (Güllüoğlu, 2004, p. 15).

2.1.1.5. Discourse

Brown (1994) defines discourse analysis as "the analysis of relationship between form and functions of language," adding that "it encompasses the notion that language is more than a sentence-level phenomenon" (p. 253). A single sentence sometimes includes some presuppositions (serving as a number of functions) that are not revealed overtly, but are clear from the context (Brown, 2000). Some examples are provided in the following:

As Brown claims a stand-alone sentence can serve as an agreement, disagreement, complaint, apology, insult, argument or only a comment depending on the context (2000). Therefore, a second language learner should know how to start a conversation and how to respond to a person trying to start a conversation. A second language learner with prefect pronunciation and grammar might fail to comprehend and communicate certain functions in the middle of a conversation if s/he has no knowledge of discourse.

2.1.1.6. Language Skills

If oral communication is examined closely, it is easy to identify certain language skills that are used. Harmer (1992) argues that very often language users employ a combination of skills at the same time. He further claims that (1992, p.16-17) "Speaking and listening usually happen simultaneously, and people may well read something and then answer their questions orally". There are also sub-skills engaged during oral communication. All four skills have sub-skills and language users employ different sub-skills to use in different situations (Harmer, 1992). For instance, during oral communication, one of the participants may listen to the other participant just to extract specific information about a topic or just for the gist of a subject.

2.1.1.7. Comprehension

To name an oral performance as conversation, at least two participants should take place in it. In order to have a meaningful conversation, comprehension is essential. Comprehension involves listening, understanding and background information about the topic being talked. If participants can comprehend each other, they can provide feedback to continue their conversation. Sometimes communication breakdowns occur and block comprehension, but participants can use some particular strategies to try to understand what is meant (Güllüoğlu, 2004).

2.2. SPEAKING SCALES

"Which scale should we use for valid and reliable results?" is the main question for many institutions and testers. One of the issues currently of particular interest and on-going development within the foreign and second language teaching profession is that proficiency testing or the evaluation of learner's level of linguistic and communicative competence (Rossi, 1983). Speaking scores consists of many sub-skills and tests the ability of speaking the target language. Performance tests generally require raters to judge the quality of examinees' written or spoken language relative to a rating scale (Upshur&Turner, 2002). According to Fulcher (1997), from the recent beginnings of testing speaking, there has been a distinct concern with the development of rating scales. Savignon (1972) explains four functional speaking abilities to assess the new trend in communicative language testing in speaking: discussing a topic with a native speaker as if for a newspaper article, reporting facts about oneself or one's recent activities and describing what someone is doing. Unsurprisingly, reliability in their use was the first requirement and once reasonable degrees of reliability could be reported (Fulcher, 1997). Using the valid and reliable scale is the main concern of the testers and according to this view Fulcher (2000) describes the most important parts of a test as; 1. Real life tasks 2. Face validity 3. Authenticity and performance. Furthermore, North (2007) describes the challenge of developing rating scales as 'trying to describe complex phenomena in a small number of words on the basis of incomplete theory'. Each institution may use different scales, this can change according to the type of the test, the institution, how many hours a day/week they have speaking lesson, their level, their age and background. A few examples of the speaking scales will be discussed in the next part.

2.2.1. Examples of Speaking Rubric

2.2.1.1. TOEFL Speaking Rubric

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) has been testing speaking skill since 2004. The Speaking section is delivered via computer. For all speaking tasks, test takers use headsets with a microphone. Test takers speak into the microphone to record their responses. Responses are digitally recorded and sent to ETS's Online Scoring Network where they are scored by certified raters. Responses

to all six Speaking tasks are digitally recorded and sent to ETS's Online Scoring Network. The responses from each test taker are scored by 3 to 6 different certified raters. The response for each task is rated on a scale of 0 to 4 according to the Rubrics; the average of all six ratings is converted to a scaled score of 0 to 30. Raters listen for the following features in test taker responses:

Delivery: How clear was the speech? Good responses are fluid and clear, with good pronunciation, natural pacing, and natural-sounding intonation patterns.

Language use: How effectively does the test taker use grammar and vocabulary to convey their ideas? Raters determine the test taker's ability to control both basic and more complex language structures, and use appropriate vocabulary.

Topic development: How fully do test takers answer the question and how coherently do they present their ideas? How well did the test taker synthesize and summarize the information in the integrated tasks? Good responses generally use all or most of the time allotted, and the relationship between ideas and the progression from one idea to the next is clear and easy to follow.

It is important to note that raters do not expect test takers' responses to be perfect. Even high-scoring responses may contain occasional errors and minor problems in any of the three areas described above. (Appendix 1)

2.2.1.2. The Common European Framework Speaking Rubric

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEF) (Council of Europe, 2001) is a resource for language education. It is intended to help learners, teachers, and assessors set goals for language learning and give them support to reach them. As a part of this, it contains a range of illustrative descriptors of language ability, including some for speaking. It is a behavioral rating scale. The descriptors have been written for general rather than specific purposes. By that way, if it were used in a professionally specific speaking assessment, the functions and language-use contexts would have to be modified to suit that test (Luoma, 2004). (Appendix 2)

2.2.1.3. The Test of Spoken English Rubric

The test of Spoken English (TSE) rubric (ETS, 2001b) is a combination of holistic and analytic rating scales. Analytic scales contain a number of criteria, usually 3-5, each of which has descriptors at the different levels of the scale. The scale forms a grid, and the examinees usually get a profile of scores, one for each of the criteria (Luoma, 2004). The advantages of analytic scales include the detailed

guidance that they give to raters, and the rich information that they provide on specific strengths and weaknesses in examinee performances. The scale has five levels, which are labeled 20, 30, 40, 50 and 60. Overall features are given in Appendix 3.

2.2.1.4. The ACTFL Speaking Rubric

The American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) Speaking rubric (ACTFL, 1999) is also a holistic scale, but here the same scale is used by raters and score users. It is used in foreign language programs in North American academia, particularly in colleges and universities. The rubric has ten levels, which focus on the beginning and intermediate stages of language learning. There are four levels in the rubric: Superior, Advanced, Intermediate and Novice. The three lower levels are divided into sub-levels each. The aim is to "show progress at the levels where most foreign language learners in the US educational contexts are" (Luoma, 2004, p. 62). (see Appendix 4)

2.2.1.5. The Speaking Rubric Used in the School of Foreign Languages At Pamukkale University

The speaking rubric used in Pamukkale University School of Foreign Languages consists of five parts including Content, Organization, Vocabulary, Fluency and Accuracy. There are five levels in the rubric: 5. Very Good, 4. Good, 3.Adequate, 2.Inadequate, 1. Poor. All these levels include a number of criteria including a lot of sub-descriptions under each level. The detailed rubric is presented in Appendix 5.

2.3. TESTING SPEAKING

In the United States, the oral proficiency interview originated out of practical necessity; during World War II, the majority of the U.S military personnel did not have the skills needed to perform key foreign-language communication tasks, since then testing speaking and assessment scales have been vital importance (Deville & Fulcher, 2003). "Testing speaking ability offers plenty of scope for meeting the criteria for communicative testing" (Weir, 2005, p. 73). The concept of performance-based teaching has been shaped largely by the work that has been done over the past 25 years in the area of oral proficiency assessment (Fall, Adair-Huck & Glisan, 2005). The assessment of spoken language has evolved dramatically over the last several decades from test of oral grammar and pronunciation to interviews and,

more recently, to multiple tasks, often collected over time (Cohen 1994). It can be described as one of the abilities in the target language to be tested.

2.3.1. How to Test Speaking Communicatively

According to Underhill (1989), an oral test is a direct meeting between two or more people, and can provide results that we cannot get from conventional written tests. The reason is it is live, and the interviewer is dealing with a different person every time, she must take great care to present herself as an interested and friendly person. If you treat your testee like a specimen under a microscope, you can expect to get a thoroughly defensive and suspicious performance. The assessor should try to be human, and you will get a more human response. Testing oral proficiency has become one of the most important issues in language testing since the role of speaking ability has become more central in language teaching with the advent of communicative language teaching (Nakamura, 1993). According to Canale and Swain (1980, cited in http://seas3.elte.hu), there are four components of Communicative Competence;

1. Linguistic competence – the knowledge of the language code (grammatical rules, vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling, etc.);

2. Sociolinguistic competence – the mastery of the socio-cultural code of language use (appropriate application of vocabulary, register, politeness, and style in a given situation);

3. Discourse competence – the ability to combine language structures into different types of cohesive and coherent texts (e.g. letter, political speech, poetry, academic essay, cooking recipe);

4. Strategic competence – the knowledge of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies which can enable us to overcome difficulties when communication breakdowns occur and enhance the efficiency of communication.

Kitao and Kitao (1996) report that Communicative language tests are intended to be a measure of how the testees are able to use language in real life situations. In testing productive skills, emphasis is placed on appropriateness rather than on ability to form grammatically correct sentences. In testing receptive skills, emphasis is placed on understanding the communicative intent of the speaker or writer rather than on picking out specific details.

2.3.2. Aims of Testing Speaking

As Underhill (1989) points out that giving a test is like asking a question – it is a request for information. If you ask the right sort of question, you get the right sort of answer. Consequently, testers have to know what kind of information they want or need before developing a test. Speaking tests can be developed to answer four basic questions. The information being sought here is the learner's general level of language ability. This can be achieved by a proficiency test. Burns and Joyce (1999) mention the aim of a proficiency test as "to assess a person's level of language in relation to a specific future use" (p.103). A well-developed speaking test including a number of different test techniques can give a quick and quite accurate measure of general proficiency. The second one answers the question "Where does this learner fit in our teaching program?" A placement test helps "to place students into an appropriate level within an institutional or an overall course of study" (Burns & Joyce, 1999, p. 103). According to Underhill (1989), the interviewer should know which classes or levels are available in order to allocate the students properly. It is better if the interviewer is one of the teachers who know the nature and syllabus of the class. The next one aims to diagnose the learners' strengths and weaknesses. The learners are expected to use certain language elements such as functions, structures or vocabulary. According to their performance, it is yielded at which parts s/he is good, and at which s/he is bad, so the result of these tests detect specific learning difficulties the students may have, and also determine the points which need remedial work (Underhill, 1989). How much the learner has learnt from a particular course is the question this kind of tests tries to answer. According to Underhill (1989), speaking test is "an achievement test takes a sample of the language elements or skills that have been covered on the course and aims to test how well the learner has mastered those elements" (p. 13). The result of this kind of tests demonstrates whether the course has been successful and the course contents have been learnt. The results can be used for the future course planning, as well (Underhill, 1989).

2.3.3. Resources

Testing speaking requires lots of efforts, and needs proper planning and the correct material. According to Madsen, "the testing of speaking is widely regarded as the most challenging of all language

exams to prepare, administer and score" (1983, p. 147). Underhill (1989, p.15) notes "a testing program can only be successful if it is designed to be carried out using the available resources". The resources to apply a valid test are explained in the next part.

2.3.3.1. Materials and Tests

For the students to have knowledge about the nature of speaking is of the first importance. This can be done through the teaching of speaking skills. They should have enough knowledge about the type and parts of the test, task types, and the process. This is generally done via a course book of speaking and listening and also is supported with the real-life tasks and extra materials. And also for the assessors, what is being tested should be in accord with what was taught in the class. This requires correct planning of the test, correct level identification and assessing. Madsen (1983) points out that another complication is the range of oral communication. At the beginning level, we find several pre-speaking activities, like pronunciation and vocabulary identification. The essential task here is to establish clearly what operations the candidate is expected to perform and the conditions under which these tasks are to be carried out (Weir, 1990).

There is necessarily a subjective element to the evaluation of communicative tests. Real life situations don't always have objectively right or wrong answers, and so band scales need to be developed to evaluate the results. Each band has a description of the quality (and sometimes quantity) of the receptive or productive performance of the testee.

2.3.3.2. People

According to Underhill (1989, p.15), in testing, as in teaching, "people are the biggest asset, and like any other resource they can be used effectively or badly". It is indispensable that people are needed pre-test, during and post-test. First of all, we need people for the test to be organized, prepared and modify it to make it applicable, secondly we have to have the correct number of people to apply the test and assess the last student as effectively as the first one. And in the last stage, we need people to decide the result. Their experience, information and practicality are important factors that are important for the test to be valid and reliable.

2.3.3.3. Time

Time is also another important factor that affects the test. Developing the test, time needed during the test process, and the assessment duration may have more time than thought. The amount of time that will be spent for developing the test, which will be needed during the testing period, must be taken into consideration because of the fact that if the assessors get tired in a short time, it will be more challenging for them to carry out the test till to the end. It may be difficult for someone to sit for a couple of hours and try to do the best (Güllüoğlu, 2004).

2.3.3.4. Equipment and Facilities

Here we come close to Underhill's views as he mentions (1989, p.17) about physical resources as "rooms and furniture for testing and preparation, sound or video recording equipment, photocopying, printing or duplication facilities". These are the factors that affect the atmosphere and improve or disrupt the candidate's performance. Not only the room but also the furniture, the design and even the light will be determinant for their performance. The room must be isolated enough from the noise or other disturbances. The other important factor is the equipments needed for recording the sound or video if it will be assessed later or again. The photocopying, printing or duplication facilities are also important for the test to be far from problems.

2.3.4. Needs

In teaching and testing, it is important to have a correlation between aims and needs. Yet, in practice, we may have some problems to match two ideals. Needs of the learner may be different from the aims of the program or when there may be more than one need that is expected to meet, it may be challenging. To match the teaching and testing aims with the needs is important since the student may be discouraged or demotivated if the aim of testing is different from his needs, because it means the learner thinks that it will not be useful for him in the real life. In ideal circumstances, "the aims of the program

match the needs of the learner so that the teaching/testing program provides just what the learner most needs, and everybody is happy" (Underhill, 1989, p. 18).

2.3.5. Difficulties Confronted in Speaking Tests

A performance test is "one in which some criterion situation is simulated to a much greater degree than is represented by the usual paper-and-pencil test" according to Fitzpatrick and Morrison (1971, p. 238). Heaton (2003, p. 88) points out that "people may have the ability to produce all the correct sounds but may still be unable to express their thoughts effectively and clearly." As McNamara (2000) mentions, speaking tests in second language contexts is not new; it has been a consistent strand within second language testing for the last forty years, and also Madsen (1983) explains the speaking tests as the most challenging of all language exams and claims that one reason for this is that the nature of speaking skill itself is not usually well defined. And also Luoma (2004, p. 1) defines the assessment of speaking as challenging because "there are so many factors that influence our impression of how well someone can speak a language, and because we expect test scores to be accurate". Some problems that may occur in speaking tests are discussed in the next part.

2.3.5.1. Problem of Administration

2.3.5.1.1. Time

Time is the most challenging and consuming part of the test. This is the most difficult one to arrange among the other tests because testing the learners orally takes more than pencil-paper tests. Each subject is tested individually or in pairs. In consequence, the tests should be prepared so appropriately that it should not take ages to test each learner, shorter and fewer techniques should be preferred (Güllüoğlu, 2004). Another drawback of the test may be on the assessors, it would be difficult to expect the same performance from the testers from the beginning to the end if the test takes too long.

2.3.5.1.2. Preparations and Physical Conditions

Hughes (1989) mentions that it is necessary to put candidates at their ease so that they can show what they are capable of. It is already a very stressful test for the students and from the beginning to the end, it is vital to have correct planning and decent atmosphere. According to Underhill (1989, p.17), "some careful thought in advance about the choice of room and the arrangement of furniture can make a

big difference to the atmosphere in which the test is conducted". He also states that tests should be held somewhere that is quiet and free from interruption. Anybody trying to hold a conversation will become irritated if repeatedly disturbed by noise or by other people. Not only for the students but also for the assessors is the same case; Hughes (1989) points out that it is important that scoring should take place in a quiet, well-lit environment.

2.3.5.2. Reliability

Reliability is often defined as consistency of measurement Bachman and Palmer (1990). For Surface and Dierdoff (2003) reliability is the extent to which an item, scale, procedure, or instrument will yield the same value when administered across different times, locations or populations. Harmer (2004) explains a test as valid if it tests what it is supposed to test. Brown and Hudson (2002) define reliability as score consistency. If the scores from a test given today are reliable, they will remain largely the same if the test is given to the same people again Luoma states (2004). Underhill (1989) says that a reliable test is consistent and dependable. A number of factors may affect the reliability of the test. Hughes (1989, p. 36) points out that;

"what we have to do is construct, administer and score tests in such a way that the scores actually obtained on a test on a particular occasion are likely to be very similar to those which would have been obtained if it had been administered to the same students with the same ability, but at a different time, the more similar the scores would have been, the more reliable the test is said to be."

According Underhill (1989) there are some possibilities that can cause trouble for the test to be unreliable, some of which are student-related reliability, rater reliability, test administration reliability and test reliability. Student-related reliability can be defined as the lack of student's performance because of some reasons which may be personal such as an illness or bad mood. His performance throughout the test may not reflect the student's level, and causes an unreliable result. His performance may also be affected by the examiners' behaviors during the test. Another important factor can be rater-reliability which reflects the human-errors during the test process. In many tests, the tester is also the rater. Throughout the whole interview process, the tester establishes the proper level for the interviewee while conducting the test (Kuo & Jiang, 1997). Thus, it is likely to make mistakes during the assessment. Jones (1985, p. 81) claims that "the assessment in an oral interview is often affected by the social relationship between the examiner and examinee". The factors can include age, race, social class and profession.

2.3.5.2.1. Criteria for Assessing Spoken Language

Having obtained a sample of the learner's speaking ability. How does one go about assessing it? There are two main ways; either giving it a single score on the basis of an overall impression (Holistic Scoring) or giving a separate score for different aspects of the task (Analytic Scoring) (Thornbury, 2005). Madsen (1983) argues that on a speaking test, have the student say something appropriate is only half the job, scoring the test is equally challenging. According to Underhill (1989, p.98) "a rating scale is a series of short descriptions of different levels of language ability". Its purpose is to describe briefly what the typical learner at each level can do so that it is easier for the assessor to decide what level or score to give each learner in a test. Fulcher (1997) explains that from the recent beginnings of testing speaking, there has been a distinct concern with the development of rating scales, and unsurprisingly, reliability was the first requirement. Harmer (2004) defines assessment scales as a way of specifying scores that can be given to productive skill work which is to use to create 'pre-defined descriptions of performance'.

2.3.5.2.2. Rater Objectivity

Reliability can be defined simply as "stability of test scores". What is focused here is the stability of the oral test results when the same raters score the same test at different times or when different raters score the same test. This concept is known as "Rater Reliability". It can be defined as "the consistency of scoring by two or more scorers" or "a scorer's consistency on different occasions". Despite having established criteria for assessment of spoken language, raters may vary in the assessment process. For example, a rater may stick to the criteria whereas the other may not as much as the first one does while assessing the subjects orally (Ur, cited in Çopur, 2002). Therefore, subjectivity is inevitable in scoring procedure as long as human being is involved in the process. The best solution to this problem is having more than one rater for each performance. The scores of each rater can be correlated to see if the results are consistent. Consequently, this may prevent subjectivity and enable the raters to depend on the rating scale and hence to be as objective as possible. In addition, better results can be yielded if each learner's performance is scored immediately and that score is recorded onto a scoring sheet (Çopur, 2002).

2.3.5.2.3. Problem of Validity

A test is said to be valid if it measures accurately what it is intended to measure (Hughes, 1989, p. 26).

Henning (1987, p. 89) defines validity as follows; validity in general refers to the appropriateness of a given test or any of its component parts as a measure of what it is purported to measure.

A test is said to be valid to the extent that it measures what it is supposed to measure. It follows that the term valid when used to describe a test should usually be accompanied by the preposition for. Any test then may be valid for some purposes, but not for others. (cited in Alderson, Clapham & Wall 1995, p. 170)

Brown (2001) points out that by far the most complex criterion of an effective test- and arguably the most important principle- is validity. According to Luoma (2004) validity is the most crucial aspect in test development; it refers to the meaningfulness of the scores, which defines a broad score of concerns. As Bachman and Palmer (1990, p. 18) explain for "the test to be useful, reliability, validity, authenticity, interactiveness, impact, practicality must be hand in hand". Cohen (1994, p. 291) sees validity as a problem and believes that "students may not speak in the class the way they actually would if performing in the real world". Validity can be defined as the agreement between a test score or measure and the quality it is believed to measure (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2001). In other words, it measures the gap between what a test actually measures and what it is intended to measure.

In addition Harmer (2004) accepts a test as valid if it tests what it is supposed to test. Underhill (1989, p. 105) mentions that "to have a valid test, there are some aspects of validity to consider; construct validity, predictive validity, content validity".

2.3.5.2.3.1. Construct Validity

Construct validation is the on-going process of demonstrating that a particular interpretation of test scores is justified, and involves, essentially, building a logical case in support of a particular interpretation and providing evidence justifying that interpretation Bachman and Palmer (1990). Underhill (1989) explains that nearly all the programs are part of a larger program; and each program makes some basic assumptions, explicitly or implicitly, about the purposes and processes of language learning. A test should obviously share the same assumptions and the same philosophy as the program of which it is part. For example, if the teaching program aims to give learners a limited competence in particular professional area, using a lot of exposure to authentic language and documents, then the test procedure should follow the same basic approach.

2.3.5.2.3.2. Predictive Validity

As the name suggests, this type of validity differs from concurrent validity in that instead of collecting the external measures at the same time as the administration of the experimental test, the external measures will only be collected some time after the test has been given (Alderson, Clapham & Wall, 1995). How accurately a prediction can be made relies on the degree of content validity (Liao, 2004). Hughes (1989) points out that predictive validity is related to the degree to which a test can predict candidates' future performance.

2.3.5.2.3.3. Content Validity

For the test to have content validity, it must proficiently be parallel with the area to cover. According to Underhill (1989, p. 106), the organizers of the test should reply to these questions; "is it relevant? Do the same items or tasks in the test match what the test as a whole is supposed to assess?" Brown (2001) also points out that if you can clearly describe the achievement that you are measuring, you can usually identify content-related evidence. He also states that if you are trying to assess a person's ability to speak a second language in a conversational setting, asking the learner to answer paper-and-pencil multiple choice questions requiring grammatical judgments does not achieve content validity. Hughes (1989, p. 26) mentions that "a test has content validity if its content constitutes a representative sample of the language skills, structures, etc. with which it is meant to be concerned". The test would have content validity only if it included a proper sample of relevant structures. Another view suggested by Alderson, Clapham, and Wall (1995) explains that typically, content validation includes 'experts' making

judgments in some systematic way, a common way for them is to analyze the content of a test and to compare it with a statement of what the content ought to be.

2.3.6. Test Administration

The preparation and development phases of an oral test are of paramount importance; however, these efforts will be vain if well-prepared oral tests cannot be administered properly (Güllüoğlu, 2004). There are some factors which are vital to consider while administering an oral test.

2.3.6.1. Time

One of the most important factors is time. According to Hughes (1989), fifteen minutes is enough to ensure that the information a rater receives is reliable. Oral exams/interviews need not be very long (Coombe, Folse & Hubley, 2007, p. 118). Underhill (1989) points out that time is not only needed for the test itself but also for the preparation and giving instructions where necessary.

Hughes (1989) reports that it is not likely that much reliable information can be obtained in less than about 15 minutes, while 30 minutes can probably provide all the information necessary. Alderson (2000) explains that if time allotment is not carefully planned, it can result in unpredictable results. About the length of an oral test, Underhill (1989, p.40) believes "it can be anything from three to thirty minutes; most often it is between eight and twelve minutes long".

2.3.6.2. Setting

Applying the test in a friendly and silent room is what everybody expects. This will certainly improve the quality of the test, provide more motivation and certainly will be a more valid test. Underhill (1989, p. 42) reports that "the interviewer besides learner will be relaxed in a natural surrounding, and this will lower the anxiety". The test can be held in a familiar situation such as an ordinary classroom, the furniture also should be arranged away from the blackboard or teacher's desk, to reduce the feeling that a teacher is questioning the student (Underhill, 1989). "Speaking is affected by the situation we are in" (Harmer, 2004, p. 25). Talking face to face or on the telephone, speaking through a microphone to an unseen audience or standing up in a lecture hall in front of a crowd will generate different uses of

language. In addition, he mentions that people speak differently in libraries from the way we do in night clubs, we often use informal and spontaneous language at home, whereas more-formal pre-planned speech in an office or work environment may be used.

2.3.6.3. Assessors and Interlocutors

Different procedures are involved in providing a test rating; as is usually the case, at the end of a successful Oral proficiency interview, the administrator has already arrived at a global rating for the examinee (Kuo & Jiang, 1997).

According to Taylor (2006, p. 2), they are the principles of good measurement which determine key features such as:

"The pairing of examiners (with one acting as participant-interlocutor and one as observer-assessor-but both providing an assessment of performance, i.e. multiple observations)

The use of an interlocutor frame (to guide the management of the test and to ensure that all candidates receive similar, standardized input in terms of test format and timing

The implementation of a comprehensive oral examiner training/standardization program" (to increase the reliability of subjectively judged ratings and provide a common standard and meaning for such judgments) (cited in Simpson, 2006).

Assessors may, towards the end of the test, talk to the candidates for the purpose of 'fine tuning' the assessment. However, if an assessor needs additional evidence from one candidate to confirm a provisional assessment, considerations of standardization and validity require the assessor to waste time questioning the other candidate as well (Saville & Hargreaves, 1999). Taylor (2006) reports that examiners of speaking and writing can be trained and regularly standardized to apply assessment criteria and scales in a consistent manner and give credit on a range of salient features rather than simply count up 'deficiencies' to determine the degree of 'correctness'. Underhill (1989, p. 89) suggests that "the single most effective way of getting round the central problem of lack of reliability is to use more than one assessor"; they may or may not be the same people as the interviewers, they may be present at the test, or they may mark from recorded tapes, or a mixture of these-one assessing live and one from a tape. Hughes (1989) suggests using a second tester for interviews; because of the difficulty of conducting an interview and of keeping track of the candidate's performance, it is very helpful to have a second tester present.

As well as eliminating candidates' concern about possible individual examiner bias, the use of two examiners is intended to relieve the pressure under which single examiners work in the traditional interview-based test. The single examiner is replaced by an interlocutor and an assessor. Typically the interlocutor explains the tasks to the candidates, engages them in conversation during the introductory stage of the test, asks them to explain their solution to any joint task, and acts as time-keeper (Saville & Hargreaves, 1999).

2.3.6.4. The Selection and Training of Assessors

Hughes (1989) mentions that it is of great importance to select interviewers carefully and train them, successful interviewing is by no means easy and not everyone has great aptitude for it. He defines the characteristics of the interviewers as sympathetic and flexible characters. According to Alderson, Clapham, and Wall, (1995, p. 14) the assessors "must be selected and trained carefully" because they are responsible for seeing that the conditions in which the test is given provide all candidates with the best chance possible to display the abilities which are being tested; and also it is important that the assessors understand the nature of the test they will be conducting, the importance of their own role and the possible consequences for candidates if the administration is not carried out correctly. Underhill (1989) notes that some people make better assessors than others, the marks they give tend to be more consistent, both with their previous marks and with the marks of other assessors; by setting up assessor training programs and exercises, and setting standards of inter-and intra-marker reliability, you can be sure that you are using the best people available. Fulcher and Davidson state that (2007) the training of all staff who applies tests is important, but probably the most discussed area of test administration is the training of interlocutors for speaking tests, and raters for speaking and writing tests.

2.3.6.5. Individual Testing

The most usual way of arranging speaking tests is to assess examinees one at a time, often in an interview format although it is a costly way of testing in terms of examiner time, it is flexible since the questions can be adjusted to each examinee's performance, and it gives the testers a lot of control during the interview. However, in this type of testing, the interviewer/examiner has a lot of power over the examinee and it can be seen the most important drawback of this type of test (Luoma, 2004). Also, according to Hughes (1989) the most common format for the testing of oral interaction is the interview, in its traditional form, though, it has one important disadvantage; the relationship between the tester and the candidate is usually such that he speaks to a superior and unwilling to take the initiative and as a result,

many functions including asking for information, are not represented in the candidate's performance. Underhill (1989) makes one of the most comprehensible explanations on the individual testing by stating that it is the most common and most authentic type of oral test for normal purposes; there is no script and no need to be prepared from the learner's part for any special activity, however, the interviewer will be well-prepared. This type of test is costly e in terms of the selection and training of the interviewers and assessors.

2.3.6.6. Guidance to Testees

The testees must be informed about the tasks/activities which will be performed along with their pairs or group members, so clear instructions and explanations are required. The instructions should include the information concerning the purpose, time allocated and the parts of the test. The testers must ensure that the testees have understood the instructions and what they need to do during the test. As an alternative to ensure understanding, conducting familiar tasks or activities in the test is suggested by Carroll and Hall (1985). For better understanding or preparation, necessary materials including role cards, task/activity cards and question cards are to be provided for the testees. If the subject still does not understand what s/he is expected of, the instructions may be given in his/her native language (Underhill, 1989).

2.3.6.7. Atmosphere

Creating a relaxing and friendly atmosphere is crucial in order to ensure better performance during the assessment process. Therefore, it is the raters' or interlocutors' duty to relax the subjects. They can do so by smiling, using the subjects' names, being pleasant and giving the instructions clearly (Underhill, 1989). In addition, the testers should avoid constantly reminding the subjects that they are being evaluated. It is also of significance not to interrupt the testees as far as possible. Otherwise, they may be puzzled and forget what to say (Hughes, 1989).

2.3.6.8. Live Test or Recorded Test

Speaking test can be live or recorded. If the test is live, it means that testees are evaluated as they perform. Heaton (2003, p. 67) warns the raters not to mark in front of a student adding that "Nothing is more discouraging for a student than to enter into conversation with someone who is constantly breaking

off to enter marks and comments" . Otherwise, they can get worried and embarrassed, and this affects their performance in a negative way. If the testees are to be recorded, the recording equipment and facilities must be complete. Recorded performances take longer time to assess, but the consistency between the scores should be checked for a high correlation of reliability in this way (Çaykan, 2001).

2.3.7. Scoring and Marking Systems

2.3.7.1. Analytic Scoring

Analytic scoring is the scoring system which is less subjective than the holistic one. Mousavi mentions that in analytic scoring, rating scales include levels of a person's language use which go from worst to best performance in a number of steps. They briefly describe what the typical learner at each level can do, so it becomes easier for the assessor to decide what level or score to give each learner in a test (2009). The assessors evaluate the learners by picking up the appropriate one(s) among a series of the description(s) provided in the scale unlike holistic scoring (Underhill, 1989). There are some demerits of analytic scoring mentioned by Underhill. The first one is rating scales are built in line with a typical learner; however, only a few of or students are typical and speaking is a complex skill involving a number of skills and aspects. Developing a rating scale with several mark categories can be a solution to this problem. Secondly, it is controversial how detailed a rating scale should be. The more descriptions a rating scale has, the easier it is for the raters to match the subjects with these described levels. Nonetheless, this may pose a problem as well. It can be equally difficult for the raters to assess the subjects while they are so involved in these detailed categories. Different interpretations of the rating scales by the raters can be another problem which leads to inconsistencies in scores and hence low reliability (Bachman & Palmer, 1990). Consequently, the scales should be devised as clear as possible without any ambiguity and they should be reviewed by the raters before they are used. In conclusion, rating scales should be designed or adapted for each particular course or even groups. Besides, they should be reviewed or improved by trial and error until they can be used most efficiently.

Table 2.1. Analytic Rating Scale (Heaton, 2003, p. 111)

	Fluency	Grammar
5	Flowing style – very easy to understand – both complex and simple sentences – very effective	Mastery of grammar taught on course – only 1 or 2 minor mistakes
4	Quite flowing style – mostly easy to understand – a few complex sentences – effective	A few minor mistakes only (prepositions, articles, etc.)
3	Style reasonably smooth – not too hard to understand – mostly (but not all) simple sentences – fairly effective	Only 1 or 2 major mistakes but a few minor ones Major mistakes which lead to difficulty in understanding – lack of mastery of sentence construction
2	Jerky style – an effort needed to understand and enjoy – complex sentences confusing – mostly simple sentences or compound sentences	Numerous serious mistakes – no mastery of sentence construction
1	Very jerky – hard to understand – cannot enjoy reading – almost all simple sentences – complex sentences confusing – excessive use of 'and'	almost unintelligible

	Vocabulary	Spelling
5	Use of wide range of vocabulary taught previously	No errors

4	Good use of new words acquired – use of appropriate synonyms, circumlocution, etc.	1 or 2 minor errors only (e.g. ie or ei)
3	Attempts to use words acquired – fairly appropriate vocabulary on the whole but sometimes restricted – has to resort to use of synonyms, circumlocution, etc. on a few occasions	Several errors – do not interfere significantly with communication – not too hard to understand
2	Restricted vocabulary – use of synonyms (but not always appropriate) –imprecise and vague – affects meaning	Several errors – some interfere with communication – some words very hard to recognize
1	Very restricted vocabulary – inappropriate use of synonyms – seriously hinders communication	Numerous errors – hard to recognise several words – communication made very difficult

2.3.7.2. Holistic Scoring

This scoring system is also referred to as 'Impression Marking' by Underhill. Madsen (1983) defines this scoring system as the one in which the assessors score the subjects' overall performance using their judgments and impressions without picking out any special features or counting system for errors. This scoring system enables the assessors to concentrate on communication rather than its components separately. On the other hand, it is challenging and confusing to evaluate a numerous things at the same time. Furthermore, it is a subjective scoring system. Holistic marking is a rough-and-ready guide for quick assessment, so they can be useful in placement or progress tests where time is limited for complicated scoring systems and errors of judgment can be corrected afterwards. Using this kind of marking calls for a lot of experience, therefore, less experienced teachers are not recommended to use this marking system (Underhill, 1989).

Table 2.2. Interview Assessment Scale (Carroll, 1982, p.135)

10	**Expert speaker**	Speaks with authority on a variety of topics. Can initiate, expand and develop a theme.
9	**Very good non-native speaker**	Maintains effectively his own part of a discussion. Initiates, maintains and elaborates as necessary. Reveals humor where needed and responds attitudinal tones.
8	**Good speaker**	Presents case clearly and logically and can develop the dialogue coherently and constructively rather less flexible and fluent than Band 8 performer but can respond to main changes of tone or topic. Some hesitations and repetitions due to a measure of language restriction but interacts effectively.
7	**Component speaker**	Is able to maintain theme of dialogue, to follow topic switches and to use

and appreciate main attitude markers. Stumbles and hesitates at times but is reasonably fluent otherwise. Some errors and inappropriate language but these will not impede exchange of views. Shows some independence in discussion with ability to initiate |
| 6 | **Modest speaker** | Although gist of dialogue is relevant and can be basically understood, there are noticeable deficiencies in mastery of language patterns and style. Needs to ask for repetition or clarification, and similarly to be asked for them. Lacks flexibility and initiative. The interviewer often has to speak deliberately. Copes but not with great style or interest. |
| 5 | **Marginal speaker** | Can maintain dialogue but in a rather passive manner, rarely taking

initiative or guiding the discussion. Has difficulty in following English at normal speed; lacks fluency and probably accuracy in speaking. The dialogue is therefore neither easy nor flowing. Nevertheless gives the impression that he is in touch with the gist of the dialogue even if not wholly master of it. Marked L1 accent |
| 4 | **Extremely limited speaker** | Dialogue is a drawn-out affair punctuated with hesitations and

misunderstandings. Only catches part of normal speech and unable to produce continuous and accurate discourse. Basic merit is just hanging |

		on the discussion gist, without making a major contribution to it.
3	**Intermittent speaker**	No working facility; occasional, sporadic communication .
2	**Non-Understandable**	No coherent communication.
1/0	**Non- speaker**	Not able to understand and/or speak.

2.4. TASKS SUGGESTED IN SPEAKING TESTS

2.4.1. Definition of a Task

A task is any of a group of fairly open-ended test items that require students to perform a task in the language that is being tested. A test task might include a series of communicative tasks or a set of problem-solving tasks and a writing task (Mousavi, 2009). Tasks are activities that people do, and in language learning contexts, tasks are usually defined in terms of language use (Luoma, 2004). According to Luoma (2004), speaking tasks are activities used for a purpose to achieve a goal, a role or a setting. As Nunan emphasizes (1992) that communicative task is:

"…a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form.. Minimally, a task will consist of some input data and one or more related activities and procedures….." (, cited in Luoma, 2004, p. 30-31)

2.4.2. Speaking Tests

2.4.2.1. Sentence Completion

A series of sentences is prepared, for example in dialogue form, with the last few words missing from each. During the interview, the learner is asked to read through the sentences, one at a time, and to suggest a way to complete the sentence. (Underhill, 1989)

2.4.2.2. Sentence Construction/Correction

A sentence, orally or in writing, which contains an error is given to the student and to identify and correct the error is required. A passage with several errors, ranging from easy to difficult may be used instead of one sentence. (Underhill, 1989)

2.4.2.3. Translation/Interpreting

In this technique, the interviewer and the learner have a native language text with which the learner is familiar; the interviewer chooses a passage or passages and wants from the learner to translate it into the foreign language. Another important point is the marking system; attention is paid both the accuracy and correctness of the translation and to the style and feeling for the original (Underhill, 1989). According to Hughes (1989), although it is not intended that candidates should act as interpreters, simple interpreting tasks can test both production and comprehension in a controlled way.

2.4.2.4. Reading a Blank Dialogue

Heaton (2003, p. 89) explains that "reading aloud test type is used when testing pronunciation is planned, and it would be helpful to imagine yourself in the real life situation desired to be in". According to Underhill (1989), the interviewer's sentence following the gap also constraints the learner's choice of words for that gap. For example:

A: Can you tell me how to get to the station?

B:………………………………………

A: And where does the bus stop?

B:…………………………..

A: Oh yes, I can see it

Also, the choice of words to fill the gaps can be quite open-ended;

A: What did you do at the weekend?

B:………………………………….(but requires use of past tense)

A: What was the weather like?

B: ………………………………(requires some reference to weather)

Or, it can be constrained completely:

A:………………………………….

B: I'm thirty one. (requires question about age)   (Underhill,1989, p. 65)

2.4.2.5. Oral Presentation

The learner prepares and gives an oral presentation lasting from five to ten minutes. Referring to his/her notes is expected, but reading aloud is strongly discouraged. Using some equipments such as a board, a projector or a computer is encouraged (Underhill, 1989).

2.4.2.6. Verbal Essay

Weir (1990) points out that in this type of the test, the learner is asked to speak for about three minutes on one or more specified topics. Sometimes the learner speaks directly into a tape/voice recorder, which may be stressful, and also the choice of the topic is crucial.

2.4.2.7. Using Pictures/Picture Story

2.4.2.7.1. Pictures for Questions and Answers

In this type of test, the examiner is asked a number of questions about the content of the picture which is given to the learner before the test. The learner is also given some time to study the picture. The questions may be extended to embrace the thoughts and attitudes of people in the picture and to discuss future developments (Weir, 1990). According to Hughes (1989) pictures are particularly useful for eliciting descriptions.

2.4.2.7.2. Describing Pictures/ Picture Talk

At the beginning, the learner is given a picture or sequence of pictures to look at, and then the interviewer asks the learner to describe the picture or story and allows him to speak freely. When the learner has finished speaking, the interviewer may ask questions which are designed to elicit particular information, perhaps about a point the learner has missed or not made clear (Underhill, 1989). Heaton (2003) claims that the aim of using pictures of single objects is testing the production of significant phoneme contrasts, yet a picture of a scene or an incident should be used for examining the total oral skills. According to Underhill (1989), a well-chosen picture makes a point and has a story to tell, speech samples from different learners are directly comparable as they are about the same picture. Moreover, the words used by a learner are not completely predetermined, and that presents a lot of opportunity for personal expression and interpretation. Thus, it creates confidence to speak and flow of conversation.

Another implication presented by Underhill is that there is a danger of missing the point of a picture or story, for many reasons such as personal or cultural. A picture which is very suitable for a place may be very unsuitable for another one. And also, cultural and personal facilities should be taken into account. Another way of using pictures for assessing oral production is stated by Heaton (2003, p .92); the students are given a picture to study for a few minutes; time is allocated to study the picture, and the student describes the picture. One examiner counts the words that the student speaks, and the other examiner counts the number of errors, for this method is very unreliable, separate scores for general fluency, grammar, vocabulary, phonology, and accuracy of description/narration are far better. Coombe, Folse and Hubley (2007) states that visuals can be very useful in assessing speaking skills. They are especially good for descriptions; students are given a picture or photo and are required to describe what they see. The assessor must be sure to give enough time to look at the picture before starting speaking.

2.4.2.8. Interview

2.4.2.8.1. Controlled Interview

In this format there are normally a set of procedures determined in advance for eliciting performance, the interviewer decides which questions to ask and what to find out about the candidate's language ability. (Underhill, 1989). He defines the interview as "the most common of all oral tests, and is a direct, face to face exchange between learner and interviewer." He adds that it is a consistent and relevant type of test that contains more than one question or comment. Heaton (2003) defines the oral interview as the most common, but it is highly subjective and thus sometimes has low reliability. In addition, the performance of a student in a particular interview in a limited time may not exactly reflect the student's ability. Hughes (1989) states that although this type of assessment is the most common format for the speaking tests, it has at least one serious drawback; the candidate is in passive condition and many functions, such as asking for information by the candidate) is ignored in the candidate's performance. According to Weir (1990), in this type of assessment, it is highly possible to ask the candidates the same questions and thus it is easier to make comparisons across performances.

2.5.2.8.2. Free Interview

In this type of interview, the conversation is not planned beforehand and because of its validity, it is preferable, but it may be time consuming if there are a lot of students. According to Weir (1990), free interview is popular because of its face and content validity, and it is like extended conversations and the direction is allowed to unfold as the interview takes place. Yet, the procedure may be time consuming and difficult to administer if there are large numbers of candidates

2.4.2.9. Role-Playing

As Underhill (1989) describes, in this type of test, the learner takes on a role and imagine himself in that particular situation. Before the test, the interviewer gives a set of instructions which are simple and using these instructions, the learner gets what he is supposed to do. Heaton (2003) emphasizes that role play activities can be used to test oral production, the role plays may vary from short simple role plays which involve two or three students to longer role plays in which there are several students. According to

Weir (1990), role play technique can be valid since it is practical and potentially highly valid and reliable, on the other hand, it is important to consider that the role has equal demands on both/all learners. Hughes (1989) explains that candidates can be asked to assume a role in a particular situation, and this allows the ready elicitation of other language functions. According to Coombe, Folse and Hubley (2007), some cue cards with information written about their "character" and the setting. Yet, some students find it difficult to project themselves into an imaginary situation, and this lack of acting ability may affect reliability. The role plays used for the test may vary from short simple role involving only two or three students to several students (Heaton, 2003). Luoma (2004) states that role-play tasks are a way of making communication in a test more versatile because, rather than talking to a tester, the examinees take on a new role.

2.4.2.10. Simulation

Simulation is a testing technique in which a group of subjects discuss a problem or a series of problems within a defined a setting (Byrne, 1989). A group of two or more participants can be tested together through this technique (Underhill, 1989). Simulation differs from role-playing in that in simulation the participants can simply act as themselves rather than pretend to be somebody else. However, they may have to act in the capacity of parents, teachers, administrators and so on. The aim of a simulation is coping with the situation rather than adopting behavior-patterns that may be unfamiliar (Littlewood, 1983).

2.4.2.11. Discussion

According to Underhill (1989) it is the most natural thing in the world; two people having a conversation about a topic. It is also the most difficult as it can occur only when both students are relaxed and confident. Furthermore, in practice, it can be successful when interviewer creates the right atmosphere.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of the students towards the speaking test, to find out their experiences before, during and after the speaking test. It goes one step further by investigating the attitudes and perceptions of the instructors at Pamukkale University about the rubric, the materials and procedures for the speaking test.

3.2. NATURE OF THE STUDY

Research can be defined as a systematic approach that tries to find answers to questions (Ellis, 1987). According to Bell (1993), the aim of a survey is to gather information from a representative selection of population. Nunan (1992) states that attitudes, opinions, or characteristics of a group are investigated through questionnaires, interviews, and observations with survey studies. Mackey & Gass (2005) defines research in a basic and simple form as a way of finding out answers to questions.

The aim of the questionnaire used in the present study was twofold. First, it was used to collect data to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of the students towards the speaking test, to find out their experiences before, during and after the speaking test. Secondly, it was administered to find out the attitudes and perceptions of the instructors at Pamukkale University about the rubric used for the speaking test, the materials used and procedure for the speaking test in a quick, accurate and cheap way. Likert scale was used to find out the beliefs, attitudes and perceptions of the students and instructors. According to McMillan & Schumacher (1993), Likert-type scales are the most commonly and easily used scaled questions, and also they allow the respondents to indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement with the statement by choosing one. This study was designed as a descriptive study. The questionnaires were seen as the main qualitative data gathering technique to find out the perceptions and attitudes of the students and instructors.

3.3. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The study includes one pilot and one main study. Information about setting, participants, data collection instruments and procedures are discussed in the following sections.

3.3.1. Setting

The study consisted of two parts; in the first part, after speaking test, the students were given a questionnaire which investigated the attitudes and perceptions of the students towards the speaking test. In the beginning of the study, a pilot study was applied to the students to find out the possible drawbacks and problems of the data gathering instruments, to have a reliable instrument and make necessary changes.

The pilot study was conducted in a pre-intermediate group including 30 students after the speaking test. This group was chosen intentionally, as the group could represent most of the sampling in view of their speaking marks.

The main study was conducted with 172 pre-intermediate and 38 intermediate students. The main study was carried out in one class hour during the fall semester of 2008-2009 academic year. The study was administered in fall semester because it was the semester that covered 14 weeks and at the end of the semester, they took the first speaking test.

In the second part of the study, the instructors who took part in the test as assessors were asked to respond a questionnaire after the test. Later on, the questionnaires given to both the students and instructors were analyzed.

3.3.2. Participants

The participants were the students and the English instructors in the School of Foreign Languages at Pamukkale University, The participants of the study were randomly chosen 210 students

out of 950 who were from pre-intermediate to intermediate students learning English as a foreign language in the preparatory program at Pamukkale University, School of Foreign Languages. The students had 25 hours of English classes per week including four skills as reading, writing, listening and speaking. Figure 3.1 shows the distribution and level of the students.
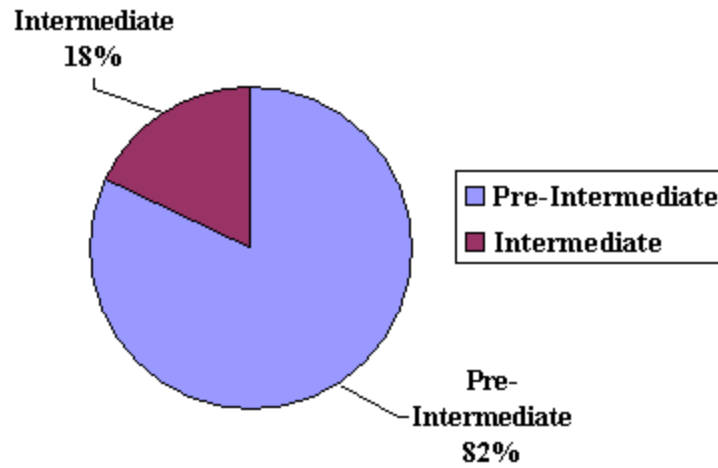
Figure 3.1. The level and number of the students

210 students were asked to respond to the questionnaire, 82% of the students was from pre-intermediate level and 18 % of them was intermediate level. In addition, 55% of the students was female and 45% was male. The age of the students ranged from 17 to 24, but 84,8 % of the students were between 18 and 20 (see table 3.1.).

Table 3.1. The age of the students

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
17	1	,5	,5
18	36	17,1	17,6

19	73	34,8	52,4
20	69	32,9	85,2
21	14	6,7	91,9
22	12	5,7	97,6
23	2	1,0	98,6
24	3	1,4	100,0
Total	210	100,0	

The instructors constituted the second part of the participants of the study as they were one of the most important factors, and took part in the speaking test as the assessor or interviewer. There were 34 instructors in the school, and 32 of them took part in the study. They had different teaching experiences from just 1 year to 18 years.
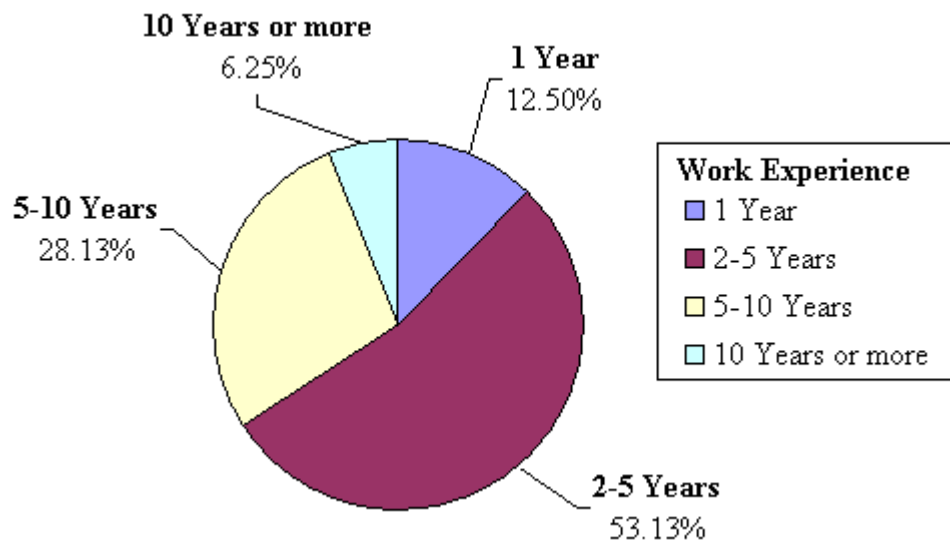
Figure 3.2. The working experience of the instructors

The instructors graduated from different departments ranging from ELT to English Language and Literature or Department of Translation and Interpretation.
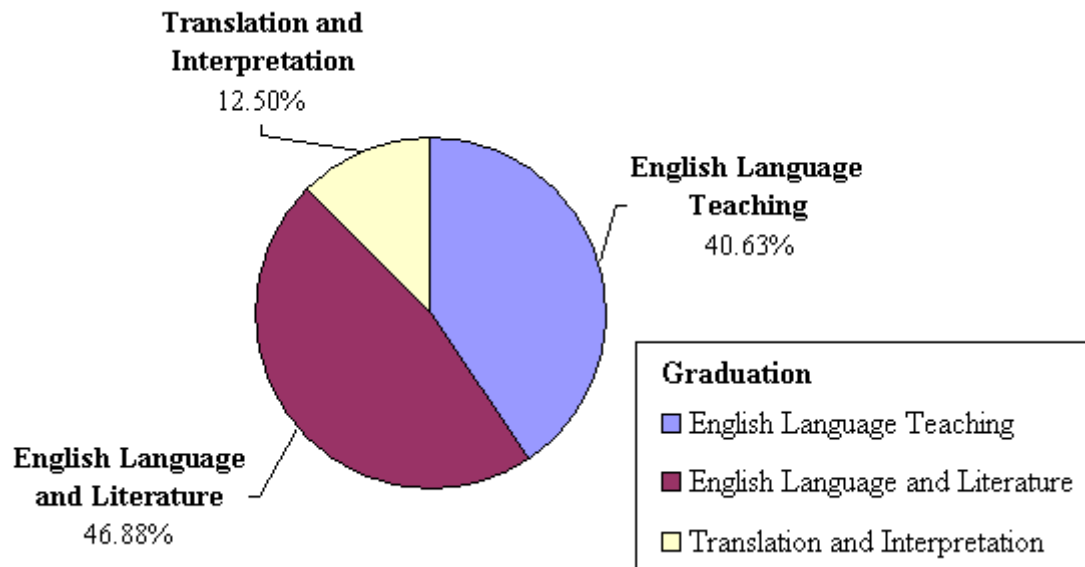
Figure 3.3. The departments the instructors graduated from

In the School of Foreign Languages, all the instructors use the same books, materials and the same curriculum, so standardization of the speaking test is crucial. In the speaking test, the instructors play a really crucial role. The students take the exam one-to-two interview type, and while the instructors take part in the test as assessors and interviewers. The students are asked personal questions by the instructors to lower the anxiety level and then some questions from the activities they had during the class and the last part is picture-story which is required to describe and answer the questions about it. The duration of the test varies from 5 minutes to 12 minutes. Each instructor has a marking rubric consisting of content, organization, vocabulary, fluency and accuracy.

The research topic was especially chosen because, as mentioned in the literature review, students in Turkey do not have enough experience about speaking skill in EFL. Among four skills, speaking is the most challenging skill for them and their maturity in speaking is low when compared with the other skills.

3.3.3. Instruments and Procedures for Data Collection

Two questionnaires were designed to collect data from both students and instructors. The first questionnaire aimed to find out perceptions and attitudes of the students about the speaking tests, their experiences before-during and after the test.

The second questionnaire was given to the instructors to reveal the instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards the rubric used for the speaking test, materials used for the speaking test, and the procedure used for the speaking tests.

3.3.3.1. Questionnaire Administered to the Students

The questionnaire applied to the students was adapted from Güllüoğlu's and Çuvalcı's master theses. The questionnaire was directly translated into Turkish and included 44 items. The main purpose of the questionnaire was to gather data which included questions about their experiences on speaking test in their previous institution, their feelings, opinions and preparation ways to the speaking test before, during and after the test. In the first part; there were questions aiming to find out demographic information about the students. The other questions were developed to find out the correct data about the students. In the questionnaire, it was aimed to find out their attitudes and perceptions about the speaking test, their preparation progress to the test, their feelings and feedbacks to the test, what they felt, learnt and what they think about the assessment after the test. Some questions were similar and repetitive, and the reliability analysis was applied to these questions.

The questionnaire for the students was administered at their regular class time. Before applying the questionnaire, the students were assured that the data gathered would not be used for judgments or assessments by their instructors. The students were told that the study is conducted to improve their language teaching program and the results would be shared with the school administration and their needs would be taken into consideration for the following classes. In addition, the students were assured that

they were not supposed to write their name on the questionnaire as they might hesitate and could hinder having objective results. But, after the questionnaire the questionnaires collected from the students were numbered incase it may be necessary to check them again. The questionnaire took 50 minutes. The Cronbach alpha was found as .78. The questionnaire applied to the students can be seen in Appendix 5

3.3.3.2. Questionnaire Administered to the Instructors

The questionnaire applied to the instructors was adapted from Güllüoğlu's master thesis and also some other items were added to the questionnaire. In this questionnaire, Cronbach alpha coefficient was .76. The pilot study was applied to 5 instructors, and necessary changes were made. There were 26 items in the questionnaire. The aim of the questionnaire was to find out the instructors' attitudes and perceptions towards the rubric, materials, and the procedure used for the speaking tests. The questionnaire applied to the instructors can be seen in Appendix 6.

3.3.4. Procedures for Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data, the statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.0 was used. The data collected from the questionnaire of the students and instructors were analyzed by using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage and mean scores). Each item in the questionnaire was analyzed and interpreted. Students were required to tick one box. Most of the items, some of them were required to number the items from the most important to the least important (see Table 3.2.). Participants were asked to choose between five answers ranging from SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), U (Undecided), D (Disagree), SD (Strongly Disagree). Likert scale was used in this questionnaire, and each item was assigned points from 5 to 1 to analyze in the computer.

A sample of Likert Scale used in this questionnaire is provided below:

I am able to speak English fluently.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5	4	3	2	1

The table below is formulated according to Tekin (as cited in Güllüoğlu, 2004).

Q. 26. What was the most difficult part of the speaking test?

Table 3.2. Calculation of item type from the most important to the least one.

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
LOPR	2	6,3	6,3
LORP	7	21,9	28,1
LROP	9	28,1	56,3
LRPO	3	9,4	65,6
OPRL	3	9,4	75,0
RLOP	7	21,9	96,9
RLPO	1	3,1	100,0
Total	32	100,0	

L: Listening so many students

R: Rating students' performance

O: Organizing the Test

P: Physical Factors (Classroom, Time)

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of the study was to find out the attitudes and perceptions of the both students towards the speaking test including their pre-test, during test and post test experiences and the instructors towards the speaking test, the rubric, the materials and the procedures. For this purpose, this study attempted to address the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions and attitudes of the students about the speaking tests?

   a) are there any differences among male and female students?

   b) are there any differences among pre-intermediate and intermediate students?

2. What are the instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards:

   a) the rubric used for the speaking test?

   b) materials used for the speaking test?

   c) procedure used about the speaking tests for the speaking test?

As a result of data analysis, each finding was discussed in terms of the research questions.

4.2. PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF THE STUDENTS TOWARDS THE SPEAKING TESTS

<u>1. What are the perceptions and attitudes of the students about the speaking tests?</u>

It is customary for writers on tests of spoken language (Heaton 1975, Madsen 1983) to begin with the observation that while speaking is the most important of the language skills, it is also the most difficult to test. The familiar problems of validity and reliability are added to the difficulties caused by

most tests of spoken language being 'live' tests, requiring the presence of the examiner, and the related considerations of cost and efficiency (Foot, 1999). In addition, as it has been pointed out in the literature review that speaking is the most stressful skill to be tested. As the Turkish EFL learners mentioned, speaking can be the most challenging type of exam.

The questions in the questionnaire given to the students included three parts which are before the test, during the test and after the test. The items referred to each part can be seen in table 4.1.

Table 4.1. The Items in Each Part in the questionnaire given to the students

Before The Test	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11
During The Test	12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19,20,21,22,23,24
After The Test	25,26,27,28,29,30,31,32,33,34,35,36,37,38,39,40,41,42,43,44

4.2.1. Attitudes and Perceptions of the Students before the Speaking Test

The most striking result in the study is that most of the students (92.8 %) experienced a speaking test for the first time in their life. As can be seen in Table 4.2., although more than half of the students have some experience in language use, Table 4.3. shows that 92.8 % of them states that they have never had a speaking test before. This result reveals that although these students have had education on English in both primary and secondary level, their teachers have never assessed their speaking skills before.

Table 4.2. The Number of Students who have Language Experience

	Frequency	Percent
Prep Class	123	58,6
Work Place	1	,5
Private Course	1	,5
No Experience	85	40,5
Total	210	100,0

It means that the teachers and the curriculum of the Ministry of Education may have naturally ignored this skill so far. On the other hand, when they came across the speaking course and the speaking test for the first time at university level, this factor may have negatively affected their attitudes and perceptions towards the speaking test. The data also show that this may affect the performance of the students in the speaking test negatively and may increase the anxiety level of the students.

Table 4.3. The percentage of the students having taken a speaking test in his/her

institution

	Frequency	Percent
Str. Disagree	175	83,3
Disagree	20	9,5
Undecided	7	3,3
Agree	2	1,0
Str. Agree	6	2,9
Total	210	100,0

It is clear in Table 4.4. that 81.9% of the students are nervous and stressed before the speaking test. In another way, the most stressful exam for the students is speaking test. The data obtained are as expected and they also have similarities with the data obtained from the students who had a speaking test before. For that reason, correlation and regression test was applied additionally. In the correlation test for the items 1 and 2, it is seen that the answers of the first item and the answers of second item have 93.6% negative correlation. That is, the students who have had a speaking test before are more relaxed and confident than the students who have not had a speaking test before. The high percentage of anxiety level may have two reasons; the first one is that the students take the speaking test the first time, and the second one is that the students from pre-intermediate level have more anxiety, that is, as the level of English decreases, the anxiety level gets higher.

Table 4.4. The percentage of the students who were anxious before the speaking test

	Frequency	Percent
Str. Disagree	18	8,6
Disagree	20	9,5
Undecided	39	18,6
Agree	49	23,3
Str. Agree	84	40,0
Total	210	100,0

One of the most important things to organize a speaking test is to inform the students about the test. Giving information about the test before may affect the students' anxiety level and their performance. According to our data, 92.9% of the students have never had a speaking test before, so giving information about the speaking test process is of vital importance. In our study, we have introduced the test to the students before they actually take it.

In item 3, a great majority of the students stated that (73.3%) they knew what parts and what kind of tasks they would come across as a speaking test. In addition, 66.7% of the students agreed that they knew how the test would be assessed (item 4). The high percentage of the data in items 3 and 4 show that although the students were given enough information about the procedure such as the parts of the speaking test and the assessment procedure, they felt anxious and stressful. It can be concluded that the reason may be their low level of the target language or their inexperience in the speaking test.

In items 5, 6 and 7, another important identification before the speaking test was tried to find out. When they were asked how they got prepared for the test, 34.8% of the students pointed out that they prepared for the test on their own, and to the same item 45.7% of the students stated that they used one strategy (they studied alone, with friends, or in a private course) while 42.9% of the students used more than one strategy. The results show that they have aptitude to get prepared for the test.

According to the data obtained from item 8, 76,2 % of the students were not relaxed and confident. The percentage is really high, and it can be assumed that the high anxiety level of the students may have directly affected the performance of the students. As they stated in item 2, it is clear that the students feel anxious and stressful before the speaking test. It is really striking that although they have had enough language use experience in primary and secondary school, the high percentage of the students have high level of anxiety. The solution may be to have the students meet with the speaking test and assess their speaking skill at an earlier age (see Table 4.5.).

Table 4.5. The percentage of the students who are relaxed and confident before the

speaking test.

	Frequency	**Percent**
Str. Disagree	109	51,9
Disagree	51	24,3
Undecided	22	10,5
Agree	10	4,8
Str. Agree	18	8,6
Total	210	100,0

As it is expected from the results of the 2nd and 8th items which gather information about the anxiety level and its effects, 69.5 % of the students regard the speaking test as the most challenging test. The data can be seen as expected because most of the students have no experience in speaking test and they have high level of anxiety and in the end the students regard the speaking test as the most challenging type of test (see Table 4.6.).

Table 4.6. The students who think the speaking test as the most challenging test

	Frequency	**Percent**
Str. Disagree	37	17,6
Disagree	46	21,9
Undecided	48	22,9
Agree	31	14,8
Str. Agree	48	22,9
Total	210	100,0

Some items were also indicative of participants' concern about their anxiety before the speaking test. A majority of the students (76.2%) stated that they were not relaxed before the test, and 69.5% of them thought that speaking test was the most challenging and most difficult test for them. This opinion can be supported because 60.5% of the students reported that they thought that speaking test would cause more anxiety than the other written tests.

In conclusion it is clear from the data obtained that, before the speaking test, most of the students have not got any experience in speaking test, they have high level of anxiety and stress. In addition, the students regard the speaking test as the most challenging test type in English.

4.2.2. Attitudes and Perceptions of the Students During the Test

In this part, the questionnaire had items about their performance, speaking skill efficiency and the procedure applied during the test. The responses were quite similar and the learners felt insufficient and insecure during the test. The results were consistent with the data which was discussed in the first part.

Item 12 was about the backwash effect of the activities in the class. The consistency of the speaking test and the speaking activities done in the class have, without doubt, a big effect on the students' performance and success. More than half of the students pointed out that the speaking test that they had taken was parallel to the content of the speaking lesson, and it made them familiar with the test. But, from the data gathered, it seems that it did not help the students lower their anxiety level (see Table 4.7.).

Table 4.7. The students' attitude and perception about the correlation of the speaking

test and speaking activities made in the class.

	Frequency	Percent
Str. Disagree	26	12,4
Disagree	29	13,8
Undecided	71	33,8
Agree	60	28,6
Str. Agree	24	11,4
Total	210	100,0

In addition, it is clear from the results of the 13th item in the questionnaire that the questions the learners encountered during the test were clear and logical. 79% of the students pointed out that the questions in the speaking test were explicit and clear. It means that the procedure of the test, the questions asked to the students during the test and the materials chosen for the test were suitable for the students' level and meaningful. In addition, the students (66.7%) reported that the questions during the test were as expected.

On the other hand, a big percentage (86.2 %) of the students pointed out that they had difficulty to explain what they want during the speaking test and could not express themselves clearly and in adequate way during the test (item 14). Although the students stated that the questions were explicit and clear, they had difficulty to express what they wanted during the test. The reason of this may be that although the students understand the questions in the test, they were lack in stating what they want to say.

It may mean that the speaking activities done in the class help them understand the situation but they still have difficulty to express themselves in English. The students may need more speaking activities in the class to express themselves in a fluent way.

When students were asked to assess their performance during the test, they reported different comments on this statement. While 53.7% of them believed that their class performance was better than their test performance in speaking, 46.2% of them thought their exam performance was much better. In another words, nearly half of the students had a better performance in the speaking test than they expected. It means that although they were anxious before the test, they had a better performance in the test than they hoped.

Items 17, 18, 20 were about the students' concern about an assessor whom they haven't met or studied before. Nearly half of the learners (48.4%) stated that it affected their performance negatively during the test, and they got nervous so they did badly On the other hand, a big majority of the students (83.8%) expressed that they were encouraged and motivated by the assessors during the test, but %46,7 of them stated that they had difficulty in understanding the pronunciation of the instructors in the speaking test. This means that the students have not met enough exposure to speaking during the class activities, and when they do not know the person they speak to, they may have problems and it may affect their performance negatively during the test.

The students stated before the test that they have high level of anxiety before the test (see Table 4.4). Whether their anxiety lowers or not was one of the main concerns, and the students stated that they had still high level of anxiety during the exam (74.7 %). The data show that even though they know the parts of the test, they were familiar with the topics in the test and the tasks were explicit and clear, their anxiety level was still higher. The reason may be that they felt insufficient to produce during the test, and the situation was directly related with their level (see Table 4.8.).

Table 4.8. The anxiety and stress level of the students before and during the speaking

     test.

	Frequency	Percent
Str. Disagree	19	9,0
Disagree	34	16,2

Undecided	51	24,3
Agree	40	19,0
Str. Agree	66	31,4
Total	210	100,0

Items 21 and 23 aimed to find out the most insufficient skill during the test, 86.2% of them reported that during the test they thought that they had insufficient vocabulary or they were not good at in the usage of appropriate vocabulary. As to the structure, they (79.7%) felt that they made some grammar mistakes that should not have been made. While 48.1 % of the students stated that their performance in the test was better than their predictions about the test, %51.9 of them pointed out that they had a test either as they predicted or worse than their predictions.

To sum up, the students think that they were familiar with the topics and tasks in the speaking test, but their anxiety level was still high. Another vital result was that the students think that they lacked in vocabulary, and they had difficulty about what they want to explain during the test, and an instructor they do not know affected their performance negatively during the test.

4.2.3. Post-Test Attitudes and Perceptions of the Students after the Speaking Test

In the last part of the questionnaire, the students were required to evaluate their performance and attitude towards the speaking test. This part can be seem as the most important part of the questionnaire because the students can make a complete evaluation.

According to our analysis, most students (82.4%) pointed out that they did not have enough experience about how to prepare for the speaking test (item 25). The institution should guide to the students how to get prepared for the speaking test efficiently. The students stated that they do not have enough experience about the preparation because they have never had a speaking test in their previous institution before.

83.6% of the students believe speaking tests are necessary to find out their level of English. The high percentage shows that they are aware of the importance of the speaking skill. In addition, they do not deny the importance of speaking skill, accept the importance of it and have enough awareness about it (see Table 4.9.).

Table 4.9. The number of students who think that speaking tests are necessary to find

out my level of English.

	Frequency	Percent
	1	,5
Str. Disagree	15	7,1
Disagree	19	9,0
Undecided	63	30,0
Agree	62	29,5
Str. Agree	50	23,8
Total	210	100,0

91% of the students think that they did not have enough oral practice in English. From the results shown in Table 4.9., it is clear that most of the students (37,1%) strongly agree on the insufficient oral practice in English in their classes..

Table 4.10. The percentage of the students who think they lack sufficient oral practice

in English

	Frequency	Percent
Str. Disagree	8	3,8
Disagree	11	5,2

Undecided	52	24,8
Agree	61	29,0
Str. Agree	78	37,1
Total	210	100,0

86.7 % of the students think that speaking is the most important skill to use English. It can be inferred from Table 4.11. that although Table 4.10. shows that most of the students believe they lack in practice in speaking, .they regard the speaking skill as the most important one. (see Table 4.11.)

Table 4.11. The percentage of the students who regard speaking skill as the most

important skill in English.

	Frequency	**Percent**
Invalid	1	,5
Str. Disagree	6	2,9
Disagree	21	10,0
Undecided	60	28,6
Agree	58	27,6
Str. Agree	64	30,5
Total	210	100,0

After the test, 83.3 % of the students believe that it is necessary to have more speaking activities during the class. When we compare the results shown in Table 4.10. and Table 4.11. with Table 4.12., it can be concluded that the students think that it is necessary to do more speaking activities during the classes. From the data obtained the institution should do more speaking activities regardless of the students' level because speaking skill seems as the most challenging skill to develop for the students.

Table 4.12. The percentage of the students who think after the test that they need more

speaking activities during the class.

	Frequency	Percent
Invalid	1	,5
Str. Disagree	12	5,7
Disagree	22	10,5
Undecided	53	25,2
Agree	76	36,2
Str. Agree	46	21,9
Total	210	100,0

After the test, 83.2 % of the students thought that the less developed skill of them is speaking. As the percentage is high, correlation test was applied and it seemed that these students are also those who think that more speaking activities are necessary during the class. The students stated that their speaking skill is the least developed skill and in the light of these data, some changes in the syllabus and materials may be needed (see Table 4.13.).

Table 4.13. The students whose speaking skills are not as developed as the other skills.

	Frequency	Percent
Invalid	1	,5
Str. Disagree	9	4,3

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	21	10,0
Undecided	54	25,7
Agree	56	26,7
Str. Agree	69	32,9
Total	210	100,0

79.5% of the students believe that enough time is not given to the students. As seen from Table 4.14., most of the students think that they have problems in time management during the speaking test. Although the test time changes between 7 and 12 minutes, it looks insufficient for the students. The reason may be that the students do not have enough level to express their ideas in a limited of time, and it affects their performance.

Table 4.14. Time sufficiency during the speaking test.

	Frequency	Percent
Invalid	1	,5
Str. Disagree	55	26,2
Disagree	76	36,2
Undecided	35	16,7
Agree	20	9,5
Str. Agree	23	11,0
Total	210	100,0

It is clear from Table 4.15. that when the students were asked about the skills that they felt most insufficient, they (87.1%) pointed out that that their vocabulary was not enough to support and express their ideas during the test, 84.8% lacked pronunciation, and 66.9% lacked grammar knowledge.

Table 4.15. The number of students who think they are lack of vocabulary.

	Frequency	Percent
Str. Disagree	11	5,2
Disagree	16	7,6
Undecided	62	29,5
Agree	64	30,5
Str. Agree	57	27,1
Total	210	100,0

When they were asked about the frequency of the speaking test, 33.8% of them reported that it must be more often while the rest thought it was enough or more than needed. It can be concluded that although the students know the importance of the test, they hesitate to take the test because they have high level of anxiety or do not have enough level of English to express themselves.

Another important item was about the content of the speaking course. Majority of the students (83.3%) reported that they needed more speaking activities in the speaking course (item 31).

To conclude, after the test, the perceptions and attitudes of the students are obvious and these data can be valid and reliable information for the institution. Although having enough knowledge about the speaking test and its importance as a skill, the students revealed that they had a very high level of anxiety and they lacked some skills to express themselves efficiently during the test.

1. What are the perceptions and attitudes of the students about the speaking tests?

   a) are there any differences among male and female students?

Another aspect of the study was to find out the differences between female and male students' perceptions and attitudes towards the speaking test. In this part of the analysis, the differences between female and male students were investigated.

When girls and boys were compared, 92.1% of girls have never had a speaking test before, and the percentage is 88. 4% for the boys. Therefore, it can be concluded that few students from both genders experienced speaking test previously, and it would not be valid information to say that there are so many differences between both genders in view of the speaking test experience in their previous institution.

Table 4.16. The distribution of female and male students who have taken a speaking

test in their previous institution (n=210).

		Totally Disagree %	Disagree %	Partially Agree %	Agree %	Totally Agree %	Total
Gender	Female	82.60	9.57	3.48	0.00	4.35	115
	Male	83.16	9.47	3.16	2.10	2.11	95

In addition, 88 % of the girls were more anxious and stressful than the boys (75 %) as an attitude and perception before the test (see figure 4.1). It is clear from the results that female students have a high level of anxiety than male ones.
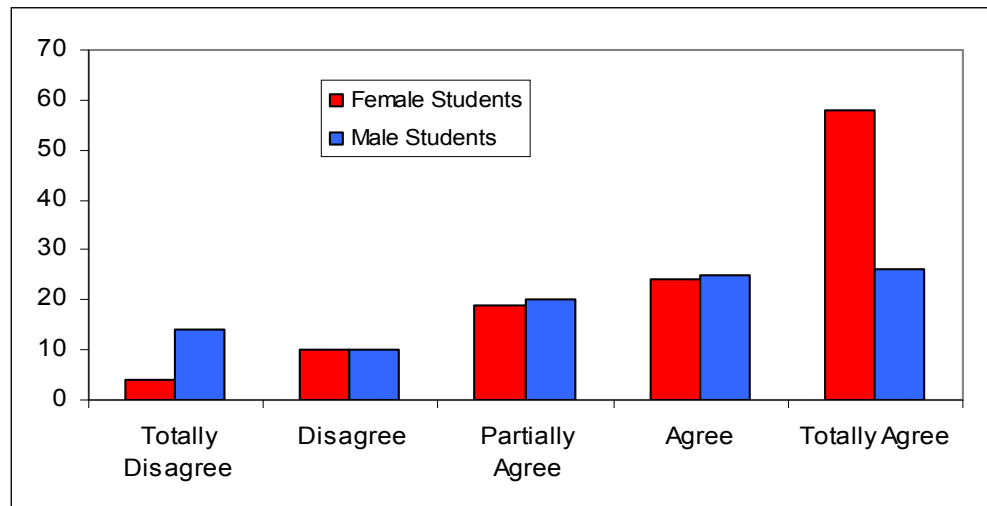
Figure 4.1. The male and female students who are stressful and anxious before the

speaking test.

64.4 % of the female students thinks that the speaking test as the most difficult test. On the other hand, 54.7 % of the male students see the speaking test as the most difficult test. The only plausible reason found in the present study is that 45% of the female students mentioned that they were more nervous during the speaking test, which can also affect their attitudes before the test (see Table 4.17.).

Table 4.17. The distribution of the students who think speaking test as the most difficult

Test (n=210).

		Totally Disagree %	Disagree %	Partially Agree %	Agree %	Totally Agree %	Total
Gender	Female	16.52	20.00	22.61	15.65	25.22	115
	Male	20.00	23.16	23.16	13.68	20.00	95

It is a striking finding that 40% of the female students claimed that they were informed about the assessment criteria, while only 26% of the male students expressed that they were informed (see Table 4.18.).

Table 4.18. The distribution of the students who claimed that they were informed about

the assessment criteria (n=210).

		Totally Disagree %	Disagree %	Partially Agree %	Agree %	Totally Agree %	Total
Gender	Female	13.91	13.04	34.79	23.48	14.78	115
	Male	24.21	16.84	24.21	23.16	11.58	95

1. What are the perceptions and attitudes of the students about the speaking tests?

b) are there any differences among pre-intermediate and intermediate students?

When two groups, the pre-intermediate and intermediate were compared, the anxiety level of pre-intermediate students before the test (85%) was much higher than intermediate group (70%) because the students who have high anxiety level have more negative feelings towards the test. Thus, the level of the students leads them to be more anxious because their level is not sufficient to be competent in using the skill. The probable reasons for this may be that as the proficiency level decreases, their production level gets lower. Furthermore, the students in the pre-intermediate level have got a different syllabus than those in the intermediate level, and this affects the materials used, the activities carried out and the amount of time spent on activities (see Table 4.19).

Table 4.19. The distribution of the students who stated that they were nervous before

the test (n=210).

		Totally Disagree %	Disagree %	Partially Agree %	Agree %	Totally Agree %	Total
Level	pre-int	6.40	9.30	18.03	22.67	43.60	172
	int	18.42	10.53	18.42	23.68	28.95	38

On the other hand, when the experienced students (12%) were examined in terms of their performance during the test, they stated that they performed better, and in conclusion, it can be said that the experienced students felt more relaxed and peaceful during the exam. Tobias' expression (1986, cited in Aydın 1999) is that students with low anxiety have an advantage of dealing only with the task.

Another comparison was done between the levels of the students as the difference between the level of the students could reveal very important findings. 94.2 % of pre-intermediate students were inexperienced about the speaking test and have never had a speaking test before. In addition, 94.5 % of the intermediate students were also inexperienced in the speaking test. When the students were asked about the anxiety level before the speaking test, the percentage of the pre-intermediate students who are stressful and anxious is 84.3 %, and intermediate students are 70.2 %.
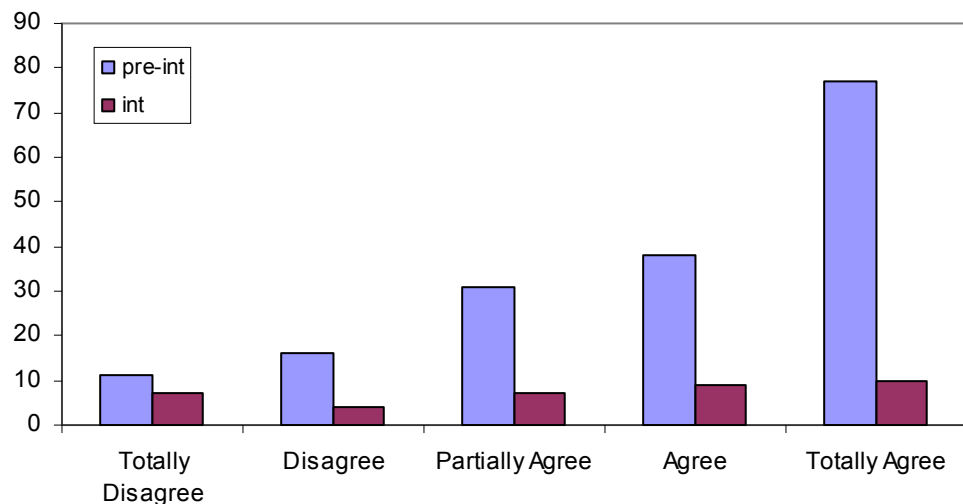
Figure 4.2. The distribution of the students who are stressful and anxious before the

speaking test.

Table 4.20 reveals that most of the pre-intermediate students (88%) judged speaking test as the most difficult one, whereas nearly half of the intermediate students (57%) reported that it is so much difficult. That can be because the higher the proficiency level is, the more productive skills the students engage in. Therefore, as the proficiency level increases, so does the speaking skill.

Table 4.20. The distribution of the students who stated that speaking test was the most

difficult test (n=210).

		Totally Disagree %	Disagree %	Partially Agree %	Agree %	Totally Agree %	Total
Level	pre-int	18.02	20.93	23.26	13.95	23.84	172
	int	21.05	21.05	21.05	18.42	18.42	38

It is clear from Table 4.21. that there are more students from pre-intermediate level (88%) than intermediate level (79%) who mentioned that they had difficulty to express what they want during the test. As discussed earlier, the probable reason is that students from lower proficiency level are not exposed to speaking activities as much as the ones from higher proficiency level. Thus, it becomes harder for them to share their ideas orally.

Table 4.21. The distribution of the students who mentioned that they had difficulty to

express what they want during the test (n=210).

		Totally Disagree %	Disagree %	Partially Agree %	Agree %	Totally Agree %	Total
Level	pre-int	2.33	9.88	16.28	27.32	44.19	172
	int	10.53	10.53	21.05	23.68	34.21	38

4.3. INSTRUCTORS' PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS TESTING SPEAKING

The second part of our data includes the perceptions and attitudes of the English instructors towards testing speaking communicatively. The following items are sought to be answered:

Table 4.22. The items examined instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards testing

speaking

Rubric	2, 9, 14, 16, 18, 24, 25
Materials	12
Procedure	4, 8, 10, 17, 26

2. What are the instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards:

a) the rubric used for the speaking test?

.

As for our data about the assessment of the test, 96.9% of the instructors reported that the rubric used for the speaking test was enough and appropriate. As discussed in the literature review, the rubric is quite comprehensive, including content, organization, vocabulary, fluency, and accuracy. Thus, it seems that the instructors are satisfied with it (see Table 4.23.).

Table 4.23. The percentage of the instructors who think that the rubric is sufficient

	Frequency	Percent
Partially Agree	1	3,1
Agree	26	81,3
Totally Agree	5	15,6
Total	32	100,0

As Table 4.24. suggests, 68.7% of the instructors think that the speaking test is the hardest type of test to assess. The rest of the instructors think that the assessing any of the other exams is harder than

assessing the speaking test. This high percentage can be because of the fact that speaking skill is assessed by open-ended questions and the answers are not predictable due to the nature of speaking.

Table 4.24. The number of the instructors who stated that speaking test is the most

difficult test to assess

	Frequency	Percent
Totally Disagre.	2	6,3
Disagree	8	25,0
Partially Agree	9	28,1
Agree	6	21,9
Totally Agree	7	18,8
Total	32	100,0

Before the speaking test, the instructors had some concerns about scoring before the test. 56.3 % of the instructors pointed out that they had some scoring concerns about the speaking test. It is a striking fact that none of the instructors had ticked the "totally disagree" option in the questionnaire. That is, speaking test was not an easy task for the instructors (see Table 4.25.).

Table 4.25. The number of the instructors who stated that they had some scoring

concerns before the speaking test

	Frequency	Percent
Totally Disagre.	4	12,5
Disagree	10	31,3
Partially Agree	11	34,4
Agree	7	21,9
Total	32	100,0

During the assessment phase; the instructors find the items in the grammar section as the easiest ones, in the second phase, assessing vocabulary is the second one right after grammar tests. For them, the most difficult assessment is carried out in speaking tests. Assessing writing is the second hardest one following speaking test assessment. Table 4.26. shows that 65.5% of the instructors ranked speaking skill as the most difficult skill to test. In addition, 25% of them thought that it was the second most difficult skill to test. None of the instructors judged the speaking skill as the easiest one.

Table 4.26. According to the instructors, from the easiest skill to the hardest to test.

	Frequency	Percent
GRVWLS	1	3,1
GVRWLS	1	3,1
GVRLSW	2	6,3
GVRLWS	6	18,8
GVRSLW	1	3,1
GVRWLS	9	28,1
GVWRLS	1	3,1
LVGRWS	1	3,1
LVRGSW	2	6,3
VGRLSW	2	6,3
VGRLWS	1	3,1
VGRWLS	1	3,1
VGSRLW	2	6,3
VWRGSL	2	6,3
Total	32	100,0

L: Listening Skill

R: Reading Skill

V: Vocabulary

S: Speaking Skill

W: Writing Skill

The open-ended questionnaire applied to the instructors revealed the following issues that the instructors had difficulty while testing speaking skill. Table 4.27. demonstrates that dealing with so many students throughout the speaking test is the most difficult part. Their second concern was related to the rating students' oral performance. That concern was followed by that of organizing the test. The instructors thought that physical factors (classroom, organization, time) affected them the least during the test.

Table 4.27. The hardest part of the speaking test according to the instructors

	Frequency	Percent
LOPR	2	6,3
LORP	7	21,9
LROP	9	28,1
LRPO	3	9,4
OPRL	3	9,4
RLOP	7	21,9
RLPO	1	3,1
Total	32	100,0

L: Listening so many students

R: Rating students' performance

O: Organizing the Test

P: Physical Factors (Classroom, Time)

47.5% of the instructors felt more nervous and uneasy compared to the other exams. 21.9% of the instructors thought that they were inexperienced in implementing the speaking test. 96.9 % of the instructors pointed out that having two assessors in speaking test was appropriate and reinforces reliability of the exam.

2. What are the instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards:

b) materials used for the speaking test?

With respect to the materials of the test, Table 4.28. shows that 79.9% of the instructors stated that the pictures and the speaking topics used in the test were appropriate for the students' level. The rest of the instructors had doubts about this matter. The fact that most of the instructors think in that way is probably because the materials are organized by considering the syllabus, textbooks and the opinions of the instructors in advance.

Table 4.28. The number of the instructors who stated that the questions and the pictures used in the speaking test were appropriate for students' level.

	Frequency	Percent
Partially Agree	9	28,1
Agree	20	62,5
Total Agree	3	9,4
Total	32	100,0

2. What are the instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards:

c) procedure used for the speaking test?

Table 4.29. demonstrates that 86.4% of the instructors were knowledgeable about how speaking test was performed as a process. This can be because of the fact that English Language Department has a mandatory course, testing and evaluation, every prospective English teacher has to take. During that course, how to test each skill

is taught. In addition, seminars and workshops carried out in the School of Foreign Languages were very helpful.

Table 4.29. The number of the instructors who are knowledgeable about the process of the speaking test

	Frequency	Percent
Totally Disagree	1	3,1
Disagree	4	12,5
Partially Agree	4	12,5
Agree	17	53,1
Total Agree	6	18,8
Total	32	100,0

In addition, 90.6% of the instructors stated that the seminars and workshops carried out before speaking test were very helpful and useful for them to apply the test. 17.2% of the instructors thought that although the seminars and workshops carried out before speaking test were helpful in implementing the speaking test, they did not have any benefit for themselves. The positive attitudes towards the seminars and workshops are likely because they are directly related to the speaking test, in which some samples previously recorded via video camera were shown, and all the instructors assessed them altogether. It contributed to the standardization of the test a lot (see Table 4. 30.).

Table 4.30. The number of the instructors who stated that the seminars and workshops carried out before the speaking test helped them assess the skill easier.

	Frequency	Percent
Totally Disagree	1	3,1
Disagree	2	6,3
Partially Agree	23	71,9
Agree	6	18,8
Total	32	100,0

90.6 % of the instructors believed that the test implementers managed adequate objectivity. That can be owing to the fact that in each class there was one assessor and one interviewer, both of whom gave the scores together (see Table 4. 31).

Table 4.31. The number of the instructors who stated that the assessors were objective

in the test.

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	3	9,4
Partially Disagree	9	28,1
Agree	20	62,5
Total	32	100,0

Table 4.32. shows that except 12.5% of the instructors, others have the experience of assessing speaking test. This means that, the instructors that start working recently (12.5%) haven't worked somewhere before or haven't met such an implementation where they work. The instructors in the percentage of 87.5% are the ones that have the experience of speaking test.

Table 4.32. The number of the instructor who have experience in the speaking test

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	4	12,5
Agree	13	40,6
Strongly Agree	15	46,9
Total	32	100,0

62.5 % of the instructors think that the most difficult exam for them to assess is the speaking test. The reason can be that, as mentioned before, the standardization of the test is very difficult, and the answers and the corresponding scores are not predictable.

Table 4.33. The number of the instructors who think speaking test as the most difficult

exam to assess.

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	12	37,5
Undecided	5	15,6
Agree	10	31,3
Strongly Agree	5	15,6
Total	32	100,0

96.9% of the instructors thinks that it is appropriate to carry out the application of the speaking test with two assessors. It can be inferred from Table 4.34. that, according to instructors, applying the test with two assessors increases the reliability of the speaking test.

Table 4.34. The number of the instructors believing in the reliability of the speaking

test with two assessors.

	Frequency	Percent
Undecided	1	3,1
Agree	14	43,8
Strongly Agree	17	53,1
Total	32	100,0

50 % of the instructors had some difficulty in marking objectively throughout the test. Although the instructors were given seminars and workshops abut the procedure of the speaking test, they still have some problems in administering the exam. It shows that experience is the real learning.

Table 4.35. The hardest thing throughout the test was marking objectively.

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	5	15,6
Undecided	11	34,4
Agree	12	37,5
Strongly Agree	4	12,5
Total	32	100,0

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter concludes the whole study. It starts with the summary of the study and presents conclusions from the study in terms of the attitudes and perceptions of the students towards speaking test, and the attitudes of the instructors about testing speaking, their perceptions and attitudes about the rubric, materials and the procedure during the test. In addition, implications of the study and suggestions for the further research have been presented.

5.2. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to investigate and find out the perceptions and attitudes of the students and what their experiences before-during and after the test are and also what the instructors' perceptions and attitudes towards the rubric used, the materials used, and the procedure applied during the speaking tests at Pamukkale University School of Foreign Languages. In addition, what kind of backgrounds the students have about speaking tests, their ability in speaking as a skill and how they get prepared to the exam, what kind of experiences they have and what they feel after the test were examined in the study. Our data sought to answer the perceptions and attitudes of the students towards the speaking test. Furthermore, the perceptions and attitudes of the English instructors towards the rubric used in the institution, the materials used and the procedure were all investigated.

As for sampling, 172 pre-intermediate and 38 intermediate level EFL students in preparatory program were chosen as one part of the participants of the study. They were selected randomly among the

whole sampling according to the cumulative percent so that it could be representative. The other part of the participants were composed of the English instructors (n=32). In order to find out the attitudes and perceptions of the participants, the students were given a questionnaire including three parts; pre-test, during-test and post-test.

In order to collect data, first the students were given a questionnaire including 44 questions. The questionnaire was given after the test and the EFL students were required to answer them after the speaking test which lasted between 7 to 12 minutes for each student. In addition, out of 36 English instructors, 32 of them answered the questionnaire which was designed for the EFL instructors. The questionnaire was given to the instructors after the test, too. To identify the attitudes and perceptions, this study focused on the first speaking test in the preparatory class.

The reason for data triangulation was to find out if there was a correlation between pre-test and during-test, pre-test and post-test, during-test and post-test. All the participants were asked to express their attitudes and perceptions by questionnaires in the 14th week of the preparatory program. It was hypothesized that the EFL students had similar language learning backgrounds, so their attitudes and perceptions towards the speaking test would be parallel, and the implications of this study may help to find out their attitudes and perceptions for the instructors and provide a more successful atmosphere and low stress and anxiety level.

First and foremost, according to the data related with before the test, it was clear that the speaking test they had in the School of Foreign Languages was their first experience for most students. As a result, the speaking test they were exposed to was the most challenging and stressful test when compared with other types of tests. The students who were stressful and anxious stated the same ideas during the exam, that is, when the exam started, their attitudes and feelings about the speaking test did not change. From the correlation test, it was clear that the students who had a speaking test in their previous institution were more relaxed and less anxious and stressful. On the other hand, before the exam, 81, 9 % of the students felt anxious and stressful, but 48.1 % of them stated that their performance during the exam was better than they thought before the exam. The reason might be that 83.8% of the students pointed out that the instructors in the exam encouraged them to express their ideas. When their negative ideas about the speaking test before and during the exam were compared with their post-test attitudes, the result did not change; 82.4 % of the students stated that they were inexperienced about getting prepared for the speaking test. Another striking result was that   60, 5 % of the students pointed out that they were unsuccessful in the speaking test. Although 89,5 % of the students think that speaking is the most important skill to be developed for them, only 33,8 % of them think that speaking test should be applied more often. This result may be interpreted in the following way: although they know the importance of

the speaking skill, because of their high anxiety and stress, they do not want to have the speaking test more often.

With respect to the results of the instructors, most of the instructors think that the speaking test is the hardest type of test to assess. Almost all of the instructors reported that the rubric applied for the speaking test was sufficient and appropriate. Nearly half of the instructors pointed out that they had some scoring concerns about the speaking test. It was found that during the assessment phase; the instructors find grammar tests as the easiest ones, in the second phase, assessing vocabulary tests is the second one right after grammar tests. For them, the most difficult assessment is carried out in speaking tests. Assessing writing is the second hardest one following speaking test assessment. For them, dealing with so many students on the exam day is the most difficult part of the test. Their second concern was related to the rating students' oral performance. That concern was followed by that of organization of the test.

5.3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Testing oral proficiency has been around recently. Nowadays, an increased attention has been given to the attitudes and perceptions of the students towards testing speaking. In addition, learners' attitude and perceptions towards testing speaking, their beliefs and backgrounds is another main concern. It is now known that people learning a second or a foreign language need to adopt positive attitudes and high motivation and use appropriate strategies in order to become more effective learners in the classroom (Aydın, 1999).

The results of the study have significant implications in terms of their methodological and pedagogical aspects. In terms of methodological aspects, in the light of the results of the study, some critical and important conclusions can be drawn. First, the students do not have enough speaking test experience in their previous institution, that is, the language teaching programs in the primary and secondary schools do not focus on speaking skill and testing speaking. Although language learning process starts in primary schools, the students are not proficient enough to express themselves in the target language in terms of speaking even at elementary level. Although the programs and curriculum of Ministry of Education have been reorganized and revised, it is clear that there are still deficiencies in terms of speaking skill and speaking test.

The second implication is the anxiety and stress level of the students. The students pointed out that they have high level of anxiety and stress level. Although they have had a language program for many years, most of the students think the speaking test as the most stressful test. The instructors should

implement more efficient ways to reduce the anxiety level of the students. They can arrange more pair work and group work activities in their classes, and thus, students will hopefully get ready for the speaking test. The students' awareness could be raised towards speaking topics so that they can get prepared in advance.

The third important implication of the study is for the instructors. The language institutions have been growing day by day all over the country for the past twenty years, and a lot of instructors with different backgrounds teach and test the target language. As a skill which has no predictable or multiple choice answers, testing speaking gains great importance. In addition, having a valid and reliable exam is crucial. The participants in this study pointed out that they had some concerns in the assessment of the speaking test. As an implication, it can be said that the institution needs more teacher training programs to have a valid and reliable test in terms of testing speaking.

In terms of pedagocical aspects, this study tried to find out not only the attitudes and perceptions of the students, but also the instructors' perspective in the same study, and also their ideas related with the rubric, materials, and the procedures used during the speaking test. As an implication, this study may provide insights for both instructors and students to minimize the negative effects of the speaking tests.

Another implication is that it can help the instructors to get awareness about the attitudes and perceptions of their students towards testing speaking, and the instructors may try to find out new ways to help the learners. As a guide, the instructors can get information about the students' attitudes and perceptions, and may help them to improve positive attitudes.

Finally, the institution may revise the speaking classes and materials which may help to develop positive attitudes and perception towards the speaking tests.

5.4. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study was conducted in an EFL setting with 172 pre-intermediate, 38 intermediate students and 32 instructors in the School of Foreign Languages, Pamukkale University in Turkey. For that reason, findings of the study can not be generalized for all the foreign language learners and instructors in Turkey. The study aimed at finding out the attitudes and perceptions of the learners and instructors towards testing speaking, so generalization was not the main concern. Nevertheless, it is the first study

about testing speaking in the School of Foreign Languages at Pamukkale University, and it might help improve the preparatory class program in terms of teaching and testing speaking. It would be really helpful is a replication of this study could be made with larger and more diverse samples in different universities in the country as done by Barın, in 1997, at Atatürk University under the name of "The importance of Listening-Speaking Skills, Their Contribution to Language Teaching and Its Implementation in The English Departments at Ataturk University", and by Güllüoğlu, in 2004, under the name of "Attitudes Towards Testing Speaking at Gazi University Preparatory School of English and Suggested Speaking Tests" in this very recent field.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

TOEFL INDEPENDENT RATING SCALE

Score	General Description	Delivery	Language Use	Topic Development
4	**The response fulfills the demands of the task, with at most minor lapses in completeness. It is highly intelligible and exhibits sustained, coherent discourse. A response at this level is characterized by all of the following:**	Generally well-paced flow (fluid expression). Speech is clear. It may include minor lapses, or minor difficulties with pronunciation or intonation patterns, which do not affect overall intelligibility.	The response demonstrates effective use of grammar and vocabulary. It exhibits a fairly high degree of automaticity with good control of basic and complex structures (as appropriate). Some minor (or systematic) errors are noticeable but do not obscure meaning.	Response is sustained and sufficient to the task. It is generally well developed and coherent; relationships between ideas are clear (or clear progression of ideas).
3	**The response addresses the task appropriately, but may fall short of being fully developed. It is generally intelligible and coherent, with some fluidity of expression, though it exhibits some noticeable lapses in the expression of ideas. A response at this level is characterized by at least two of the following:**	Speech is generally clear, with some fluidity of expression, though minor difficulties with pronuncia-tion, intonation, or pacing are noticeable and may require listener effort at times (though overall intelligibility is not significantly affected).	The response demonstrates fairly automatic and effective use of grammar and vocabulary, and fairly coherent expression of relevant ideas. Response may exhibit some imprecise or inaccurate use of vocabulary or grammatical structures or be somewhat limited in the range of structures used. This may affect overall fluency, but it does not seriously interfere with the communication of the message.	Response is mostly coherent and sustained and conveys relevant ideas/information. Overall development is somewhat limited, usually lacks elaboration or specificity. Relationships between ideas may at times not be immediately clear.

2	**The response addresses the task, but development of the topic is limited. It contains intelligible speech, although problems with delivery and/or overall coherence occur; meaning may be obscured in places. A response at this level is characterized by at least two of the following:**	Speech is basically intelligible, though listener effort is needed because of unclear articulation, awkward intonation, or choppy rhythm/pace; meaning may be obscured in places.	The response demonstrates limited range and control of grammar and vocabulary. These limitations often prevent full expression of ideas. For the most part, only basic sentence structures are used successfully and spoken with fluidity. Structures and vocabulary may express mainly simple (short) and/or general propositions, with simple or unclear connections made among them (serial listing, conjunction, juxtaposition).	The response is connected to the task, though the number of ideas presented or the development of ideas is limited. Mostly basic ideas are expressed with limited elaboration (details and support). At times relevant substance may be vaguely expressed or repetitious. Connections of ideas may be unclear.
1	**The response is very limited in content and/or coherence or is only minimally connected to the task, or speech is largely unintelligible. A response at this level is characterized by at least two of the following:**	Consistent pronunciation, stress, and intonation difficulties cause considerable listener effort; delivery is choppy, fragmented, or telegraphic; frequent pauses and hesitations.	Range and control of grammar and vocabulary severely limit (or prevent) expression of ideas and connections among ideas. Some low-level responses may rely heavily on practiced or formulaic expressions.	Limited relevant content is expressed. The response generally lacks substance beyond expression of very basic ideas. Speaker may be unable to sustain speech to complete the task and may rely heavily on repetition of the prompt.
0	Speaker makes no attempt to respond OR response is unrelated to the topic.		

APPENDIX 2

CEF RATING SCALE

	Range	Accuracy	Fluency	Interaction	Cohorence
C2	Shows great flexibility reformulating ideas in differing linguistic forms to convey finer shades of meaing precisely, to give emphasis, to differentiate and to eliminate ambiguity. Also has a good command of idiomatic expressions and colloquialisms.	Maintains consistent grammatical control of complex language, even while attention is otherwise engaged (e.g. in forward planing, in monitoring others' reactions)	Can express him/herself spontaneously at length with a natural colloquial flow, avoiding or backtracing around any difficulty so smoothly that the interlocutor is hardly aware of it.	Can interact with ease and skill, picking up and intonaional cues apparently effortlessly. Can interweave his/her contribution into the joint discıurse with fully natural turntaking referencing, allusion making, etc.	Can create coherent and cohesive discourse makin full and appropriate use of avariety of organisational patterns and a wide range of connectors and other cohesive devices.
C1	Has a good command of broad range of language allowing him/her to select a reformulation to express him/herself clearly in an appropriate style on a wide range of general, academic, professional or leisure topics without having to restirct what he/she wants to say	Consistently maintains a high degree of grammatical accuracy; errors are rare, difficult to spot an generally corrected when they do occur.	Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously, almost effortlesly. Only a conceptually diffucult subject can hinder a natural, smooth flow of language.	Can select a suitable phrase from a readily available range of discourse funcitons to preface his remarks in orders to get or to keep the flor and to relate his/her own contibutions skilfully to those of other speakers.	Can produce clear, smoothly flowing, well-structured speech, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohosive devices.

	Range	Accuracy	Fluency	Interaction	Cohorence
B2	Has a suffecient range of language to be able to give clear descriptions and Express viewpoints on most general topics, without much conspicuous searching for words, using some complex sentence forms to do so	Shows a relatively high degree of grammatical control. Does not make errors with cause misunderstanding, and can correct most of his/her mistakes	Can produce stretches of language with fairly even tempo: although he/she can be hesitant as he/she searches for patterns and expressions. There are a few noticeably long pauses	Can initiate discourse, take his/her turn when appropriate and end conversation when he/she needs to, though he/she may not always do this elegantly. Can help the discussion along on familiar ground confirming comprehension, inviting others in, etc.	Can use a limited number of cohesive devices to link his/her utterances into clear, coherent discourse, though there may be some 'jumpiness' in a long contribution
B1	Has enough language to get by, with sufficient vocabulary to Express him/herself with some hesitation and circumlocutions on topics such as family, hobbies and interests, work, travel, and other current events	Uses reasonably accurately a repertoire of frequently used 'routines' and patterns associated with more predictable situations	Can keep going comprehensibly, even though pausing for grammatical and lexical planning and repair is very evident, especially in longer stretches of free production	Can initiate, maintain and close simple face-to-face conversations on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. Can repeat back part of what someone has said to confirm mutual understanding	Can link a series of shorter, discrete simple elements into a connected, linear sequence of points.

	Range	Accuracy	Fluency	Interaction	Cohorence
A2	Uses basic sentence patterns with memorised phrases, groups of a few words and formulate in order to communicate limited information in simple everyday situations	Uses some simple structures correctly, but stil systematically makes basic mistakes	Can make him/herself understood in very short utterances, even though pauses, false starts and reformulation are very evident	Can answer questions and respond to simple statements. Can indicate when he/she is following, but is rarely able to understand enough to keep conversation going of his/her own accord	Can link groups of words with simple connectors like 'and' and 'but' and 'because'
A1	Has a very basic repertoire of words and simple phrases related to personal details and particular concrete situations	Shows only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in a memorised repertoire	Can manage very shorh, isolated, mainly pre-packaged utterances, with much pausing to search for expressions, to articulate less familiar words, and to repair communication	Can ask and answer questions about personal details. Can interact in a simple way but communication is totally dependent on repetitioni rephrasing and repair	.Can link words or groups of words with very basic linear connectors like 'and' and 'then'

Adopted from Luoma (2004, p.74)

APPENDIX 3

TEST OF SPEAKING ENGLISH RATING SCALE

60 **Communication almost always effective : task performed very competently.**
Speaker volunteers information freely , with little or no effort , and may go beyond the task by using additional appropriate functions

- Native – like repair strategies
- Sophisticated expressions
- Very strong content
- Almost no listener effort required

50 **Communication generally effective : task performed competently.**

Speaker volunteers information , sometimes with effort ; usually does not run out of time.

- Linguistic weaknesses may necessitate some repair strategies that may be slightly distracting
- Expressions sometimes awkward
- Generally strong content
- Little listener effort required

40 **Communication somewhat effective ; task performed somewhat competently.**

Speaker respond with effort ; sometimes provides limited speech sample and sometimes runs out of time.

- Sometimes excessive , distracting and ineffective repair strategies used to compensate for liguistic weaknesses (e.g. vocabulary and /or gramer)
- Adequate content
- Some listener effort required

30 **Communication generally not effective ; task genarally performed poorly.**

Speaker responds with much effort ; provides limited speech sample and often run out of time.

- Repair strategies excessive , very distracting and ineffective
- Much listener effort required
- Difficult to tell if task is fully performed because of linguistic weakness , but function can be identified

20 **No effective communication : no evidence of ability to perform task.**

Extreme speaker effort is evident ; speaker may repeat prompt , give up on task , or be silent.

- Attempts to perform task end in failure
- Only isolated words or phrases intelligible , even with much listener effort
- Function cannot be identified

APPENDIX 4

ACTFL RATING SCALE

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 into national 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 the all 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 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 they are called on to perform the complex tasks associated with the Superior level over a variety of topics, their language, at times, breaks down and proves inadequate, or they may avoid the tasks altogether, for example, by resorting to simplification through the use of description or narration in place of argument or hypotheses.

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 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 and linguistic challenges presented by a complication or unexpected turn of events that occurs within the context of the routine situation or communicative task with which they are otherwise familiar. Communicative strategies such as circumlocution or rephrasing are often employed fort his 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, expect 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 of 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.

ADVACED LOW

Speakers at the advanced-low level are able to handle a variety of communicative tasks, although somewhat haltingly at times. They participate actively in most informal and a limited number of formal conversations on activities related to school, home, and leisure activities and, to a lesser degree , those related to events of work, current, public, and personal interest or individual reliance. Advanced-Low speakers demonstrate the ability to narrate and describe in all major time frames (past, present and future) in paragraph length discourse, but control of aspect may be lacking at times. They can handle appropriately the linguistic challenges presented by a complication or un expected turn of events that occurs within the context of a routine situation or communicative task with which they are otherwise familiar, though at times their discourse may be minimal for the level and strained. Communicative strategies such as rephrasing and circumlocution may be employed in such instances. In their narrations and descriptions, they combine and link sentences into connected discourse of paragraph length. When pressed for a fuller account, they tend to grope and rely on minimal discourse. Their utterances are typically not longer than a single paragraph. Structure of the dominant language is still evident in the use of false cognates, literal translation, or the oral paragraph structure of the speakers' own language rather than that of the target language. While the language of Advanced-Low speakers may be marked by substantial, albeit irregular flow, it is typically somewhat strained and tentative, with noticeable self-correction and a certain grammatical roughness. The vocabulary of Advanced-Low speakers is primarily generic in nature. Advanced-Low speakers contribute to the conversation with sufficient accuracy, clarity, and precision to convey their intended message without misrepresentation or confusion, and it can be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, even though this may be achieved through repetition and restatement. When attempting to perform functions or handle topics associated with the Superior level, the linguistic quality and quantity of their speech will deteriorate significantly.

INTERMEDIATE HIGH

Intermediate-High speakers are able to converse with ease and confidence when dealing with most routine tasks and social situations of the Intermediate level. They are able to handle successfully many uncomplicated tasks and social situations requiring an exchange of basic information related to work, school, recreation, particular interests and areas of competence, though hesitation. Intermediate-High speakers handle the tasks pertaining to the Advanced evident. Intermediate-High speakers handle the tasks pertaining to the Advanced level, but they are unable to sustain performance at that level over a variety of topics. With some consistency, speakers at the Intermediate-High level narrate and describe in major time frames using connected discourse of paragraph length. However, their performance of these Advanced-level tasks will exhibit one or more features of breakdown, such as the failure to maintain the

narration or descriptions semantically discourse, the misuse of cohesive devices, a reduction in breadth and appropriateness of vocabulary, the failure to successfully circumlocution, or a significant amount of hesitation. Intermediate-High speakers can generally be understood by native speakers unaccustomed to dealing with non-natives, although the dominant language is still evident (e.g. use of code-switching, false cognates, literal translation, etc.), and gaps in communication may occur.

INTERMEDIATE MID

Speakers at the Intermediate-Mid level are able to handle successfully a variety of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is generally limited to those predictable and concrete exchanges necessary for survival in the target culture; these include personal information covering self, family, home, daily activities, interests and personal preferences, as well as physical and social needs, such as food, shopping, travel and lodging. Intermediate-Mid speakers tend to function reactively, for example, by responding to direct questions of requests for information. However, their are capable of asking a variety of questions when necessary to obtain simple information to satisfy basic needs, such as directions, prices and services. When called on to perform functions or handle topics at the Advanced level, they provide some information but have difficulty linking ideas, manipulating, time and aspect, and using communicative strategies, such as circumlocution. Intermediate-Mid speakers are able to express personal meaning by creating with the language, in part by combining and recombining known elements and conversational input to make utterances of sentence length and some strings of sentences. Their speech may contain pauses, reformulations and self-corrections as they search for adequate vocabulary and appropriate language forms to express themselves. Because of inaccuracies in their vocabulary and/or pronunciation and/or grammar and/or syntax, misunderstandings can occur, but Intermediate-Mid speakers are generally understood but sympathetic interlocutors accustomed to dealing with non-natives.

INTERMEDIATE LOW

Speakers at the intermediate-low level are able to handle successfully a limited number of uncomplicated communicative tasks by creating with the language in straightforward social situations. Conversation is restricted to some of the concrete exchanges and predictable topics necessary for survival in the target language culture. These topics relate to basic personal information covering, for example, self and family, some daily activities and personal preferences, as well as to some immediate needs, such as ordering food an making simple purchases. At the intermediate-low level, speakers are primarily reactive and struggle to answer direct questions or request for information, but they are also able to ask a few appropriate questions. Intermediate-low speakers express personal meaning by combining and

recombining into short statements what they know and what they hear from their interlocutors. Their utterances are often filled with hesitancy and inaccuracies as they search for appropriate linguistic forms and vocabulary while attempting to give form to the message. Their speech is characterized by frequent pauses, ineffective reformulations and self-corrections. Their pronunciation, vocabulary and syntax are strongly influenced by their first language but, in spite of frequent misunderstandings that require repetition or rephrasing. Intermediate-low speakers can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors, particularly by those accustomed to dealing with non natives.

NOVICE HIGH

Speakers at the Novice-High level are able to handle a variety of tasks pertaining to the Intermediate level, but are unable to sustain performance at that level. They are able to manage successfully a number of uncomplicated communicative tasks in straightforward social situations. Conversation is restricted to a few of the predictable topics necessary for survival in the target language culture, such as basic personal information, basic objects and a limited number of activities, preferences and immediate needs. Novice-High speakers respond to simple, direct questions or request for information; they are able to ask only a very few formulaic questions when asked to do so. Novice-High speakers are able to ex press personal meaning   by relying heavily on learned phrases or recombination of these and what they hear from their interlocutor. Their utterances, which consist mostly of short and sometimes incomplete sentences in the present, may be hesitant or inaccurate. On the other hand, since these utterances are frequently only expansions of learned material and stock phrases, they may sometimes appear surprisingly fluent and accurate. These speakers' first language may strongly influence their pronunciation as well as their vocabulary and syntax when they attempt to personalize their utterances. Frequent misunderstandings may arise but, with repetition or rephrasing, Novice-High speakers can generally be understood by sympathetic interlocutors used noun-natives. When called on the handle simply a variety of topics and perform functions pertaining to the Intermediate level, a Novice-High speaker can sometimes respond in intelligible sentences, but will not be able to sustain sentence-level discourse.

NOVICE MID

Speakers at the Novice-Mid level communicate minimally and with difficulty using a number of isolated words and memorized phrases limited by the particular context in which the language has been learned. When responding to direct questions, they may utter only two or three words a time or an occasional stock answer they pause frequently as they search for simple vocabulary or attempt to recycle heir own and their interlocutor's words. Because of hesitations, lack of vocabulary, inaccuracy, or failure

to respond appropriately, Novice-Mid speakers may be understood with great difficulty even by sympathetic interlocutors accustomed to dealing with non-natives. When called on to handle topics by performing functions associated with the intermediate level, they frequently resort to repetition, words from their native language, or silence.

NOVICE LOW

Speakers at the Novice-Low level have no real functional ability and, because of their pronunciation, they may be unintelligible. Given adequate time and familiar cues, they may be able to exchange greetings, give their identity, and name a number of familiar objects from their immediate environment. They are unable to perform functions or handle topics pertaining to the Intermediate level, and cannot therefore participate in a true conversational exchange.

Adopted from Luoma (2004, p.74)

APPENDIX 5 SPEAKING RUBRIC APPLIED AT PAMUKKALE UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

CONTENT

5.VERY GOOD: Ideas expressed fully, covering all content elements with appropriate elaboration and minimal digression.

Completely relevant to the assigned task. Interesting and informative.

4.GOOD: Ideas expressed covering all content elements with some elaboration. There may be some minor repetition or digression. Relevant to the task and require minimal effort to listen.

3.ADEQUATE: A simple account with little elaboration or with some repetition and digression from the task. One or two content elements may have been ignored. Content may have been covered, however, not very interesting, but monotonous.

2.INADEQUATE: Not enough information. Student is jumping from one point to the other. Noticeable digression and irrelevance to the task. Requires considerable effort to follow.

1.POOR: Totally irrelevant to the assigned task or information is too little to assess.

ORGANIZATION

5.VERY GOOD: Ideas clearly stated, supported by various examples, facts or details. Well-organized and developed. Fully cohesive.

4.GOOD: Main ideas stand out but loosely organized or somewhat supported by various examples, facts or details. Still cohesive.

3. ADEQUATE: Only topic sentence and some factual information have been expressed. Limited support. Non-fluent. Lack of cohesion.

2.INADEQUATE: Ideas confused or disconnected. No cohesion at all.

1.POOR: Ideas do not communicate. No organization or not enough to assess.

VOCABULARY

5.VERY GOOD: Effective word choice and appropriate usage fully relevant to the task. A wide range of vocabulary has been used and even there may be idiomatic expressions.

Mutually intelligible pronunciation.

4.GOOD: Quite precise use of vocabulary but still occasional inappropriate usage without obscuring the meaning. Mutually intelligible pronunciation.

3.ADEQUATE: Adequate usage of vocabulary with some hesitation. Some repetitions and searching for a word. Student may not remember some words but replaces with the ones from L1. Pronunciation requires careful listening.

2.INADEQUATE: Vocabulary is focused on basic objects, places and most common words. Frequent inappropriate usage of words. Pronunciation is mostly not intelligible.

1.POOR: Not enough usage of vocabulary to assess.

FLUENCY

5.VERY GOOD: Effortless and smooth speech covering appropriate intonation, rhythm and stress. Student can initiate, sustain and close a conversation and rarely asks for repetition.

4.GOOD: Some noticeable hesitations, repetitions but still easy to follow. Participates in conversation at a normal speed.

3.ADEQUATE: Frequent hesitation as a result of uncertainties but still at reasonable ease. Sometimes depended on the teachers' prompt question to carry out the task.

2.INADEQUATE: Student is often forced into silence but language limitations and needs help in handling the topic. Totally dependent on teachers' prompt questions to carry out the task.

1.POOR: Communication frequently breaks down. Student needs a lot of encouragement to keep going and requires very slow speech.

ACCURACY

5.VERY GOOD: Good control and confident use of language including complex statements and range of structures. There may be few errors of agreement, tense, number, articles or prepositions.

4.GOOD: Effective but simple constructions including minor problems in complex structures, a few errors of agreement, tense, number, articles or prepositions.

3.ADEQUATE: Major problems in structure and sometimes require careful listening. Meaning is sometimes obscured. Several errors of agreement, tense, number, articles or prepositions.

2.INADEQUATE: Difficult to follow due to frequent grammatical errors. Poor sentence construction or so much translation of syntax from L1.

1.POOR: No mastery of sentence structure or not enough information to assess.

APPENDIX 6

QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED TO THE STUDENTS

Sayın Öğrenci,

"Pamukkale Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu Hazırlık Sınıflarında Uygulanmakta Olan Konuşma sınavlarına ilişkin Öğrencilerin Görüşleri ve Yaklaşımları" konusunda Yüksek Lisans Tez çalışması için hazırlanan bu anket formunu cevaplamada göstereceğiniz hassasiyet ve katkılarınızdan dolayı teşekkür ederiz.

Yrd. Doç. Dr Turan PAKER	Devrim HÖL
Pamukkale Üniversitesi	Pamukkale Üniversitesi
Eğitim Fakültesi	Eğitim Fakültesi
İngiliz Dili Eğitimi ABD.	İngiliz Dili Eğitimi ABD.

Cinsiyet   : ( ) Bayan   ( ) Bay

Yaş   :

Mezun Olduğunuz Lise : Anadolu Lisesi ( )

             Süper Lise   ( )

             Düz Lise   ( )

             Fen Lisesi   ( )

             Diğer (Lütfen Açıklayınız) ……………

Düzeyiniz   : Orta   ( )

             Orta-Üst   ( )

Başka Bildiğiniz Diller : Almanca   İyi ( )   Orta ( ) Az ( )

Fransızca   İyi ( )   Orta ( ) Az ( )

Diğer(Lütfen Belirtiniz) ……………………..

Daha Önceki Dil Kullanım Tecrübeleriniz

Hazırlık Okudum   ( )

Çalıştığım kurumda kullandım   ( )

Özel bir kursa devam ettim   ( )

Yurtdışında kullanma imkanım oldu   ( )

Yok   ( )

Diğer (Lütfen Açıklayınız) ……………….( )

		Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kısmen Katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
A	**Sınav Öncesi**					
1	Daha önceki eğitim kurumumda konuşma sınavına girmiştim					
2	Konuşma Sınavı öncesi diğer sınavlara göre daha gergin ve huzursuzdum					
3	Konuşma Sınavının hangi bölümlerden oluşacağı hakkında yeterince bilgi sahibiydim					
4	Konuşma Sınavında değerlendirmenin nasıl yapılacağı hakkında bilgilendirilmiştim					
5	Arkadaşlarım ve hocalarımla küçük fikir alışverişleri dışında konuşma Sınavına tek başıma hazırlandım					
6	Konuşma Sınavına genel anlamda arkadaşımla çalışmalar yaparak hazırlandım					
7	Konuşma Sınavı için bir İngilizce öğretmeninden yada kurstan özel ders yada kurs aldım					
8	Konuşma sınavı öncesi oldukça rahattım					
9	Konuşma Sınavı benim için en zor sınavdı.					
10	Konuşma sınavı puanlaması hakkında en ufak bir fikrim yoktu.					
11	Konuşma sınavının yazılı sınavlara göre daha rahat olacağını düşünmekteydim					
B	**Sınav Esnası**					

12	Konuşma sınavı derste yaptığımız konuşma etkinlikleriyle paraleldi					
13	Konuşma sınavındaki sorular ve resimler açık ve netti					
14	Sınav sırasında istediklerimi tam olarak ifade etmekte zorlandım					
15	Sınavdaki performansım konuşma dersindeki performansımdan daha iyiydi					
16	Sınavda performansım sınav öncesi düşüncelerime göre çok daha iyiydi					
17	Konuşma Sınavını uygulayan öğretim elemanlarından birini tanımamam sınav sırasında gerginliğimi artırdı					
18	Konuşma Sınavını uygulayan öğretim elemanlarından birini tanımamam sınavdaki performansımı olumsuz etkiledi					
19	Konuşma Sınavı boyunca diğer sınavlara göre daha gergin ve huzursuzdum					
20	Sınav esnasında görevli öğretim elemanlarının telaffuzunu anlamakta zorlandım					
21	Konuşma sınavı esnasında kelime bilgimin yetersiz olduğunu düşündüm					
22	Görevli öğretim elemanları sınav boyunca daha iyisini yapmam için cesaret ve kişisel destek verdiler.					
23	Konuşma sınavı esnasında yaptığım gramer yanlışı yapmamam gerektiğini düşündüm					
24	Konuşma sınavındaki bazı sorular daha önce hiç karşılaşmadığım ve beklemediğim sorulardı.					
	Sınav Sonrası	Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kısmen Katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
25	Konuşma Sınavlarına nasıl hazırlanmam konusunda tecrübesizim					
26	Konuşma Sınavları kendimi en başarısız bulduğum sınavlardır					
27	Konuşma Sınavının İngilizce düzeyimi belirlemede gerekli olduğunu düşünüyorum					
28	Konuşma sınavından sonra sınıfta daha çok konuşma aktivitesi yapılmasını istedim					

29	Konuşma becerimin diğer becerilerim kadar gelişmediğine karar verdim					
30	Konuşma sınavında sürenin yetersiz olduğunu düşünüyorum					
31	Konuşma Sınavlarının daha sık aralıklarla uygulanması gerektiğini düşünüyorum					
32	Derste yapılan konuşma aktivitelerinin yetersiz olduğunu düşünmekteyim					
33	Konuşma sınavının İngilizce' yi kullanmamda en önemli beceri olduğunu düşünmekteyim					
34	Konuşma sınavında sorulan sorular normal hayatta konuşmam gereken türden konulardı					
35	İngilizcede en önemli becerinin konuşma becerisi olduğunu düşünüyorum					
36	Kendimi en rahat hissettiğim sınav, konuşma sınavıydı					
37	Konuşma becerimin İngilizcede en iyi olduğum beceri olduğunu düşünmekteyim					
38	Sınav puanlamasında öğretim elemanlarının objektif olduğunu düşünüyorum					
39	Sınav sonrasında kendimi İngilizce konuşma konusunda da geliştirmiş olduğumu düşündüm					
40	Konuşma becerisinin, kendimi en yetersiz hissettiğim beceri olduğunu düşünüyorum					
41	Konuşma sınavı sonrası gramer eksiğim olduğunu düşündüm					
42	Konuşma sınavı sonrası kelime eksiğimin çok fazla olduğunu düşündüm					
43	Konuşma sınavı sonrası İngilizce pratik yapma eksiğimin çok fazla olduğunu düşündüm					
44	Konuşma sınavı sonrası telaffuzumun yetersiz olduğunu düşündüm.					

APPENDIX 7

QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED TO THE INSTRUCTORS

Değerli Arkadaşlar,

"Pamukkale Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu Hazırlık Sınıflarında Uygulanmakta Olan Konuşma sınavlarına ilişkin Öğrencilerin ve Okutmanların Görüşleri ve Yaklaşımları" konusunda Yüksek Lisans Tez çalışması için hazırlanan bu anket formunu cevaplamada göstereceğiniz hassasiyet ve katkılarınızdan dolayı teşekkür ederiz.

Yrd. Doç. Dr Turan PAKER   Devrim HÖL

Pamukkale Üniversitesi   Pamukkale Üniversitesi

Eğitim Fakültesi   Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu

İngiliz Dili Eğitimi ABD.

Cinsiyet   : ( ) Bayan   ( ) Bay

Yaş   :

    Mezun Olduğunuz Bölüm   : İngilizce Öğretmenliği   ( )

                 İngiliz Dili Edebiyatı   ( )

                 Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı   ( )

                 Mütercim Tercümanlık   ( )

                 Diğer (Lütfen Açıklayınız) …………….

Çalışma Yılınız   : 1   ( )

                    2-5   ( )

                    5-10   ( )

                    10 ve üzeri   ( )

		Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kısmen Katılıyorum	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
1	İlk kez konuşma sınavı değerlendirmesi yaptım					
2	Konuşma Sınavı benim için değerlendirmesi en zor sınavdı.					
3	Daha önceki yıllarda konuşma sınavıyla ilgili deneyim kazandım.					
4	Konuşma Sınavında değerlendirmenin nasıl yapıldığı hakkında bilgim vardı.					
5	Konuşma Sınavı öncesi yapılan seminer ve çalışmalar değerlendirmede bana yol gösterdi					
6	Konuşma Sınavı öncesi yapılan seminer ve simülasyonlar kendimi geliştirmemi sağladı					
7	Sınav öncesi puanlamayla ilgili endişelerim vardı					
8	Sınav öncesi sınavın uygulanış tarzıyla ilgili endişelerim vardı					
9	Konuşma Sınavı için uygulanan ölçek yeterliydi					
10	Konuşma Sınavının hangi bölümlerden oluşacağı hakkında yeterince bilgi sahibiydim					
11	Konuşma Sınavı öncesi bireysel olarak hazırlık yaptım					
12	Konuşma Sınavındaki resimler ve sorular öğrencilerin seviyelerine uygundu.					
13	Konuşma Sınavı boyunca diğer sınavlara göre daha gergin ve huzursuzdum.					
14	Konuşma sınavının değerlendirilmesi en zor sınav olduğunu düşünüyorum					
15	Konuşma Sınavları uygulaması konusunda tecrübesizim					
16	Konuşma Sınavı uygulamasının 2 değerlendirici ile yapılması uygundur					
17	Sınav sırasında öğrencilere verilen süre yeterliydi.					
18	Ölçek içerik olarak yeterliydi					

19	Konuşma Sınavı öğrencilerin konuşma becerilerinin diğer becerilere göre daha az gelişmiş olduğunu görmemi sağladı					
20	Sınav uygulayıcılarının değerlendirmede yeterli objektifliği sağladılar					
21	Okul genelinde tüm sınav uygulayıcılarının objektif olduklarını düşünüyorum					
22	Konuşma Sınavında öğrencilerin endişe ve kaygı düzeyleri çok yüksekti..					
23	Konuşma sınavı becerilerin kullanımının cesaretlendirilmesi için faydalı bir sınav oldu					
24	Sınav sürecinde en zor olan objektif puan vermekti					

25   Lütfen değerlendirmesi en kolaydan en zora doğru numaralandırınız

(1: En Kolay   6: En zor)

	Reading
	Writing
	Listening
	Speaking
	Grammar
	Vocabulary

26   Konuşma sınavının en zor kısmı sizce neydi?

(1: En Zor   4: En Kolay)

	Organizing the test
	Physical Factors (Classroom, organization, time)
	Rating sts oral performance
	Listening and dealing with so many sts

ÖZGEÇMIS

08/05/1979 yilinda Denizli'de dogdu. Ilk ve orta ögrenimini Denizli'de tamamladiktan sonra Yüzüncü Yil Üniversitesi Fen-Edebiyat Fakültesi Ingiliz Dili Edebiyati bölümünden 2000 yilinda mezun oldu.

2000-2007 yillari arasinda Denizli'de Milli Egitim Bakanligi'na bagli ilkögretim ve Anadolu Liselerinde Ingilizce ögretmeni olarak görev yapti ve 2005-2007 yillari arasinda Türk-Amerikan Dernegi Denizli subesinde TOEFL-ÜDS-KPDS sinavlari koordinatörlüklerinde bulundu.

2007 yilindan itibaren Pamukkale Üniversitesi Yabanci Diller Yüksekokulunda Okutman olarak görev yapmakta ve ayni birimin Sinav Koordinatörlügünü yürütmektedir.