Investigating Speaking Performance in Terms of Cultural Capital*

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Abstract

This study examines whether or not cultural capital has a predictive role in speaking performance. This is a mixed-methods study. Its data were collected from 263 participants (118 females, 145 males) of different ages and professions. The Cultural Capital Scale and a semi-structured interview form were used to collect the data. The participants' speeches were videotaped and evaluated using the Speaking Performance Rating Scale. The study data were evaluated using correlation analysis (r), simple linear regression and content analysis. This study found a positive, significant relationship between cultural capital and speaking performance ($r=0.878$, $p<0.001$). Cultural capital accounted for 77.2% of the variation in speaking performance, thus significantly predicting speaking performance. Of the participants, 87.07% said that cultural capital affects speaking performance, and 94.29% said that there was parallelism between cultural capital competencies and speaking performance. Cultural capital plays a vital role in improving speaking performance. Cultural activities such as mobile movie theaters, sports facilities, libraries, theater performances and more should be made available to children who live in relatively underprivileged environments in order to increase their cultural capital. With long-term strategies and development policies, educational programs should be restructured to consider cultural capital's role in linguistic skills. Online practices such as virtual visits to museums and exhibitions, participation in virtual concerts and e-books should be emphasized more. Courses that prioritize cultural content such as music, movies and novels should be designed. The content of textbooks should be enriched by including biographies of important scientists and artists. Researchers should also investigate whether or not cultural capital affects other fundamental linguistic skills

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid increase in social interaction today has caused individuals to speak more. Speaking is the quickest way to completely and accurately communicate messages to individuals with whom we interact. Societies also judge individuals by the way they speak. Some are considered impolite, some kind. Some are thought to be knowledgeable and understanding, while others are deemed ignorant, and inconsiderate. Most of these evaluations are based on how the people in question speak. Speech is thus important, both as a means of communication and because of the way it is perceived by societies.

The effects of cultural structure determine speech characteristics such as pronunciation, fluency, content production and language competency. Culture is a system that emerges as a result of the organization of humans, emotions, behaviors and objects (Goodenough, 1961). Douglas (2004: 88) defines culture as the moral and intellectual spirit of specific organizations and their efforts to produce common meaning. Güvenç (1997) stresses that improving culture results in improved language. Therefore, with improvements in language, culture is developed and enriched. Similarly, Krauss and Chiu (1998: 42) argue that social behaviors form language. Mosiyenko (2014: 87) claims that language is a simple reflection of culture. All these points lead to the conclusion that culture and language are intertwined.

Bourdieu's thoughts on culture and language are important. According to Jenkins (1992: 99), Bourdieu does not set culture apart from language and characterizes them as explanatory of each other. Speaking provides a rich source of impressions of speakers, according to Williams (1975, as cited in Krauss & Chiu, 1998). Kent and Burkand (1981) highlight that speakers' age, gender, geographical origin and socioeconomic status can be determined by listening to their speech. Understanding and teaching language are closely related to individuals' cultural level, experience and knowledge (Günay, 1995). Individuals develop behaviors and discourse that are appropriate to their cultural background.

The relevant literature uses some of these concepts interchangeably, perhaps due to culture's broad range of meanings and its role in cultural capital. Indeed, in their descriptions of culture, Swidler (1986), Gans (2018: 21), Güngör (2018: 302) and Williams (1993: 10) include variables that are parts of cultural capital along with art, information, education and recreation.

Researchers have interpreted cultural capital in a variety of ways. Bourdieu (1986) defines cultural capital as educational competencies that children attained in their families or at school. Marshall (1999: 448) considers cultural capital to be a kind of socio-cultural background and experience that consists of a variety of linguistic and cultural abilities. Harker (1990) is of the opinion that cultural capital involves attitudes and tendencies that are closely associated with education. Swartz (1996) emphasizes that cultural capital involves a wide range of resources such as verbal ability, general cultural awareness, esthetic preferences, scientific knowledge and academic achievement. Dumais (2002) argues that cultural capital is grounded in individuals' knowledge, linguistic competencies and linguistic behaviors. McTavish (2020) says that cultural capital plays a role in variables such as academic achievement, social conversation and business life. Cultural capital offers advantages such as being able to build a career or generate income (Lareau & Weininger, 2003; Lin, 1999). Cultural capital refers to participation in art, music and culture, according to DiMaggio (1982), and according to DiMaggio and Mohr (1985) and Roberts (2004), it also refers to participation in knowledge, activity and higher culture. When describing cultural capital, some studies (Dumais, 2002; Robinson & Garnier, 1985; Sullivan, 2001) consider language competency, interaction skills and linguistic skills as a common component (Dumais, 2002; Robinson & Garnier, 1985; Sullivan, 2001). Collins (1998) claims that cultural capital affects the content of actions, conversations and thoughts. Since descriptions of cultural capital commonly include verbal abilities, it can be concluded that some linguistic skills are determined by cultural capital.

Studies in the literature have investigated speaking skill (Ahmad & Rozimela, 2013; Atli & Bergil, 2012; Ayrancı, 2016; Başaran & Erdem, 2009; Bircan, 2013; Doğan, 2009; Erdem & Erdem, 2015; Hamzadayı & Dölek, 2017; Khameis, 2006; Kusnierek, 2015; Lourdunathan & Menon, 2006;

Sato, 2003; Uçgun, 2007; Vilimec, 2006). Other studies have investigated the effects of cultural capital on academic achievement (Andersen & Hansen, 2011; DiMaggio 1982; Gaddis, 2013; Jæger, 2011; Lareau, 1987; Lee & Bowen, 2006; Roscigno & Ainsworth-Darnell, 1999; Tramonte & Willms, 2010; Wildhagen, 2009; Yamamoto & Brinton, 2010; Yaşar, 2016). However, there are no studies of speaking performance that examine how it is determined by cultural capital. Determining the effects of cultural capital on speaking performance will contribute to students, teachers and program designers' ability to promote speaking skills and create a basis for reflection, discussion and research on cultural capital and fundamental linguistic skills.

Each of the strategies, methods and techniques that are used to promote speaking skills affect speaking at different levels. Students who experience the same instruction in speech still end with varying levels of performance. This is true not only in student life, but afterward, too. This study aimed to determine whether or not individuals with different cultural capital levels differ and the roles of the variables of cultural capital in speaking performance. The study's main research question was: Is cultural capital a significant predictor of speaking performance? Its sub-questions were:

1. Is there a significant relationship between cultural capital and speaking performance?

2. Are the intellectual accumulation, participation, cultural awareness and cultural potential sub-dimensions of cultural capital significant predictors of speaking performance?

3. Is cultural capital a significant predictor of the pronunciation, fluency, content, language competency, and non-verbal communication sub-dimensions of speaking skills?

4. What are participants' views about whether or not cultural capital competency affects speaking skills?

5. How do participants evaluate their speaking skills along with their cultural capital competencies?

METHOD

Research Design

This is a mixed-methods study that combines qualitative and quantitative research techniques. Mixed-methods studies integrate quantitative and qualitative research into a single study (Johnson & Christensen, 2014: 430). This study has an explanatory sequential mixed-method design based on the use of qualitative data to explain quantitative findings in detail (Creswell, 2016: 224).

Correlation analysis, a non-experimental method, was used for the qualitative part of this study. Correlation analysis examines the relationships between one or more independent quantitative variables and one or more dependent quantitative variables (Johnson & Christensen, 2014: 44). This study used the prediction model, a relational research technique. In this model, the independent variable is the predictor, and the dependent variable is the predicted variable (Tekbıyık, 2014: 103). Interviews were used in the qualitative part of this study.

Research Sample

This study was carried with 263 participants in 12 different professions (118 females and 145 males). Their ages ranged from 20 to 65. In correlational studies, sample sizes of at least 30 are considered sufficient (Fraenkel, Hyun & Wallen, 2012; Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003). The participants' professions were classified using the approach of the ISCO-08 (International Standard Classification of Occupations).

Research Instruments and Procedures

The Cultural Capital Scale was developed by Avcı and Yaşar (2014) to determine cultural capital competencies. Its reliability and validity study was conducted, and its internal consistency alpha coefficient was found to be 0.955. Factor analysis determined that its factors accounted for 63.79% of the variance in the dependent variable.

The author of this study developed a semi-structured interview form to determine the participants' views about their cultural capital competencies and how these competencies are reflected in their speaking skills. The form consists of a single question. Experts were consulted for their advice about how to prepare the form.

The Speaking Performance Rating Scale was examined by 10 experts, and the content validity index (CVI) values of its scale items were determined. The items with CVI values of less than .90 were excluded from the scale. Kendall's coefficient of concordance (W) was used to determine the scale's reliability. Three experts evaluated 20 different speeches, and the W value was .954 where $p<0.05$. The scale has 22 items in five dimensions.

During data collection, the participants first filled out the Cultural Capital Scale and the semi-structured interview form. Later, they gave improvised speeches about one of a set of preselected issues. Their speeches were videotaped. No time limits were set for their speeches, which were evaluated using the Speaking Performance Rating Scale.

Data Analysis

This study used correlation analysis to determine the relationships between cultural capital and speaking performance. Simple linear regression analysis was used to determine cultural capital's ability to predict speaking performance. The data obtained using the semi-structured interview form were analyzed using content analysis. IBM SPSS 21.0 (released 2012, IBM SPSS for Windows, Version 21.0, Armonk, NY: IBM Corp.) and MS-Excel 2007 software were used for the statistical analyses and calculations. This study's threshold for statistical significance was $p<0.05$.

RESULTS

1. The results for the main research question and their interpretation

Table 1. The results of the regression analysis for cultural capital's prediction of speaking performance

	B	Std. Error	t	P	F	p	R	R^2
Cultural Capital	0.606	0.020	29.689	**<0.001**	881.422	<0.001	0.878	0.772
Constant	13.552	1.965	6.896	**<0.001**				

Table 1 shows that the regression model was statistically significant ($F=881.422$, $p<0.001$), that cultural capital accounted for 77.2% of the variance in speaking performance, and that cultural capital significantly predicted speaking performance ($F=881.422$, $p<0.001$). A one-unit change in cultural capital led to a 0.666-unit change in speaking performance.

2. The results for the first research sub-question and their interpretation

Table 2. The relationships between cultural capital and speaking performance

	Cultural capital	Intellectual Accumulation	Participation	Cultural Awareness	Cultural Potential
Speaking Performance	0.878	0.850	0.707	0.729	0.774
Pronunciation	0.777	0.740	0.639	0.653	0.690
Fluency	0.829	0.799	0.688	0.679	0.723
Content	0.868	0.846	0.692	0.717	0.762
Language Competency	0.827	0.809	0.635	0.693	0.735
Non-Verbal Communication	0.644	0.627	0.501	0.536	0.577

*p=0.009, all other significances were p<0.001

As Table 2 shows, there was a high-level, linear, positive and statistically significant relationship between the individuals' cultural capital competencies and speaking performance (r=0.878, **p<0.001**), based on the Pearson's correlation coefficient levels suggested by Büyüköztürk (2014: 32). Among the sub-dimensions, the highest-level relationship was between content and intellectual accumulation (r=0.846, **p<0.001**).

3. The results for the second research sub-question and their interpretation

Table 3. The results of the regression analysis for the prediction of speaking performance by the sub-dimensions of cultural capital

	B	**Std. Error**	**t**	**p**	**F**	**p**	**R**	**R^2**
Intellectual Accumulation	1.164	0.045	26.050	**<0.001**	678.583	<0.001	0.850	0.722
Constant	22.670	1.897	11.948	**<0.001**				
Participation	2.079	0.129	16.158	**<0.001**	261.066	<0.001	0.707	0.500
Constant	28.900	2.648	10.914	**<0.001**				
Cultural Awareness	2.576	0.150	17.193	**<0.001**	295.599	<0.001	0.729	0.531
Constant	26.931	2.604	10.341	**<0.001**				
Cultural Potential	2.905	0.147	19.748	**<0.001**	389.997	<0.001	0.774	0.599
Constant	23.537	2.443	9.634	**<0.001**				

As Table 3 shows, the regression models were statistically significant. According to the model, the intellectual accumulation sub-dimension of cultural capital accounted for 72.2% of the variance in speaking performance, the participation sub-dimension accounted for 50.9% of the variance in speaking performance, and the cultural awareness sub-dimension accounted for 53.1% of the variance in speaking performance. The cultural potential sub-dimension accounted for 59.9% of the variation in speaking performance. All these sub-dimensions of cultural capital significantly predicted speaking performance. A one-unit change in the intellectual accumulation sub-dimension led to 1.164 units change in speaking performance. A one-unit change in the participation sub-dimension led to 2.079 units change in speaking performance. A one-unit change in the cultural awareness sub-dimension led to 2.576 units change in speaking performance, and a one-unit change in the cultural potential sub-dimension led to 2.905 units change in speaking performance.

4. The results for the third research sub-question and their interpretation

Table 4. The results of the regression analysis for cultural capital's prediction of the sub-dimensions of speaking performance

	B	Std. Error	t	p	F	p	R	R^2
Cultural Capital	0.149	0.007	19.949	**<0.001**	397.955	<0.001	0.777	0.604
Pronunciation	6.333	0.721	8.786	**<0.001**				
Cultural Capital	0.123	0.005	23.961	**<0.001**	574.107	<0.001	0.829	0.687
Fluency	3.054	0.495	6.165	**<0.001**				
Cultural Capital	0.220	0.008	28.275	**<0.001**	799.489	<0.001	0.868	0.754
Content	1.697	0.751	2.260	**0.025**				
Cultural Capital	0.085	0.004	23.771	**<0.001**	565.043	<0.001	0.827	0.683
Language Competency	1.814	0.345	5.257	**<0.001**				
Cultural Capital	0.028	0.002	13.586	**<0.001**	184.580	<0.001	0.644	0.414
Non-verbal communication	0.653	0.195	3.339	**0.001**				

As Table 4 shows, the regression models were statistically significant. Cultural capital accounted for 60.4% of the variance in the pronunciation sub-dimension of speaking performance, 68.7% of the variance in the fluency sub-dimension, and 75.4% of the variance in the content sub-dimension. It also accounted for 68.3% of the variance in the language competence sub-dimension and 41.4% of the variance in the non-verbal communication sub-dimension. Cultural capital significantly predicted these sub-dimensions of speaking performance. A one-unit change in cultural capital led to 0.149 units change in the pronunciation sub-dimension and 0.123 units change in the fluency sub-dimension. A one-unit change in cultural capital also led to 0.220 units change in the content sub-dimension, 0.085 units change in the language competence sub-dimension and 0.028 units change in the non-verbal communication sub-dimension.

5. The results for the fourth research sub-question and their interpretation

Table 5. The participants' views about whether or not cultural capital competency affects speaking performance

Views	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Cultural capital competency affects speaking performance.	229	87.07
Cultural capital competency affects speaking performance, but is not sufficient on its own.	22	8.36
Cultural capital competency does not affect speaking performance.	12	4.56
TOTAL	263	100

As Table 5 shows, 87.07% of the participants said that cultural capital affects speaking performance, 8.36% said that cultural capital is not the only variable that affects speaking performance, and 4.56% said that cultural capital does not affect speaking performance.

6. The results for the fifth research sub-question and their interpretation

Table 6. The participants' views about their speaking performance based on their cultural capital competencies

Views	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
I have a high level of cultural capital competency and can speak effectively.	88	33.46
I have a moderate level of cultural capital competency and speaking skills.	53	20.15
I have a low level of cultural capital competency and experience difficulties with speaking.	107	40.68
I have a low level of cultural capital competency, but can speak effectively.	9	3.42
I have a high level of cultural capital competency, but do not think that I speak effectively.	6	2.28
TOTAL	263	100

As Table 6 shows, 33.46% of the participants said that they had a high level of cultural capital competency and can speak effectively, 20.15% said that they had a moderate level of cultural capital competency and speaking skills, and 40.68% said that they had a low level of cultural capital competency and experience difficulties with speaking.

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS

The results for this study's main research question indicated that cultural capital accounts for 77.2% of the variance in speaking performance, and that cultural capital significantly predicts speaking performance. Of the participants, 87.07% said that cultural capital affects speaking performance, and 94.29% said that there was parallelism between cultural capital competencies and speaking performance. The relationship between cultural capital and speaking performance was found to be linear, positive, and statistically significant ($r=0.878$, $p<0.001$). Together, these findings lead to the conclusion that cultural capital competency plays an essential role in speaking performance. Indeed, Dumais (2002) says that individuals' social tendencies and behaviors, including speech acts, are the results of their habits and cultural capital in specific fields. Janene, Nicola and Vicki (2013: 166) argue that previous experiences and sociocultural antecedents affect how individuals speak and what they say. McWhorter (2014) claims that language is the phenomenon that reflects one's culture and worldview and that language is an indicator of cultural capital. Cultural capital can be thus seen as a system of indicators that affect speech and are reflected in it.

The results for this study's second sub-question indicated that the intellectual accumulation sub-dimension of cultural capital accounted for 72.2% of the variance in speaking performance. The participation sub-dimension accounted for 50.0%, the cultural awareness sub-dimension accounted for 53.1%, and the cultural potential sub-dimension accounted for 59.9%. All these sub-dimensions of cultural capital significantly predicted speaking performance. The top two predictors of speaking performance were: intellectual accumulation (72.2%) and cultural potential (59.9%). Components such as being knowledgeable in a variety of disciplines, reading scientific journals or articles, being interested in literature, reading books regularly, going to the theater and/or the movies and visiting museums and/or historical places, which constitute intellectual accumulation and cultural potential, thus play an essential role in speaking performance. Heath (2012: 425-426) highlighted the role of knowledge and skills related to science and art, cultural capital variables, on language development and described the effects of art, science, and social and family heritage, which affect cultural capital, on individuals' speaking tendencies and performance as inevitable. Similarly, Matarasso (1997) found that participation in art activities has positive effects in domains such as social adaptation, personal development and imagination. Speaking, here, is a medium for social adaptation.

The results for this study's third sub-question indicated that cultural capital accounted for 60.4% of the variance in the pronunciation sub-dimension of speaking skill, 68.7% of the variance in the fluency sub-dimension and 75.4% of the variance in the content sub-dimension. It also accounted for 68.3% of the variance in the language competency sub-dimension and 41.4% of the variance in the non-verbal communication sub-dimension. Cultural capital significantly predicted these sub-dimensions of speaking skills. There was also a positive and statistically significant relationship between cultural capital and all the sub-dimensions of speaking skill, which indicates that cultural capital affects all the sub-dimensions of speaking skill. It is striking that cultural capital accounted for the highest percentage of variance in the content sub-dimension (75.4%), which also had the highest Pearson's correlation coefficient ($r=0.868$). Cultural capital thus has a determinant effect on the components that constitute the content sub-dimension such as enriching the content of speech, featuring main ideas, addressing different aspects of the topic and speaking in a goal-oriented fashion without deviation. On the other hand, the highest relationship between the sub-dimensions of cultural capital and speaking skill was between intellectual accumulation and content ($r=0.846$). This finding indicates parallelism between reading habits and content production in speaking. Uçgun (2007) stresses that people who lack a reading habit cannot be expected to give well-organized and articulate speeches. Marks (2009) says that reading, an explanatory component of cultural capital, plays a vital role in enlarging vocabulary, knowledge acquisition, gathering information and increasing

interpretative power. It is thus inevitable for reading, a strong predictor of cultural capital, to affect speaking performance through variables such as vocabulary and knowledge acquisition.

There is clearly a relationship between cultural capital and language skills. The theoretical background of Bourdieu's approach indicates that cultural capital, cultural tendencies and linguistic skills are intertwined (Yanıklar, 2010). The ability to use language in specific forms is a criterion of cultural capital (Harrison, 2013). People who lack cultural capital are not able to connect with others, interact with them competently and are not taken seriously in some cases (Schwalbe et al., 2000). Also, children are born with the ability to learn language(s) and thus speaking skill, and this ability is largely at similar levels. Therefore, it may be incorrect to attribute variations or deficiencies in individual speaking performance to natural abilities.

Socioeconomic status is another essential determinant of cultural capital competency. Indeed, there is a positive, significant relationship between socioeconomic status and cultural capital competency (De Graaf, 1986; Nishioka & Durrani, 2019). For example, there are vital inequalities between children who are raised in families with different socioeconomic statuses. These inequalities increase over time and become deficiencies in linguistic skills (Fernald, Marchman & Weisleder, 2013). Roy, Chiat & Dodd (2014) say that children raised in socioeconomically disadvantaged families experience early language problems, and their speaking skills do not develop. Pace et al. (2017) found that socioeconomic status affects linguistic skills such as vocabulary, grammar, narration and phonetics. Many children from homes with low socioeconomic status are less able than their peers to use standard language and produce discourse (Ginsborg, 2006). Rowe (2008) argues that the children of more educated parents with more cultural capital benefit more from verbal opportunities while communicating with their parents than the children of less educated parents with less cultural capital, and this difference affects children's speech development. More educated parents with high cultural capital talk more with their children, pay attention to lexical diversity and use long expressions (Rowe, 2008; Schwab & Lew-Williams, 2016). Cultural capital levels affect variables such as speaking and local language, as argued by Andersen and Hansen (2011). Bourdieu and Passeron (2015: 161) found that individuals with low cultural capital may make intonation mistakes while using standard language because they speak quickly and feel uncomfortable while speaking. Koytak (2012) stresses that individuals from families with relatively low cultural capital use local words and experience speech disfluency. Grenfell (2011: 80) says that individuals with professions that society regards as relatively high-level are more competent in word use and topic elaboration. Labov found that individuals from the lower strata of society frequently pause and repeat themselves and are indecisive in their speech (as cited in Grenfell, 2011: 80). Shaw (1951) observed that word use and manners of expression provide hints about speakers' social strata based on cultural capital. Smedley and Bayton (1978) also thought that middle class people speak more accurately than the lower classes.

Cultural capital, which was first described by Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) in their theory of cultural and social reproduction, plays an active intermediary role in inequality in educational models. This study's findings show that it plays a similar intermediary role in speaking performance, and that varying cultural capital competencies cause inequality in speaking performance.

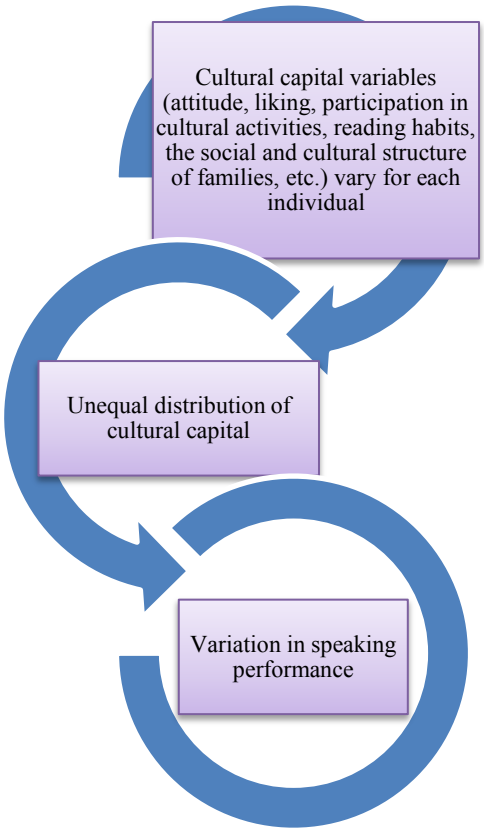

Figure 1. The role of cultural capital in the variation in speaking performance

It is important to increase cultural capital levels to enhance speaking performance. Cultural activities such as mobile movie theaters, sports facilities, libraries, theater performances and more should be made available to children who live in relatively underprivileged environments in order to increase their cultural capital. With long-term strategies and development policies, educational programs should be restructured to consider cultural capital's role in linguistic skills. Online practices such as virtual visits to museums and exhibitions, participation in virtual concerts and e-books should be emphasized more. Courses that prioritize cultural content such as music, movies and novels should be designed. The content of textbooks should be enriched by including biographies of important scientists and artists. Researchers should also investigate whether or not cultural capital affects other fundamental linguistic skills

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