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Student and Teacher Perceptions of a Performance Assessment for College English Conversation Courses

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The purpose of this study was to explore college students' and teachers' perceptions of a performance assessment to see how students and teachers understand it. To do this, a quantitative and qualitative survey was given to 969 sophomore students who enrolled for an English conversation course at a university in Gyeonggi province near Seoul. The survey was also completed by eight native English instructors who taught the English conversation program at the same university. The results show that both teachers and students agreed on the necessity of a performance assessment. Both teachers and students believed that the performance assessment was helpful to improve students' general English ability. Teachers preferred multiple types of tests throughout the semester, but students do not show clear preferences. Students prefer a one-on-one interview to a group presentation, even though they believe the group presentation improves their linguistic ability. Teachers believe the performance assessment helps, but do not strongly agree with maintaining the current project-based performance test. The results imply that maintaining a small class for conversation teachers and providing a comfortable setting for the students are the ways for performance assessments to be successful.

[performance assessment/college English conversation courses/student perceptions/ teacher perceptions]

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I. INTRODUCTION

Since the introduction of communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980) in Korea, which refers to a learner's ability to use language to communicate successfully, a number of studies have been conducted highlighting the necessity of a performance assessment (Han & Jeon, 2001; Kim, 1999; J. Lee, 2002; S. Lee, 2000; Pyo, 2003). One of the primary reasons for language scholars and researchers paying particular attention to performance assessments is that they require the test taker to demonstrate the communication skills the test is targeted to measure by doing real-world tasks, rather than by answering questions asking how to do them. As Kim (1999) points out, traditional discrete-point tests such as multiple choice, paper and pencil, fill-in-the-blank, and true/false tests can only measure what information and/or knowledge the learners have memorized instead of whether the learners can actually use the skills and/or knowledge to produce a product. On a similar line of thought, Lee (2002) argues that a language assessment should be focused on 'what learners can do with the language, not what they know about the language.' Simply put, a performance assessment reflects what learners will use in real-world situations.

However, although performance assessments are considered appropriate tests to measure students' communication skills, in reality, they are not preferred or properly implemented by teachers in Korea (Kim, 2005; Park, 2016). The possible reasons why performance assessments are not implemented as extensively as written assessments are because; they are difficult and complicated to administer, difficult to design meaningful and relevant tasks, and involve rater bias (Hughes, 2003; Luoma, 2004; McNamara, 2000). In a similar vein, a number of studies on performance assessments in the Korean EFL context have admitted that performance assessments have many constraints such as a heavy workload, lack of knowledge/confidence from teachers, and insufficient teacher training (H. Kim, 2003; H. Kim & H. Yun, 2015; S. Lee, 2000; T. Park, 2016).

Despite the fact that there have been a growing number of studies calling for performance assessments in the Korean EFL context, only a few studies have focused on performance assessments using empirical data. For example, Park (2016) examined how performance assessments in the English learning context are being implemented in Korean high schools and how they are perceived by teachers and students. He surveyed 310 English teachers and 284 students using questionnaires and the result showed that speaking assessments are underrepresented when assessing students in most high schools. Additionally, the preferred speaking assessment among high school teachers is an indirect assessment rather than a direct assessment.

Another research paper written by H. Kim & H. Yun (2015) investigates how Korean English teachers perceive a performance assessment. They used a teacher-based assessment framework (Davison & Leung, 2009) to investigate their perceptions of this

style of assessment and their uses for it. For their study, they conducted a survey on 58 Korean English teachers who were teaching in Elementary, Middle, and High schools. The findings revealed that the teachers favored the use of traditional exams and quizzes although they understood the importance of teacher-based assessments in language education.

Although the above studies have provided valuable insights into teachers' and students' perceptions of examinations, they have not examined the perceptions of performance assessments, especially in university settings. As many universities in Korea have employed native speaking English teachers (NSETs) to improve students' communicative competence (Choi & Kang, 2009; Lee, 2001; Lim, 2006; Yang, 2011), it is worthwhile to investigate how teachers and students perceive performance assessments in a university environment. Probing into the currently-used performance assessment will provide a chance to examine the problems and constraints and offer guidelines that teachers should consider in making performance assessments more equitable for their students. The findings of this study will demonstrate the different perceptions of teachers and students on performance assessment and how they differ from each other as well as suggest the ways to improve the current test practice.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

With an emphasis on communicative competence (Canale & Swain, 1980), the use of a performance assessment has received a great deal of attention in the ESL field. This signals a shift of assessments from receptive skills to communicative performance and a change of testing trends from indirect, discrete point tests to direct, authentic communication (Bachman, 1990). Following this trend, the Korean EFL context has moved from traditional assessments to alternative assessments (Kim, 2005) and a growing number of scholars and teachers insist performance assessments should be employed in language assessment (Han & Jeon, 2001) .

A performance assessment, which follows a similar concept of authentic and alternative assessment, is defined as "a task which requires the learners to use skills and/or the knowledge to produce a product or complete a performance." (Wiggins, 1990). Simply put, a performance assessment is one which requires students to demonstrate that they have mastered specific skills and competencies by performing or producing something. Newmann, Brandt & Wiggins (1998) indicate authentic assessment measures products or performances that are centered on meaningful real-world problems or tasks. Moreover, Meyer (1992) notes that an authentic task or assessment allows students to plan, to complete the work, to self-assess, to revise, and to consult with others. Bass, Magone, and

Glaser (2002) defines that performance assessments give students opportunities to engage in cognitively complex activities such as generating strategies, monitoring work, analyzing information, and applying reasoning skills.

Scholars and researchers perceive performance assessments differently and they describe the characteristics of the assessment diversely. For example, O'Malley & Pierce (1996) described authentic assessment as being integrative and consisting of constructed response, higher-order thinking, and authenticity. Aschbacher (1991) states that alternative assessments require problem solving and higher-level thinking, involve tasks that are worthwhile as instructional activities, use real-world contexts or simulations, focus on processes as well as products, and encourage public disclosure of standards and criteria. Herman, Aschbacher, and Winters (1992) believe that alternative assessments require students to perform, create, produce, or do something; tap into higher level thinking and problem-solving skills; use tasks that represent meaningful instructional activities; approximate real-world applications; ensure that people, not machines, do the scoring, using human judgement; call upon teachers to perform new instructional and assessment roles. Bergen (1993) categorized the qualities of authentic assessment as: 1) group-based project with each individual contribution required for success 2) complexed - it measures many facets simultaneously 3) reflects the real world.

O'Malley & Pierce (1996) categorized common types of authentic assessments and their examples include the following: oral interviews, story or text retelling, writing samples, projects/exhibitions, experiments/demonstrations, constructed-response items, teacher observations, and portfolios. Other cited performance assessment types are composition tests, cloze tests, c-tests, cloze elides, dictation, reduced-forms dictation, oral proficiency interviews, role-play tests, group tests, and task-based tests (Brown & Hudson, 1998).

Despite all the positive contributions that performance assessments can have, many teachers still avoid employing them in their classes. Common concerns are that performance assessments have low construct validity and fairness issues due to subjectivity in rating. Also, it is difficult to design or select efficient assessment instruments as various factors affect the result of performance assessments. For example, the definition of the nature of the test construct, the characteristics of the test-takers, the effect of task types, interlocutor effect, rater reliability and so on (Brown, 2004; McNamara, 1996; O'Sullivan, 2008).

However, there are a number of reasons for the use of performance assessments and they (1) provide clear guidelines for students about teacher expectations (Berk, 1986); (2) reflect real-life challenges (Hart, 1994); (3) make effective use of teacher judgement (Archbald & Newmann, 1988); (4) allow for student differences in style and interests (Wiggins, 1989); and (5) are more engaging than other forms of assessment (Wiggins,

1990). Moreover, Darling-Hammond (2006) states that performance assessments that require students to evaluate and solve complex problems, conduct research, write extensively, and demonstrate their learning in projects, papers and exhibitions have proven to motivate students. Also, open-ended assessments improve the chances for English-learning students to engage with language production and learning, offering unique opportunities for them to express their knowledge in a broader sense than the limited linguistic opportunities given to them in traditional discrete point tests. Performance tasks are also instructional, allowing students to actively engage in worthwhile learning activities within the classroom (Palm, 2008). In performance assessment settings, students may be encouraged to seek out additional information or try various approaches, and in some situations, work in teams. These assessment strategies are all beneficial for English learners as the students benefit from engagement in classroom activities.

III. METHOD

1. Research Questions

The research questions were posed as follows:
1) What are the students' perceptions of a performance assessment?
2) What are the teachers' perceptions of a performance assessment?
3) How do the students' and teachers' perceptions differ from each other?
4) What are the students' and teachers' suggestions for improvement?

2. Participants

A case study was used to investigate the teachers' and students' perceptions of the performance assessment method implemented in the conversation courses during the fall semester of 2017. Eight native English instructors and 969 sophomore students enrolled in an English conversation course at a university located in Gyeonggi province were the participants of this study. The teacher participants consisted of five males and three females, ranging from 30-40 years in age, from various countries such as America, England, Ireland and New Zealand. Their EFL teaching experience varied from two to eleven years. Two have master's degrees in TESOL, two have Master's in Education and the others have Master's in various related fields. Of the 969 participating students, 800 were sophomores and 156 were juniors and seniors. The gender ratio of the student participants was 2:8 (male: female), consisting of 773 girls and 196 boys. The student

participants were assumed to have different educational backgrounds and English levels, however, they all completed English Conversation I as a prerequisite course.

3. Setting

English conversation courses are required for all students and the courses consist of two classes which build upon each other: English Conversation I and English Conversation II. Conversation I is designed to be taken during the spring semester, and Conversation II is designed to be taken during the fall semester. The goal of English Conversation II for this study is to enhance students' communicative competence in English with a focus on speaking. The course is 15 weeks long, and the class met once a week for 100 minutes. The average class size is 20 students, with some fluctuation in the size of classes. The course is partially standardized, using a shared syllabus. The course syllabus outlines 15% participation, 15% attendance, 10% project-related homework (submitting a PPT for the group presentation), 10% project presentation, 10% English Clinic (students visit their professors for a 1:1 interview to demonstrate their project outline), and 40% for a written final exam. The contents are always agreed upon by all professors at a pre-semester meeting.

In the past, a non-standardized course evaluation was implemented by individual professors. For example, some professors used written midterm exams while others employed speaking tests. Additionally, some teachers assigned homework from the book while others assigned homework related to class projects. However, researches attest that speaking assessments are necessary in conversation courses to create a better overall course for students and to push the conversation course to become more closely aligned with the goal on the syllabus, which is to enhance students' communicative competence. Taking this into consideration, the written midterm exam used by most professors was replaced with a speaking assessment, the project-based performance assessment. The assessment was in the form of group presentations and one-on-one interviews. A written final exam was kept in order to keep the courses fair and to offset the difficulties of assessing speaking exams. The idea is that this would boost the conversational nature of the courses, while still maintaining fairness in grading through a final written test. The final exams had a standardized format while still allowing teachers to design their own questions.

4. Overview of the project-based performance assessment

Students were formed in groups of 3-4 in the beginning of the semester. They chose their preferred topics or topics of interest from the textbook, Master Debate. After they

chose their topics, they visited their professors individually and demonstrated an outline of their presentation. Students were told in class that they should visit their professors from week 3 to week 8 for one-on-one interviews (English Clinic). In English Clinic, students were only assessed based on a pass/fail basis and they were given make-up interviews, if they had failed. After everyone in the group finished their interviews, they started making a PowerPoint of their project together and submitted it before their presentation. Around week 11, students delivered and video-recorded their presentation in class and uploaded their video on YouTube. Professors selected the top performed presentation from their class and voted for the top seven performances among the compiled videos. Those chosen groups performed their presentation at the university-wide competition and received prizes such as the University President's Awards and scholarships.

The paper focused on the performance assessment by looking at student and professor perceptions of this new assessment method. In summation, the primary change enacted during the Fall 2017 Semester was the following: Written midterm exams were eliminated and replaced with a performance assessment; The performance assessment consisted of visiting English Clinic, completing an outline and PowerPoint for homework, doing a 1-on-1 interview with a professor, and presenting a group presentation to the class. All of these steps built upon each other and were related to a topic from the course textbook.

5. Data Collection

At the end of the Fall Semester, students and professors completed an in-class survey to detail their perceptions of the project-based performance assessment used for Conversation II in Fall 2017. The survey had 18 closed-ended questions and the questions were broken into three sections. Both students and professors answered the same 18 questions based on a five-point scale ranging from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). In addition, two open-ended questions were supplemented for participants to illustrate the advantages and disadvantages of the currently employed performance assessment.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As Lee (2002) notes, an assessment should focus on what learners can do with the language, and not what they know about the language. That is the whole basis for the department's decision to switch to a performance assessment away from written midterm exams. After implementing this change, it is important to see what the students find to be the strengths and weaknesses of this new performance assessment. The questions are

designed to gauge the students' sentiment as completely as possible over all aspects of the performance assessment. The questionnaires consist of three sections: preferences of spoken and written tests for conversation courses; perceptions of the structure and assessment methods selected for the performance assessment; overall perceptions of the performance assessment and its effect on English abilities and the classroom environment.

The first section of questions (Table 1) is to elicit teacher and student perceptions on spoken and written tests for conversation courses. The questions are:

1) Speaking tests are necessary for conversation classes.
2) Both speaking and written tests are necessary.
3) Speaking tests should be conducted only once during the semester.
4) Speaking tests should be conducted several times per course.

TABLE 1
Teacher and Student Preferences of Spoken and Written Tests for Conversation Courses
Number (%)

Q.	Student					Teacher				
	SD	D	N	A	SA	SD	D	N	A	SA
1.	59 (7)	163 (17)	268 (27)	353 (36)	126 (13)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (12.5)	3 (37.5)	4 (50)
2.	92 (9)	238 (25)	291 (30)	265 (27)	83 (9)	1 (12.5)	0 (0)	1 (12.5)	3 (37.5)	3 (37.5)
3.	49 (6)	113 (12)	285 (29)	397 (41)	125 (13)	1 (12.5)	2 (25)	2 (25)	2 (25)	1 (12.5)
4.	45 (5)	106 (11)	329 (34)	352 (36)	137 (14)	0 (0)	1 (12.5)	2 (25)	4 (50)	1 (12.5)

*SD- Strongly Disagree, D- Disagree, N- Neutral, A- Agree, SA- Strongly Agree

For the 1st item, 'speaking tests are necessary for conversation classes' seven out of the eight professors agree that speaking tests are needed for conversation courses, while six out of the eight professors agree with the 2nd item that 'both speaking and writing tests are necessary'. Professors responded, '*It is important to test students' speaking skill as the goal of this course is to enhance their conversational skill.*', '*Speaking tests are necessary, but written tests are also important because they have no rater bias and subjectivity*'. This mirrors a similar correlation to the students as 49% believe speaking tests are necessary, but only 36% believe that both speaking and written tests are necessary. Students explained, '*A speaking test is essential in conversation classes, but it is unfair because*

natural English speakers will surely perform better than unnatural speakers.' This indicates that students and professors marginally consider speaking tests more essential for conversation courses when compared to written tests. This bodes well for the performance assessment as the main purpose is to make the course more conversational.

The performance assessment also aims to take a more holistic approach to assessing speaking by requiring students to complete a few speaking tasks throughout the semester instead of only one large speaking test. The 3rd and the 4th items address this issue. On the 3rd item, 'speaking tests should be conducted only once during the semester', three professors believe that speaking tests should be conducted only once per semester while two were neutral and three disagreed. For the 4th item, 'speaking tests should be conducted several times per course', five professors agree that speaking tests should be conducted several times throughout the semester, with only two neutral and one professor disagreeing. Conversely, 54% of the students agree that speaking tests should be conducted only once per semester while 50% of the students believe that they should be conducted several times.

This is not an overwhelming difference, but it does indicate a small divergence between professor and student opinions on the holistic nature of the performance assessment. Overall, professors seem to prefer multiple speaking tests spread out throughout the semester while students do not show a clear preference. Students stated the performance assessment requires '*…intensive labor…*' and is '*…time consuming...*'. This reaction could be a result of their overall course load, and a desire to decrease this amount, instead of a reaction based on pedagogy. That is, professors may prefer multiple speaking tests as it can be difficult to accurately grade students with only one chance on a speaking test. The students' response could stem from their desire to reduce the number of tests, even though multiple tests are beneficial. In sum, both student and teacher participants do seem to agree that speaking tests are necessary in conversation courses despite showing different preferences on the frequency of tests.

Table 2 describes teacher and student perceptions of the structure and assessment methods selected for the performance assessment. The questions are:

5) A 1-on-1 interview is the best performance assessment method.
6) English Clinic with a Group presentation is better than an interview to assess speaking skills.
7) The presentation topic plays an important role in the performance assessment.
8) English Clinic is helpful to improve speaking competence.
9) English Clinic is helpful to improve the group presentation.
10) The performance assessment consisting of homework (PPT submission) and a group presentation is adequate.

11) The current structure of the performance assessment should be maintained.

TABLE 2
Teacher and Student Perceptions of the Structure and Assessment Methods Selected for the Performance Assessment

Number (%)

Q.	Student					Teacher				
	SD	D	N	A	SA	SD	D	N	A	SA
5.	57 (6)	132 (14)	282 (29)	340 (35)	158 (16)	1 (0)	2 (25)	3 (37.5)	2 (25)	1 (12.5)
6.	68 (7)	221 (23)	331 (34)	247 (25)	102 (11)	2 (25)	2 (25)	3 (37.5)	0 (0)	1 (12.5)
7.	26 (2)	114 (12)	349 (36)	376 (39)	104 (11)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (50)	3 (37.5)	1 (12.5)
8.	40 (4)	127 (13)	392 (40)	316 (33)	94 (10)	2 (25)	1 (12.5)	0 (0)	3 (37.5)	2 (25)
9.	34 (3)	100 (10)	340 (35)	363 (38)	132 (14)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (50)	4 (50)
10.	26 (3)	77 (8)	351 (36)	403 (41)	112 (12)	1 (12.5)	0 (0)	4 (50)	2 (25)	1 (12.5)
11.	22 (2)	89 (9)	326 (34)	393 (41)	139 (14)	1 (12.5)	0 (0)	5 (62.5)	2 (25)	0 (0)

*SD- Strongly Disagree, D- Disagree, N- Neutral, A- Agree, SA- Strongly Agree

On the 5th item, ‘a 1-on-1 interview is the best performance assessment method’, more than 50% of the students indicate that they believe a 1-on-1 interview is the best assessment method. This likely stems from a student preference to speak English in front of an audience of one instead of many people. Students noted that they ‘*…dislike public speaking…*’, which fits the data presented here. Especially because the students are comparing the presentation directly with the interview, so one choice requires public speaking while the other does not. Conversely, only two professors agree with the 5th item showing a divergence from student opinions. Professors responded, ‘*One-on-one interviews are much more time consuming and difficult to schedule while group presentations generally require less time.*’, ‘*One-on-one interview is an ideal way of assessing students’ speaking skills but seeing more than 100 students individually is impossible.*’

For the 6th item, ‘English Clinic with a Group presentation is better than an interview to assess speaking skills’, only one professor agrees while three are neutral and four disagree.

Similarly, only 36% of the students agree that English Clinic along with the Group Presentation is the best way to assess speaking skills. The professors and students both indicate that interviews are marginally better in terms of assessment methods when compared to group presentations.

On the 7th item, 'the presentation topic plays an important role in the performance assessment', four professors agree while the other four are neutral. This exactly mirrors the student sentiment with 50% of the students agreeing that the presentation topic is important. They said, '*The topic motivates us to participate.*', '*If a topic is interesting, we enjoy talking about it.*' The professors and students both seemingly agree that the topic should be interesting and relevant to the course material when designing a performance assessment.

The 8th and the 9th items focus on English Clinic and its usefulness for students. English Clinic is a communication channel to give students an extra chance to talk with their professor outside of class and it is required for all students in conversation courses. Five professors agree with the 8th item, 'English Clinic is helpful for speaking competence', while three professors disagree. For students, 43% agree, while 17% disagree. Additionally, all professors agree with the 9th item, 'English Clinic is helpful for the group presentation', along with 52% of the students. Professors said, '*It is a good chance to help students individually.*' This item shows the strongest agreement for the professors out of all the others. It can be said that the professors truly value this time outside of class to provide extra support for the students. The students also agree but not as strongly as the professors. Students contended, '*It is difficult to visit professors due to their limited time of availability.*', '*Seeing professors for such a short time does not offer any valuable help*.' This could be a result of the students having difficulty scheduling time with their professors due to their busy schedules and lack of extra time.

Three professors agree with the 10th item, 'the performance assessment consisting of homework (PPT submission) and a group presentation is adequate', while four are neutral and one disagrees. The students had a slightly higher agreement at 53%. This indicates that the students are mostly satisfied with the current requirements for the performance assessment. Additionally, the 10th item had a very low rate of disagreement for both the professors and students with only one professor and 11% of the students. This is likely because the requirements for the performance assessment were decided before the semester and presented clearly to the students as soon as possible.

For the 11th item, 'the current structure of the performance assessment should be maintained', two professors agree while five are neutral and one disagrees. Conversely, 55% of the students agree that the current performance assessment should be maintained. Their reasons are '*It provides opportunities to speak in English*.', '*It helps to build presentation skills*', '*It helps to build teamwork*'. This indicates that the students are content with the

current performance assessment. However, professors suggest making some changes. Professors responded, '*Scripted presentations are not a realistic measure of true conversation ability.*', '*The textbook is focused on conversation and the test does not reflect students' learning.*' This calls for a change of curriculum or a textbook which aligns with the assessment.

Table 3 demonstrates overall teacher and student perceptions of the performance assessment and its effect on English abilities and the classroom environment. The questions are:

12) The performance assessment improves overall English ability.
13) The group presentation improves linguistic competence.
14) The group presentation is a good chance for students to interact.
15) The performance assessment provides a positive learning environment.
16) The performance assessment is a creative and meaningful task.
17) The performance assessment helps teachers measure students' overall English ability.
18) The performance assessment meets the goals of the course.

TABLE 3
Teacher and Student Overall Perceptions of the Performance Assessment and Its Effect on English Abilities and the Classroom Environment

Number (%)

Q.	Student					Teacher				
	SD	D	N	A	SA	SD	D	N	A	SA
12	29 (3)	103 (11)	460 (47)	301 (31)	76 (8)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (25)	4 (50)	2 (25)
13	30 (3)	75 (8)	286 (29)	451 (47)	127 (13)	0 (0)	1 (12.5)	1 (12.5)	4 (50)	1 (12.5)
14	22 (2)	103 (11)	400 (41)	355 (37)	89 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (12.5)	4 (50)	3 (37.5)
15	33 (3)	140 (15)	378 (39)	340 (35)	78 (8)	0 (0)	1 (12.5)	2 (25)	3 (37.5)	2 (25)
16	25 (2)	113 (12)	407 (42)	338 (35)	86 (9)	0 (0)	1 (12.5)	2 (25)	3 (37.5)	2 (25)
17	24 (2)	76 (8)	372 (39)	401 (41)	96 (10)	1 (12.5)	0 (0)	3 (37.5)	2 (25)	2 (25)
18	23 (2)	126 (13)	404 (42)	339 (35)	77 (8)	1 (12.5)	1 (12.5)	4 (50)	1 (12.5)	0 (0)

*SD- Strongly Disagree, D- Disagree, N- Neutral, A- Agree, SA- Strongly Agree

For the 12th item, six professors agree that 'the performance assessment improves overall English ability' while two are neutral. Conversely, 39% of the students agree and 47% are neutral. However, through the interviews, students stated, '*It improves my vocabulary skills as I have to look up on the dictionary to find words in English.*', '*Researching in English helps me to develop my reading skills.'* This reflects the students' belief that the group presentation improves linguistic competence specifically when compared to overall ability. Four professors agree that the performance assessment helps teachers measure overall English ability while three are neutral and one disagrees. It seems both teachers and students agree that the performance assessment is effective in developing general English ability.

Item 13, 'the group presentation improves linguistic competence', has the strongest student agreement of all other items at 60%. The students believe that the group presentation improves linguistic competence, yet they still prefer a 1-on-1 interview. This further supports the notion that the preference for a 1-on-1 interview comes from a dislike of public speaking rather than a belief that group presentations are ineffective.

Seven professors agree with the 14th item 'the group presentation is a good chance for students to interact' while one is neutral. Professors said, '*It helps students get to know each other better and builds teamwork.'* However, the students were not as positive about the chance for interaction as a result of the group presentation at 46%.

Along the same lines, more than 60% of the professors show agreement with the 15th item, 'the performance assessment provides a positive learning environment' while only 43% of the students agree. This indicates that the students did not perceive the overall classroom environment to be as positive as the professors believed it to be.

Five professors agree, while two are neutral and one disagrees with the 16th item 'the performance assessment is a creative and meaningful task'. For the students, 44% agree with this which indicates the performance assessment has some room for improvement. As the development of this assessment is an ongoing process, the professors also believe there is room for improvement. This is verified by the fact that only two professors agree with the 18th item 'performance assessment meets the goals of the course' while four are neutral and two disagree. 43% of the students agree with this which indicates that some work could be done to create a performance assessment that more closely aligns with the course goals.

Interestingly, a slight majority of the students felt that the homework for the performance assessment was suitable and that the current performance assessment should be maintained. Despite this satisfaction from the students, the professors did not agree that the current performance assessment should stay. This mirrors the professors' preference to run the courses in their own way, not following the shared curriculum, as well as the load of work, even though group presentations and interviews were the best assessment methods.

The student agreement was 51% on the 17th item, 'the performance assessment helps teachers measure students' overall English ability', indicating that they believe the performance assessment is an effective tool for evaluating students. Half of the professors also agreed that it is an effective method of assessment. Additionally, 43% of the students agree that the performance assessment meets the goals of the course. On the other hand, 42% were neutral and only 15% disagreed with this statement. This shows that the performance assessment is aligned with the goals of the course according to the students. However, this also means that in order to further align this course project with the conversational goals of this class, some changes will need to be made. The teachers attest that the project-based performance assessment is not designed to measure students' conversational skills and could be improved upon.

V. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The aim of this study was to investigate college student and teacher perceptions on the currently employed multiple performance assessment. The research findings reveal that teacher and student perceptions on the assessment are not in consensus and they have different perspectives on the assessment practice.

Based on the findings, the students and professors both consider speaking tests to be marginally more important compared to written tests for conversation courses. This aligns well with the goals of the performance assessment. Professors prefer multiple tests throughout the semester, while students do not show a clear preference of multiple tests. This is presumably a result of differing interests between professors and students. Professors are likely concerned with accurately assessing students, which is easier to do across multiple speaking tests, while students desire to decrease their course load.

Next, the professors and students both perceive group presentations and one-on-one interviews as beneficial for college English conversation courses. However, the students likely dislike public speaking which can be confirmed through the results. As the figures present, the students recognize the linguistic value of the group presentation yet they still prefer one-on-one interviews when given a choice. This seems to be strongly favored by students in order to use English in a more comfortable setting instead of in front of a large audience. Yet, teachers assert one-on-one interviews are not ideal as they require heavy teaching hours and meeting a large number of students. This implies that the performance assessment was successful but can be improved with some changes. Specifically, developing strategies for a more comfortable setting for the group presentation and maintaining a speaking assessment for a sizeable percent of the final grade are optimal for a conversation class.

The results also suggest to provide students with more communication channels, such as English Clinic, to help students throughout the project. Both students and teachers agree that English Clinic is beneficial, but it is important to provide such channels in qualitative and quantitative ways. Moreover, the topic seems important for a performance assessment. The topic should be related to the course and interesting for the students to add extra motivation.

In sum, teachers preferred multiple types of tests throughout the semester, but students do not show clear preferences. Students prefer a one-on-one interview to a group presentation, even though they believe the group presentation improves their linguistic ability. Teachers believe the performance assessment helps, yet they do not strongly agree with maintaining the performance test. The results imply that maintaining small classes for conversation teachers and creating a comfortable setting for the students are the ways for the performance assessment to be successful.

Despite the constraints we have in conducting the performance assessment, it is still important and worthwhile for teachers to maintain the test as our goal is to help students use the language communicatively in the real world. While every preference and opinion of students and teachers cannot be acted upon, the findings give simple guidelines that teachers and test developers can use to acknowledge the complexity of performance assessment practices.

Going forward, it is important to propose specific ideas in order to improve upon the current performance assessment. Based on the data, it is clear that maintaining small class sizes is important for the performance assessment and would be beneficial for students and professors. When assessing students through one-on-one interviews, smaller class sizes lighten the load on professors. Also, as noted before, students prefer interviews to presentations and are more comfortable without a large audience. However, the students still note that presentations are necessary in conversation classes. This is an important skill that will likely be used by many students after graduation. For this reason, the presentation should not be eliminated and should be a part of future performance assessments. Keeping this in mind, there are some changes that can be made to the current presentation style in order to create a more comfortable presenting environment. Aside from keeping class sizes small, students could alternatively present in subgroups.

Using this method, the class would be divided by the professor into groups. On presentation day, each subgroup would go to a different room and students would present in front of a smaller audience. While the different groups of students are presenting, the professor would have to rotate around to the different classrooms. In order to maintain grading accuracy, videos would still need to be taken of every presentation. This way the professor would be able to watch the presentations in their entirety at a later time when grading. For this to work, students would be responsible for filming other students in

each presentation room. This could prove to be empowering for students as they would be taking part in the management of the presentation process. Presenting in subgroups would create the atmosphere and comfort of a small class even if a particular language department does not have the luxury of keeping all conversation classes under a designated number.

Additionally, professors noted that scripted presentations are not always the best indicators of language ability. A non-scripted speaking assessment could take the place of a group presentation in future performance assessments. One example of a potential non-scripted speaking assessment is a group debate. This would require students to demonstrate their conversational ability without simply memorizing a script. If a group debate was implemented, students would be presented with their topic early in the semester and given time to research and prepare. English Clinic could still be used in a performance assessment with a debate. Students would visit English Clinic for help with research instead of for help with a script.

In summation, a performance assessment based on the feedback from this paper would retain some aspects but could also benefit from some changes. More specifically, English Clinic would remain as both students and professors viewed that favorably. The one-on-one interview would also remain, but it would be important to keep class sizes small so professors could dedicate ample time to each student. If it is not possible to reduce class sizes, then adjustments can be made. For example, the time for each individual interview could be shortened. Additionally, the group presentation could change from being scripted to non-scripted so the professors can more accurately assess students' language ability. When presenting the group debate in class, students could be divided into subgroups and assigned to different rooms in order to retain the comfort of a small class. This means the newly proposed performance assessment would consist of English Clinic, a one-on-one interview, and a non-scripted group presentation.

These proposed changes are based on the feedback from the questionnaire given to students and teachers. However, it should be noted that this study has limitations due to a small sample size, and therefore cannot be generalized for all teachers and students. More information needs to be collected and analyzed in future research. However, considering the scarcity of research on teacher and student perceptions of performance assessments in university settings, we believe this kind of empirical study will provide useful information to teachers and test developers for designing and making similar performance assessments in the future.

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APPENDIX

I. Please answer to the questions below with SD (Strongly Disagree), D (Disagree), N (Neutral), A (Agree), SA (Strongly Agree).

1) Speaking tests are necessary for conversation classes.
2) Both speaking and written tests are necessary.
3) Speaking tests should be conducted only once during the semester.
4) Speaking tests should be conducted several times per course.
5) A 1-on-1 interview is the best performance assessment method.
6) English Clinic with a Group presentation is better than an interview to assess speaking skills.
7) The presentation topic plays an important role in the performance assessment.
8) English Clinic improves speaking competence.
9) English Clinic improves the group presentation.
10) The performance assessment consisting of homework (PPT submission) and a group presentation is adequate.
11) The current structure of the performance assessment should be maintained.
12) The performance assessment improves overall English ability.
13) The group presentation improves linguistic competence.
14) The group presentation is a good chance for students to interact.
15) The performance assessment provides a positive learning environment.
16) The performance assessment is a creative and meaningful task.
17) The performance assessment helps teachers measure students' overall English ability.
18) The performance assessment meets the goals of the course.

II. Please answer to the questions below.

1) What are the advantages of the current performance assessment?
2) What are the disadvantages of the current performance assessment?

Examples in: English
Applicable Language: English
Applicable Level: Tertiary

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