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A PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR WASHBACK EFFECTS OF E-PORTFOLIOS IN SPEAKING ASSESSMENT

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Abstract: This paper aims to propose a framework to explore the washback effects of e-portfolios in speaking assessment. Drawing on multiple theoretical frameworks in washback research, it first reviews classical models of language assessment and illustrates how evolving priorities in language education have led some educators to adopt alternative, technology-driven approaches, notably e-portfolios. The paper then synthesizes prior theoretical foundations alongside empirical studies to identify key stakeholders including students, teachers, and school administrators and their roles in shaping and experiencing washback effects. Building on this synthesis, the paper proposes a framework that shows how stakeholders' beliefs, attitudes, and practices intersect when e-portfolios are used to assess English speaking skills. Finally, it underlines the framework's theoretical significance for valid and responsive assessment design and provides pedagogical recommendations for educators and assessment practitioners seeking to implement e-portfolios effectively in diverse instructional contexts.

Keywords: washback effects, e-portfolio assessment, English-speaking assessment, language assessment

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KHUNG ĐỀ XUẤT VỀ TÁC ĐỘNG DỘI NGƯỢC CỦA HỒ SƠ HỌC TẬP ĐIỆN TỬ TRONG ĐÁNH GIÁ KỸ NĂNG NÓI

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Tóm tắt: Bài báo này đề xuất khung tìm hiểu tác động dội ngược (washback) của hồ sơ điện tử (e-portfolio) đối với việc đánh giá kỹ năng nói. Dựa trên nhiều khuôn khổ lý thuyết trong nghiên cứu tác động dội ngược, bài báo trước hết xem xét các mô hình đánh giá ngôn ngữ cổ điển và minh họa các ưu tiên ngày càng thay đổi trong giáo dục ngôn ngữ đã dẫn dắt một số nhà giáo dục áp dụng các phương pháp thay thế dựa trên công nghệ, điển hình là e-portfolio, như thế nào. Tiếp đó, bài báo tổng hợp các nền tảng lý thuyết trước đây cùng với các nghiên cứu thực nghiệm để xác định các bên liên quan chủ chốt gồm: sinh viên, giảng viên và cán bộ quản lý nhà trường, và vai trò của họ trong việc hình thành và trải nghiệm các tác động dội ngược. Trên cơ sở tổng hợp này, bài báo đề xuất một khung cho thấy cách thức niềm tin, thái độ và thực hành của các bên liên quan giao thoa khi sử dụng e-portfolio để đánh giá kỹ năng nói tiếng Anh. Cuối cùng, bài báo nhấn mạnh ý nghĩa lý thuyết của khung này đối với việc thiết kế đánh giá có tính hợp lệ và linh hoạt, đồng thời đưa ra các khuyến nghị sư phạm cho giảng viên và chuyên gia đánh giá nhằm triển khai e-portfolio một cách hiệu quả trong các bối cảnh giảng dạy đa dạng.

Từ khóa: tác động dội ngược (washback), đánh giá bằng e-portfolio, đánh giá kỹ năng nói tiếng Anh, đánh giá ngôn ngữ

1. Introduction

Historically, language assessments have been essential in identifying students' strengths and areas for improvement, while also providing teachers with valuable data to inform their training (Bachman & Palmer, 2010). Between the 1970s and the early 2000s, assessments predominantly focused on traditional tests and examinations targeting specific language elements - grammar, vocabulary, and reading comprehension (Bachman & Palmer, 2010). Although these assessments evaluated certain aspects of language proficiency, they occasionally undervalued other communicative and performance-related skills, especially speaking, therefore limiting a comprehensive understanding of learners' capabilities (Inbar-Lourie, 2008).

Over the past two decades, alternative assessment methodologies that provide more authentic and significant evaluations of language usage have garnered substantial attention (Brown, 2004; Europe, 2001). Among these alternative assessment types, e-portfolio-based assessment with the implementation of technology enables students to collect and display diverse artifacts (e.g., recorded activities, reflections, multimedia presentations), the e-portfolio-based assessment collectively illustrates students’ progress and performance in language acquisition (Barrett, 2005). Advocates of e-portfolios assert that they offer formative

feedback, facilitating active student engagement in their developmental process and more comprehensively documenting communicative proficiency (Zhang & Tur, 2022).

Despite growing interest in e-portfolio assessment, two important gaps persist (Alderson & Wall, 1993). First, although washback has been extensively studied in traditional testing contexts (Alderson & Wall, 1993; Bailey, 1996; Cheng & Curtis, 2012; Green, 2013), relatively few have investigated the potential impact of e-portfolio-based assessment on teaching and learning, particularly for developing English speaking proficiency (Barrett, 2005; Cepik & Yastibas, 2013; Duong & Nguyen, 2022; Lasminiar, 2022). Existing studies of e-portfolio washback tend to focus on written genres or general language development (Pourdana & Tavassoli, 2022), leaving oral proficiency outcomes under-investigated. Second, few studies that examine e-portfolio washback in speaking settings remain mostly descriptive and disjointed, providing case studies or small-scale surveys without tying their results into a cogent model. Teachers thus lack a thorough framework explaining which contextual elements, evaluation strategies, and stakeholder views combine to generate either positive or negative washback on speaking abilities.

To fill these gaps, this study pursues two aims: (1) to synthesize theory and empirical evidence on washback effects of e-portfolio in speaking assessment, and (2) to propose and illustrate a stakeholder-driven framework. The proposed framework of the review aims to guide future research and practical applications, thereby enhancing the understanding of how technology-enhanced evaluations can impact the development of speaking competence across diverse educational settings.

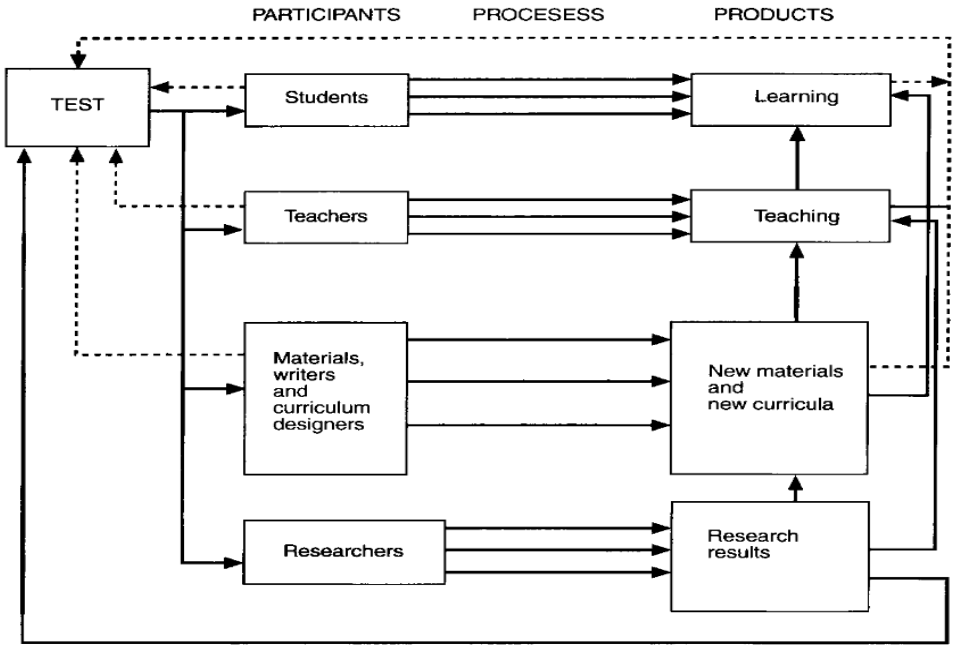
2. Theoretical Foundation

2.1. Washback

The conceptualization of test influence and impact may be traced back to the 1950s and 1960s, when scholars like Vernon (1958) and Wiseman (1961) asserted that testing might affect instructional methods. Washback was not acknowledged as a crucial but intricate educational phenomenon until the 1980s (Hughes, 1988). Washback, often referred to as backwash, has been broadly conceptualized as the influence of testing on teaching and learning practices, encompassing both intended and unintended (Alderson & Wall, 1993; Bailey, 1996; Messick, 1996). Classical definitions commonly emphasize the direct link between assessment and instructional practices. For instance, Alderson and Wall (1993) defined washback as test-driven impacts on what teachers teach and how learners learn, emphasizing both beneficial and detrimental consequences of assessment practices. Besides teachers and students concerning the process of testing and assessment, Hughes (2003) involved other participants as stakeholders through four prerequisites: (1) learners must have a tangible incentive to succeed, (2) teachers must be likewise motivated to support that success, (3) all participants must understand the test's nature and consequences, and (4) they must be fully informed about its curricular and methodological demands. Echoing this view, Bailey (1996) extended this view by emphasizing stakeholder perceptions of test authenticity and stakes, arguing that washback effects depended not only on test features but also on how stakeholders including students, teachers, curriculum developers perceived and reacted to those features. Bailey's (1996) model (see Figure 1) explicitly included multiple stakeholders (students, teachers, researchers, curriculum designers, and materials writers) as active agents in shaping washback, highlighting its inherently socio-contextual nature.

Figure 1

Bailey's (1996) basic model of washback



More recent scholarship has expanded upon these foundational definitions. For instance, Cheng and Curtis (2012) emphasized washback as a complex interplay of contextual factors (institutional policies, stakeholder attitudes, cultural dimensions) beyond the simple test-instruction relationship. Green (2013) further suggested that washback could manifest differently across macro (policy-level), meso (institutional), and micro (classroom) levels, implying that washback is context-sensitive and dynamic rather than universal. Recent research (Saif, 2006; Xie & Andrews, 2013) highlighted that washback is a complex and multi-layered phenomenon, and points out that early definitions did not fully capture the multifarious washback in current language education. Whereas the standard models gave a limited view, more careful inspection confirms that they had problems with the changes caused by innovation and new educational goals (Saif, 2006). While earlier writers outlined core definitions (Alderson & Wall, 1993; Bailey, 1996) to describe washback, modern expertise proposes a larger and more flexible way to view washback that includes technological developments, varied stakeholder roles, and complex contextual interactions (Cheng & Curtis, 2012; Green, 2013; Saif, 2006).

Even with these expanded definitions, existing theoretical frameworks did not fully cover what happens in the digital assessment area, especially with e-portfolios. While washback has been well analyzed in recent studies, there has not been enough theory to explain exactly how it works in e-portfolios. By bringing together multiple stakeholder functions and factors from the setting to address how e-portfolio assessments moderate washback in speech assessment, the suggested paradigm offered in this work may directly tackle to this issue.

The framework was developed from Bailey's concept of stakeholder interactions to incorporate digital assessment tools (e-portfolio) and combines more aspects, including stakeholders' beliefs, attitudes, and contextual influences, to make clearer the ways modern washback mechanisms work. Yet Bailey's (1996) model predates digital assessment; it omits technology-specific factors such as platform usability and multimedia feedback.

2.2. E-Portfolio-Based Assessment

Initial discussions on portfolio-based assessment often concentrated on the collection of tangible artifacts that represent a learner's progression across time (Barrett, 2005). Traditional portfolios usually include written work, feedback from instructors, and personal reflections. With the progress in educational technology, educators and students have been being shifting portfolios from physical to electronic forms for the storage, presentation, and evaluation of student work (Farrell, 2020).

E-portfolio is defined as a digital, web-based portfolio of students' work, reflections, and achievements that is created over time within an electronic format (Alawdat, 2013; Phung & Dang, 2022). It consists of a wide range of artifacts - texts, audio, video, graphics, results extracted from academic and extra-curricular activities, with reflective commentaries (Zhang & Tur, 2022).

E-portfolio-based assessment represents a shift toward authentic, learner-centered assessment methodologies, leveraging digital technologies to document and reflect on learners' competencies through diverse artifacts (Barrett, 2005; Safari & Koosha, 2016). Unlike conventional tests that mostly assess discrete language elements, e-portfolios give learners whole and continuous documentation of their development in communicative skills top priority, to support learner autonomy and continuous formative feedback (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019; Cepik & Yastibas, 2013; Chang et al., 2018). The success of e-portfolios mostly relies on their congruence with instructional objectives, involvement of stakeholders, and contextual factors.

Many theoretical frameworks inform the teaching and assessment aspects of e-portfolios. According to constructivist theories, learners gain understanding by thinking about what they have done and working together, which is in line with what e-portfolios support (Jonassen & Rohrer-Murphy, 1999). It is also noted by self-regulated learning (SRL) frameworks that e-portfolios allow learners to note their progress, choose goals, and apply useful strategies, all of which are vital for language learning (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2013). Black and Wiliam (2009) point out in Assessment for Learning (AFL) theory that it is important to include plenty of formative feedback loops for effective e-portfolio use by putting formative feedback in a lead role in e-portfolio development.

Because of these variations in theory, e-portfolio assessment is conceptualized as much more than a simple use of technology. It is recognized as an effective teaching and assessment practice. Bringing together constructivist, SRL, and AFL theories provides a cohesive theoretical foundation for understanding e-portfolios' potential for generating meaningful washback in language education, particularly in fostering authentic speaking competencies.

2.3. Speaking Assessment

Speaking skill development is fundamentally grounded in the theoretical construct of communicative competence, encompassing linguistic competence, sociolinguistic appropriateness, discourse management, and strategic effectiveness (Bachman & Palmer, 2010; Canale & Swain, 1980). Effective speaking involves accuracy, fluency, pragmatic appropriateness, and the ability to interact dynamically in diverse communicative contexts (Galaczi & Taylor, 2018). Speaking assessment, therefore, must reliably capture these multifaceted dimensions of oral communication. However, it presents unique challenges due to its real-time, interactive, and socially contextualized nature (Luoma, 2004; Zechner & Evanini, 2019). The inherent subjectivity in evaluating spoken performance further exacerbates these

challenges, often resulting in issues related to reliability, validity, rater biases, and inconsistencies (Fulcher, 2015).

Authentic interactive tasks (e.g., discussions, role-plays) align closely with real-world communication demands but simultaneously pose challenges related to standardization and scalability (Zaim & Arsyad, 2020; Zechner & Evanini, 2019). Distinctions between formative and summative speaking assessments further highlight essential considerations: formative assessment, through continuous feedback and iterative improvements, effectively fosters skill development, learner autonomy, and reflective practice (Black & Wiliam, 2009). Conversely, summative assessments, while useful for certifying competence or proficiency at specific checkpoints, might restrict opportunities for ongoing skill refinement and active learner engagement (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2019; Luoma, 2004).

The proposed framework aims to address these complexities by integrating formative assessment principles with e-portfolio-based methods, capturing ongoing learner progression through authentic, recorded speaking tasks. This integration not only mitigates limitations associated with summative evaluations but also promotes constructive washback effects, aligning assessment criteria closely with instructional objectives and thereby encouraging educators to adopt meaningful, communicative-focused teaching practices (Cheng & Curtis, 2012; Barrett, 2005). Thus, the development of this framework is crucial, providing theoretical coherence and practical guidance for enhancing speaking assessment through stakeholder interaction, feedback mechanisms, and pedagogical responsiveness in higher education contexts.

3. Empirical Research on Washback Effects

3.1. Washback in Traditional Assessments

To examine the empirical underpinnings of classical washback, systematic research was conducted across Scopus, Web of Science, and ERIC for peer-reviewed studies published in English between 2015 and 2025. The search used combinations of keywords such as ‘washback’, ‘traditional testing’, ‘language exam’, ‘test-driven instruction’, and ‘teacher cognition’. Studies were included if they focused on high-stakes language assessments, provided empirical data (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods), and explicitly addressed aspects of teacher practices, student engagement, or the impact of policy and context. Studies that focused solely on alternative or digital assessments were excluded. Following duplicate removal and abstract screening, approximately 110 articles were identified that directly contribute to understanding how high-stakes tests influence classroom practices and learning behaviors (Alqahtani, 2021; Athiworakun & Adunyarittigun, 2022; Aydin & Şahin, 2024; Chak, 2024; Dawadi, 2021; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2023; Saglam & Farhady, 2019; Shijun, 2022).

There are four key debates persisting in the current literature. First, the predominant theme of teaching-to-the-test and instructional narrowing was found in 78 studies (71%). Teachers often restricted instructional content and methods significantly to match exam requirements, sidelining communicative skills and innovative teaching approaches (Alqahtani, 2021; Athiworakun & Adunyarittigun, 2022; Chak, 2024; Dammak et al., 2022; Hoyos Pipicano, 2024; Muñoz et al., 2019; Saglam & Farhady, 2019; Shijun, 2022; Tong & Pham, 2024). Second, 53 studies (48%) highlighted significant impacts on learner behaviors, noting test-driven strategies such as memorization, drilling of past-exam papers, and strategic prioritization of high-weighted exam components. Students' authentic communicative language practices were frequently compromised by test-centric study habits (Alqahtani, 2021; Aydin &

Şahin, 2024; Chak, 2024; Dawadi, 2021; Nguyen, 2023b; Saglam & Farhady, 2019). Third, a smaller subset of studies (6 studies, 5%) explicitly examined student motivation and attitudes, indicating mixed motivational outcomes. While some students developed enhanced intrinsic motivation when exams were perceived as valid and goal-aligned (Dong & Liu, 2022; Liu & Yu, 2021; Nguyen, 2023a; Sadeghi et al., 2021; Wu & Lee, 2017), others reported increased anxiety and predominantly extrinsic motivation, focusing primarily on exam scores (Dawadi, 2021; Sadeghi et al., 2021). Lastly, policy contexts and institutional constraints were explicitly discussed in 18 studies (16%). These studies emphasized how accountability measures, institutional expectations, and curricular misalignment significantly mediated washback, often exacerbating the negative impact of high-stakes testing on teaching and learning (Athiworakun & Adunyarittigun, 2022; Nguyen, 2023; Dawadi, 2021; Shijun, 2022; Aydın & Şahin, 2024; Chak, 2024). Collectively, empirical research since 2015 strongly confirms the enduring relevance of classical washback theory, underscoring that washback effects are nuanced, context-dependent, and mediated by multiple factors, including teaching practices, learner strategies, student motivation, and broader policy contexts.

Critical analysis of these empirical studies indicates a consensus that traditional assessments significantly influence instructional practices and learner behaviors, often resulting in narrowed instruction and teaching to the test (Nguyen, 2023a; Saglam & Farhady, 2019). Even though many studies revealed that negative washback effects exist, several studies also highlight positive effects like curriculum alignment and planned, organized lessons (Aydin & Şahin, 2024). Nevertheless, the generalizability of these results is constrained by context-specific approaches and mostly depends on qualitative or small-scale studies, suggesting the necessity of more integrated, complete theoretical assessments. In conclusion, while empirical studies validate the enduring relevance of washback theory, they also expose its limitations in capturing the contested, non-linear realities of testing impacts. A critical reimagining of assessment frameworks is essential to align measurement practices with the developmental and emancipatory goals of education.

3.2. Washback in E-Portfolios

To capture the emerging body of research on washback effects in e-portfolio-based assessments, a complementary search was executed in Scopus, Web of Science, and ERIC. The search focused on English-language, peer-reviewed empirical studies published between 2015 and 2025 using terms such as ‘washback’, ‘e-portfolio’, ‘alternative assessment’, and ‘English speaking’. The selection criteria required the studies which investigated how e-portfolios impacted teaching and learning, specifically those that highlighted formative or technology-mediated processes. From this process, 15 core articles were identified that effectively extend classical washback theories into the e-portfolio context.

Although limited in number, these studies demonstrate that e-portfolios can reshape teacher practice and student behavior in ways that align with classical washback theory. Although limited in number, these studies demonstrate that e-portfolios can reshape teacher practice and student behavior in ways that align with classical washback theory. Empirical evidence reveals predominantly positive but context-dependent washback effects, including enhanced learner motivation (8 studies, 53%; e.g., Mathur & Mahapatra, 2024; Ayaz & Gök, 2023; Lasminiar, 2022), deeper reflective practices and learner autonomy (5 studies, 33%; e.g., Duong & Nguyen, 2022; Ayaz & Gök, 2023), and improved teacher-student feedback interactions (3 studies, 20%; e.g., Kusuma & Waluyo, 2023; Zheng & Barrot, 2022). However, critical analysis underscores significant variability in findings influenced by institutional

readiness and support (4 studies, 27%; e.g., Bokiev & Abd Samad, 2021; Ngo & Luu, 2023), stakeholder attitudes (4 studies, 27%; e.g., Ngo & Luu, 2023; Ayaz & Gök, 2023), and technical conditions (5 studies, 33%; e.g., Lasminiar, 2022; Zheng & Barrot, (2022). Methodologically, existing studies primarily rely on small-scale qualitative approaches, limiting theoretical generalization and comprehensive understanding of washback mechanisms (Kusuma & Waluyo, 2023). These methodological limitations and the fragmented nature of existing evidence highlight a critical need for systematic, theory-driven integration, which the present framework explicitly addresses.

4. A Framework for Washback Effects of E-Portfolios in Speaking Assessment

4.1. Rationale for the Framework

The proposed framework synthesizes theoretical foundations from Section 2 and empirical insights from Section 3 to fill specific gaps in our understanding of how washback effects materialize in e-portfolio-based assessments of English-speaking skills. Theoretically, the framework integrates foundational washback theories, especially Bailey's (1996) stakeholder-focused model, which emphasizes the mediating role of stakeholder perceptions, attitudes, and practices in shaping assessment outcomes. Bailey's (1996) framework explicitly acknowledges multiple stakeholders such as students, teachers, administrators, curriculum developers, and materials writers, highlighting the complex and dynamic interactions between these agents in the washback phenomenon. By building directly upon Bailey's (1996) model, the proposed framework situates e-portfolios within a clearly articulated stakeholder-interaction approach, explicitly extending the foundational washback concepts to digital and speaking-oriented assessment contexts.

Lately, literature about e-portfolios highlights a focused teaching approach that puts learners at the center. This encourages reflecting, repeated feedback, and being self-directed (Barrett, 2005; Lam, 2020; Zhang & Tur, 2022). This is consistent with Bailey's focus on practicing assessment based on the interests of stakeholders, which allows for a logical, coherent approach to integrate formative assessment principles into the stakeholder-oriented washback model. Empirically, existing research (Duong & Nguyen, 2022; Lasminiar, 2022; Mathur & Mahapatra, 2022) demonstrates positive washback from e-portfolios on speaking skill development yet highlights context-specific challenges, including technological barriers and teacher workload. Crucially, however, most empirical studies focus predominantly on written or general language proficiency, neglecting oral skills (Chang et al., 2018; Ngo et al., 2025). The current framework explicitly addresses this gap by systematically linking stakeholder interactions, formative feedback cycles, and speaking-specific demands, offering a comprehensive understanding of how e-portfolios impact English-speaking instruction.

4.2. Components of the Framework

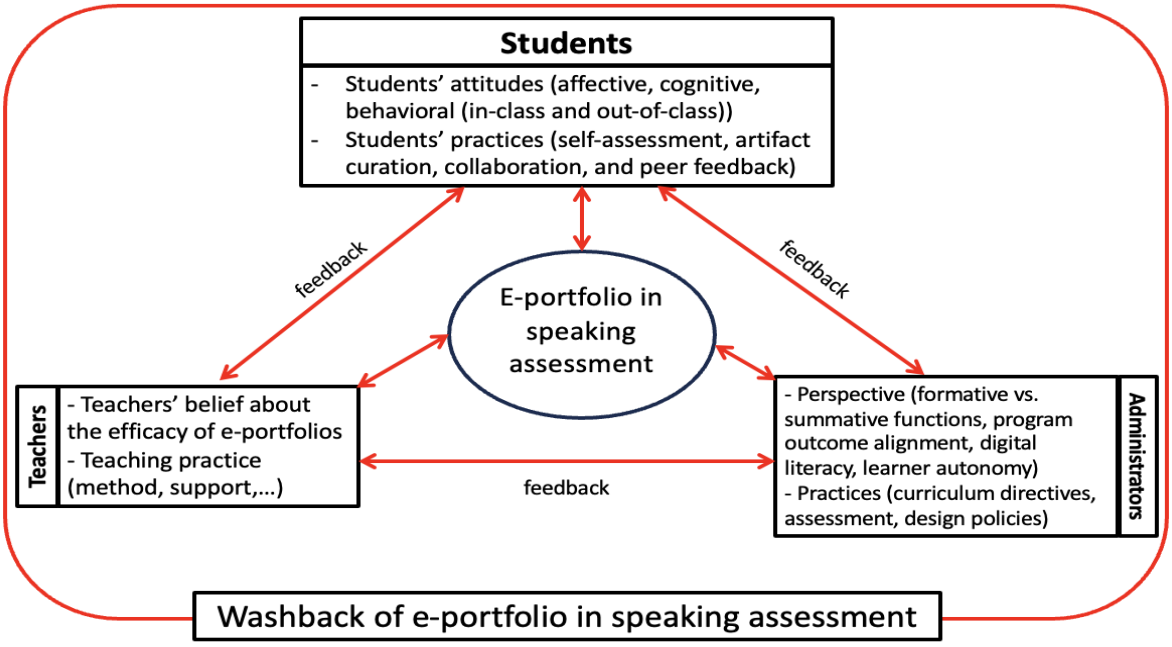
Figure 2 illustrates three parallel stakeholder dimensions including students, teachers, and administrators. This framework focuses on students, teachers, and administrators because our systematic review (Section 3) shows they are the primary agents driving washback effects of e-portfolios in speaking assessment. Students engage directly with speaking tasks and formative feedback; teachers translate assessment requirements into instructional design, feedback practices, and reflective activities; and administrators set the policy, resource, and training conditions that enable or constrain these classroom processes. Although parents can support extra practice or moral encouragement, empirical studies (Poole et al., 2018) report

minimal direct parental involvement in speaking-oriented e-portfolio work. For this reason, the framework privileges these three instructional stakeholders, while noting that future research might extend it to include parents once evidence of their concrete roles emerges.

At the center lies e-portfolio in speaking assessment, which fosters iterative tasks and ongoing feedback cycles essential for spoken-language development. The current framework primarily focuses on individual e-portfolios used for assessing English-speaking skills. However, this does not exclude group e-portfolios. Peer collaboration, interaction, and peer feedback components commonly associated with group e-portfolios are also relevant to individual e-portfolios. In both scenarios, collaboration and peer feedback serve as critical practices contributing to the washback effects by enhancing student engagement and reflective practices. Thus, while the framework is illustrated through individual e-portfolios, it explicitly accommodates collaborative elements like peer assessment, group discussions, and feedback interactions.

Figure 2

The Framework for Washback Effects of E-Portfolios in Speaking Assessment



4.2.1. Students

Students are the primary beneficiaries (or "targets") of e-portfolios in speaking assessment. Their attitudes and practices critically influence whether e-portfolio tasks genuinely promote active learning or simply serve compliance requirements (Barrett, 2005; Cheng & Watanabe, 2004). Washback research consistently highlights learners' perceptions, motivation, behaviors, and attitudes as influential in determining assessment outcomes (Alderson & Wall, 1993; Bailey, 1996). In the context of e-portfolio use, students make critical decisions, including which oral performances to upload, how often they revise artifacts, and whether they actively engage in peer or teacher feedback activities (Zhang & Tur, 2022). To capture students' attitudes, we adopt Eagly and Chaiken's (1998) ABC model, which distinguishes three mutually reinforcing dimensions: affective (how learners feel about using e-portfolios), cognitive (what they believe about their value), and behavioral (how those

feelings and beliefs translate into action). This tripartite lens is essential for analyzing washback, because the success of e-portfolio assessment ultimately hinges on learners' emotional engagement, perceived usefulness, and willingness to revise and collaborate. The subsections that follow examine each dimension in the context of speaking-skill e-portfolios.

- *Affective dimension*

The affective component is what a person thinks or feels about other individuals or a specific situation (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998). In this study, the affective dimension refers to a general student's feeling about the e-portfolios in the course of English-speaking skills. Facially positive affective attitudes of interest, enjoyment, and enthusiasm may also contribute to students' motivation as well as beneficial learning outcomes when using e-portfolios for assessing speaking skills (Ahangari & Akbari Hamed, 2013). On the other hand, negative affective attitudes like anxiety or apprehension that students may develop toward the assessment may in fact decrease the chances of the student engaging fully in the assessment process (Ahangari & Akbari Hamed, 2013).

- *Cognitive dimension*

The cognitive component refers to a person's attitude, that is, what he or she thinks or has in their mind every time they deal with people or a particular event. The cognitive dimension in this study implies students' expectations, estimates, or perceptions of e-portfolios as facilitative tools for learning English speaking skills, the criteria and anticipated performance of e-portfolio tasks, and other related mental processes that students go through while addressing the set e-portfolio tasks (Bailey & Garner, 2010). When students perceive the assessment process as relevant to their learning goals and/or as genuine, they may develop positive attitudes towards cognition, thus increasing their investments in the process (Barrett, 2005).

- *Behavioral dimension*

The behavioral aspect is defined as how a person acts or behaves toward others or a particular event (Eagly & Chaiken, 1998). The behavioral dimension encompasses in-class behaviors and out-of-class behaviors. The former may be associated with portfolio-related activities, assessment procedures applied by teachers, and responses to teachers' feedback (Baturay, 2015) while out-of-class behaviors may include the students' practice, contemplation, and evaluation of their own e-portfolios (Hakim & Srisudarso, 2020). Attitudes formed through positive behavioral patterns of learning involving learners' proactive learning behaviors and self-regulated learning have been found to enhance learning outcomes of e-portfolios in assessment (Chang et al., 2018; Duong & Nguyen, 2022).

Besides attitudes, in e-portfolio use, students actively decide which oral performances to upload, the frequency of artifact revisions, and whether to engage in teacher and peer feedback activities (Zhang & Tur, 2022). From the theoretical foundations and empirical findings, observable student practices are directly related to e-portfolio assessment, including self-assessment, artifact curation, collaboration, and peer feedback.

4.2.2. Teachers

In contrast with students, teachers' roles in the framework extend beyond attitudes to include both their beliefs about the efficacy of e-portfolios and the practical teaching practices they deploy. Beliefs, in this context, refer explicitly to teachers' pedagogical perspectives on e-portfolios, such as confidence in their value for improving speaking skills, perceptions of their feasibility, and attitudes regarding technology integration (Messick, 1996; Xie & Andrews,

2013). These beliefs significantly influence the pedagogical practices teachers adopt specifically, task design, frequency and quality of feedback, and the integration of reflective practices into speaking assessments (Ghany & Alzouebi, 2019).

Teachers, as architects of learning experiences, hold decisive authority over which e-portfolio tasks are assigned, how feedback is administered, and what standards guide oral performance evaluation (Green, 2013). Washback research consistently underscores teacher cognition and pedagogy as crucial determinants of whether an assessment fosters meaningful skill development or superficial test-oriented drills (Messick, 1996; Xie & Andrews, 2013). In an e-portfolio system, teacher beliefs about technology and teaching methods translate directly into the practice of providing timely feedback, designing reflective activities, or scaffolding speaking tasks. The framework thus distinguishes teacher beliefs (e.g., confidence in e-portfolios for speaking practice, perceived utility of reflection) from teacher practices (e.g., modeling task, feedback frequency, technology integration). This is aligned with teacher cognition studies showing that beliefs drive pedagogical choices, thereby shaping the assessment environment and its subsequent washback (Ghany & Alzouebi, 2019).

4.2.3. Administrators

Institutional leaders (e.g., department heads, curriculum coordinators) wield the power to create enabling or inhibiting conditions through resource allocation, training programs, and policy directives through resource allocation and training programs (Balaban, 2020; Poole et al., 2018). In the study's framework, they unite strategic perspectives (beliefs about e-portfolios' formative versus summative functions, alignment with program outcomes, and priorities for digital literacy and learner autonomy) with operational practices (curriculum directives; assessment design policies such as rubrics and evaluation criteria). These administrative actions establish the institution's overarching assessment culture, signal the value placed on reflective, technology-enhanced oral assessments, and determine whether teachers and students can sustain iterative feedback cycles. Ultimately, administrators shape the broader environment in which e-portfolio washback effects unfold, directly influencing the effectiveness of speaking-skill development.

At the higher education level, adapting Bailey's (1996) washback framework to emphasize administrators while omitting explicit roles for researchers and material writers is theoretically and empirically justified. Administrators have direct, decisive influence on policy formation, curriculum alignment, and resource allocation which are critical factors to shape washback at the institutional and classroom levels (Shih, 2007; Shohamy, 2020; Shohamy et al., 1996). In contrast, the impact of external researchers and material writers tends to be indirect, mediated through teachers' and administrators' adoption decisions (Abidin, 2021; Alderson & Wall, 1993). Moreover, in higher education environments, stakeholders usually play hybrid roles; instructors and administrators may concurrently participate in research activities and material production (Banegas et al., 2020). Thus, acknowledging these overlapping functions helps to better understand how washback effects show themselves through the active integration of assessment techniques, thereby matching the theoretical framework more precisely with the dynamic reality of university environments. Bailey's (1996) model also suggests a reciprocal interaction between tests and participants, implying that those engaged can affect the exams themselves. Rather than having a direct linear impact, washback operates as a dynamic and complex process influenced by various participants such as students, teachers, parents, researchers, curriculum designers, and material writers, underscoring the multifaceted and comprehensive nature of washback (Bailey, 1996; Dawadi, 2021).

4.3. Interaction Between Students, Teachers, and Administrators in Using E-Portfolios as an Assessment

Bidirectional Interactions among Stakeholders

E-portfolios for English-speaking assessment bring together students, teachers, and administrators in a dynamic system of mutual influence. While students and teachers collaborate on performance feedback and skill development, administrators provide the overarching policies and resources necessary to sustain the assessment process. These relationships are not one-directional. Rather, as Chang et al. (2018) note, student engagement can directly shape teacher practices, and strong administrative support enhances teachers' confidence and effectiveness. Over time, stakeholders develop iterative insights into how to optimize e-portfolio tasks, creating an evolving cycle of continuous improvement (Bailey, 1996; Shohamy, 2020).

Student - Teacher Interaction

At the classroom level, students and teachers engage in formative dialogue around speaking performance (Chang et al., 2011). In e-portfolios, students regularly upload recordings or reflective artifacts on the e-portfolio, and teachers provide targeted feedback on that e-portfolio to guide students' self-reflection and skill refinement. This ongoing exchange fosters deeper learner autonomy and constructive participation (Bailey & Garner, 2010). Hattie and Timperley's (2007) introduced three-level model of feedback including feed-up, feed-back, feed-forward. In the context of Vietnam, Nguyen and Nguyen (2023) Vietnamese EFL teachers and students feedback mirrors these practices through three channels including asynchronous audio/video comments on student recordings, threaded rubric-aligned text annotations, and brief one-on-one tutorials (face-to-face or online). Within the e-portfolio environment, students may review teacher comments on their uploaded speaking recordings and then request additional guidance or clarifications to refine subsequent portfolio submissions. Consequently, the washback generated through the e-portfolio cycle is driven by the quality and timeliness of teacher feedback and by the proactivity with which students engage in revising their speaking artifacts.

Student - Administrator Interaction

Even though students may not interact daily with administrators, the institutional support administrators provide significantly influences students' experiences (Quines & Monteza, 2023). Marsh and Roche's (1997) evaluation-informed policy model and Cook-Sather's (2006) student–faculty partnership framework emphasize surveys, focus groups, and committee involvement as key feedback channels. In Vietnam, quality-assurance surveys embedded in institutional dashboards, student–staff liaison focus groups (via semi-structured interviews), and student representation on assessment committees serve as the primary student–administrator feedback channels (Nguyen et al., 2023; Ta et al., 2023). When administrators set clear guidelines for e-portfolio usage or ensure adequate technical infrastructure, learners can more effectively record and upload speaking tasks. Conversely, limited resources or inconsistent policies may constrain students' ability to engage in meaningful reflection and revision. By following institutional protocols and capitalizing on available support (e.g., training workshops, stable digital platforms), students are better positioned to improve and achieve desired speaking outcomes.

Teacher - Administrator Interaction

Administrators also play an essential role in supporting teachers' professional development and motivation (Rai, 2018). In e-portfolio-based speaking assessments, collaborative planning

between teachers and administrators (e.g., aligning curriculum outcomes, designing rubrics) helps ensure the assessment tasks remain relevant and well-structured. Administrators can further facilitate teacher success by allocating resources (e.g., software licenses, hardware for recording) or scheduling time for feedback cycles. Ongoing communication between teachers and administrators regarding washback effects (e.g., changes in teaching focus, student engagement) allows for real-time policy or resource distribution adjustments, enhancing the overall efficacy of e-portfolio implementation (Quines & Monteza, 2023). Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) stress that data-driven instructional leadership requires structured feedback loops. Hallinger et al. (2017) report that in Vietnamese higher education there are cohort-level analytics dashboards sent to academic leaders, regular strategy meetings with teachers, and targeted professional-development workshops which underpin effective policy enactment and continuous pedagogical improvement.

Contextual Mediators

Across these interactions, institutional culture, resource availability, and professional development operate as mediating factors (Messick, 1996; Shohamy et al., 1996; Yujie et al., 2024). Even the most proactive teacher beliefs or enthusiastic student attitudes may yield minimal washback if, for example, there is insufficient technology to manage frequent audio or video submissions. Conversely, an environment that values reflective practice and allots time for formative feedback is likely to maximize the positive influence of e-portfolios on speaking proficiency.

Speaking - Specific Considerations

Unlike traditional written tasks, spoken language disappears quickly when spoken since people cannot normally record it (Chang et al., 2011) unless they use recording technology. Digital attachments in e-portfolios provide students with a way to record spoken tasks while allowing them to hear their previous attempts alongside peer reviews. The iterative process of performance - feedback - revision works specifically for speaking advancement because it enables students to enhance their speaking accuracy along with fluency and communicative ability over time. The assessment process for e-portfolio oral submissions needs regular student submissions along with strong feedback systems and specialized attention to recording tools because it differs from traditional discrete-point and writing evaluation approaches.

In short, the washback effects of e-portfolio for speaking assessment rely on the lasting relationship between students, teachers, and administrators, while functional mediators at the institution support based on oral-language requirements. The combined effect of stakeholders with clear policies and clear communication helps build positive washback impacts for skill development instead of focusing on test preparation.

5. Conclusion

The proposed framework establishes multi-stakeholder reciprocity among students, teachers, and administrators, moving beyond traditional teacher-focused washback models by adopting a socio-cultural perspective on collaborative learning (Lantolf et al., 2015). Uniquely, this framework highlights technology-mediated tasks specifically aimed at speaking skill development, diverging from earlier washback discussions primarily concerned with validation or discrete linguistic outcomes (Messick, 1996). The cyclical interaction model emphasizes ongoing, interactive assessment processes, facilitating sustained oral proficiency growth and encouraging pedagogical shifts toward student-centered instructional practices (Barrett, 2005).

Practically, the framework provides a comprehensive roadmap for empirical research,

guiding longitudinal, mixed-method studies to monitor washback effects. It also provides concrete plans for teacher professional development, therefore allowing useful classroom integration of task authenticity, feedback cycles, digital-literacy scaffolds, and learner reflection. Using the framework as an evaluation tool will help institutional stakeholders guarantee strong support for oral-skill development whether they are implementing or improving e-portfolio systems.

Notwithstanding these important contributions, current data mostly originates from higher-education environments, therefore restricting understanding of the roles of parental and community stakeholders. Future research must pilot the framework in K-12 and culturally diverse environments, employing mixed-methods designs incorporating rubric evaluations, AI-assisted pronunciation analyses, and learner diaries to enhance generalizability and sharpen theoretical constructs.

This study advances the discourse on e-portfolio assessments by advocating a shift toward authentic, natural language skill development. The framework demonstrates substantial potential for improving student communicative competence through structured stakeholder collaboration. However, extensive validation in varied educational contexts is essential, particularly examining external variables such as family engagement and resource availability. Ultimately, this research positions e-portfolios as transformative educational tools, capable of fostering both pedagogical innovation and comprehensive learner development within contemporary language education curricula.

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