

Developing criteria for assessing language learning and electronic portfolios in ESP contexts

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Plan for this workshop

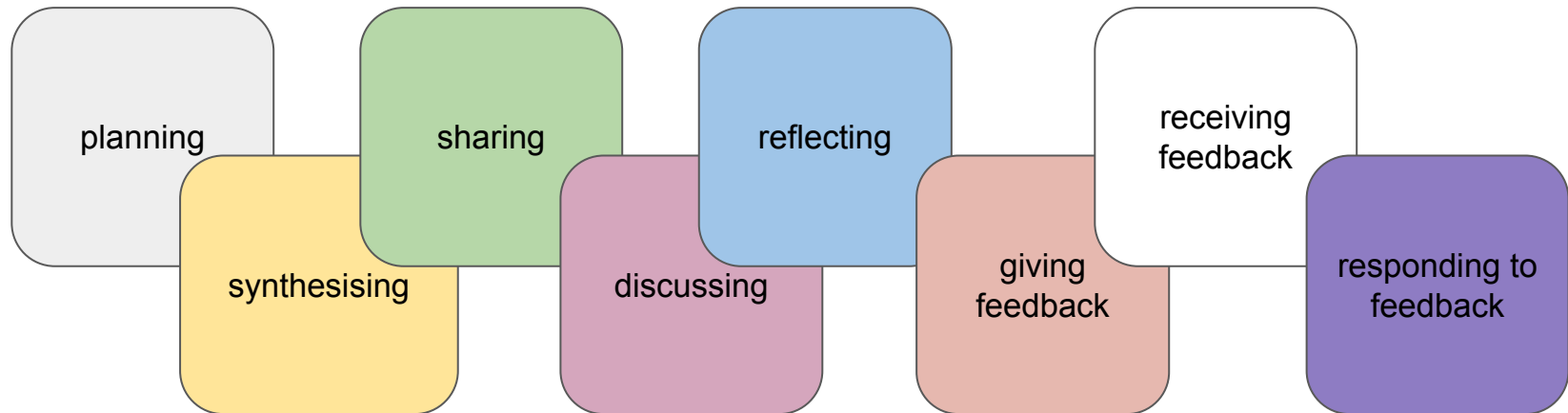
- Presentation (ca. 20 minutes)
 - research on portfolios
 - a framework
 - examples of portfolios at BHT
- World café: group work (ca. 40 minutes)
- Presentation of group work results (ca. 15 minutes)
- Discussion (ca. 15 minutes)



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What is an e-portfolio?

- “An e-portfolio is the product, created by the learner, a collection of digital artefacts articulating experiences, achievements and learning”.
- + process (equally important)



“...portfolio assessment **actively** involves students in the assessment process and can give them a sense of **empowerment** and **community**, particularly when it involves self- and peer-assessment” (Abrar-ul-Hassan 2021; emphasis added)

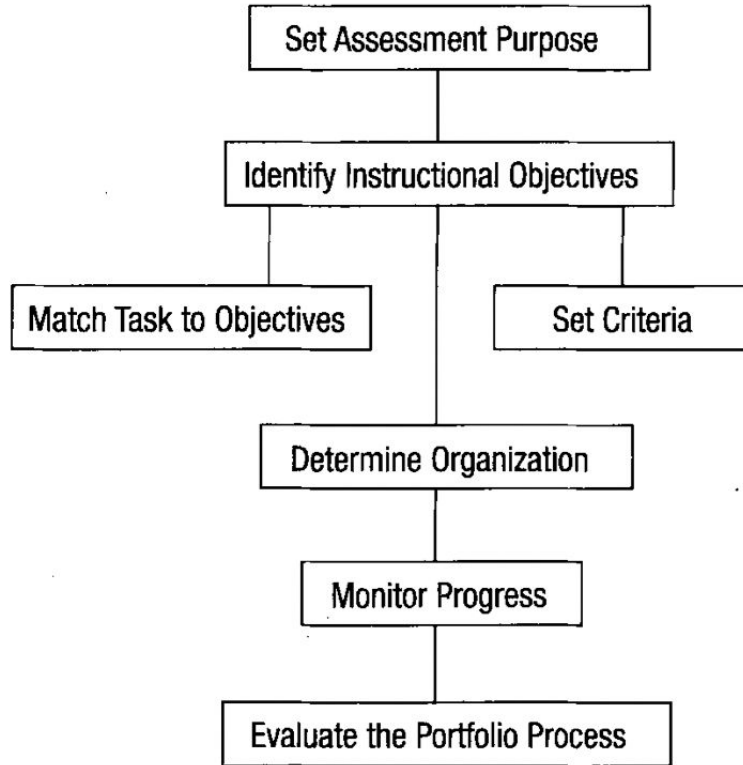
Three prevailing types of portfolios: 1) showcase 2) progress 3) working (cf. Abrar-ul-Hassan 2021)

“[E]-portfolios may offer opportunities for **transformative** practices in teaching, learning and assessment ... opportunities to access hard-to-measure constructs such as **collaboration**, **reflection** and a student’s learning journey. However, e-portfolios need to be **carefully** evaluated, designed and implemented” (Walland 2022; emphasis added)

“[S]tudents embrace this innovative practice with **enthusiasm**, and hence, e-portfolios seem to be even **superior** to regular portfolios ... because e-portfolios accommodate the needs of the new generation brought up in **information age**, who like to communicate and share stuff with each other in the virtual world.” (Wang 2020; emphasis added)

Figure 1

FRAMEWORK FOR PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT



“Portfolios are **flexible** tools that allow for frequent **opportunities** to practice and demonstrate **authentic** language use in relevant contexts and for **specific** purposes ... Portfolio assessment is an **ongoing, interactive** assessment that **actively** involves both the teacher and the student in the process of learning” (Delett 2008; emphasis added)

Language e-portfolio projects at the BHT

Case Study 1: Portfolio Assessment in a Business English course

- Tools: Moodle, H5P files, Mahara
- 2nd semester Business English B2
- Obligatory course
- Portfolio connected to a presentation (elevator pitch)
- Written exam: 50%, portfolio: 40%, participation in class: 10%
- 65 students (4 parallel courses)
- In-person classes, 2 online sessions
- Reflections on
 - topics relevant to the course (business pitches, start-up companies, investors etc.)
 - language learning process itself (learner types, language learning goals etc.)



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Sample Topics:

Managing motivation, learner types, SMART goals, ideas for elevator pitches, evaluation of investors' questions in video

Case Study 2: Portfolio Assessment in two ESP modules

English for the Digital Economy (Business Administration – Digital Economy)

Focus on fostering **learner autonomy** in ESP through:

- Selecting personal language learning **goals**
- **Designing** activities / **collaborating** with peers to achieve them
- **Monitoring** the learning process and progress
- **Reflecting** on and **documenting** the learning journey in Mahara
- **Self-assessment**



English Business Communications (Business Administration & Engineering – Civil Engineering)

Focus on **discipline-related** issues, e.g. a plan to 'smarten up' a district of Berlin:

- **Researching** the current problems facing the city of Berlin and smart solutions available
- **Identifying** a district in Berlin that would serve as your pilot project and **justifying** the choice
- **Choosing** 3 problem areas as identified in step 1 for the pilot project
- **Creating** a “**website**” (in Mahara) to communicate findings, goals and plans to the public and to address potential concerns

Case Study 3: Portfolio Assessment in an ESP Module



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Course: English in Business and Technology
Students per course: 25
Language Level: B1-B2
Focus: learner autonomy/task-based learning
Type of portfolio: assessment (vs. learning)

- Developing tasks/assessment criteria
- Grading
- Learning new technology (digital portfolios)
- Plagiarism

Case Study 4: Intercollegiate Project

Intercollegiate sustainability project between TUES (Tottori, Japan) and BHT (Berlin)

- **Language levels:** B1 – C1
- **Project objectives:** encourage collaborative working and interaction on a set of common goals through the medium of English, partly in structured online sessions in class time
- **Project goals:** Groups of four (two TUES, two BHT students) collaborate on producing a. 2,000 word written report on a given sustainability topic; b. a 10 minute film on their experience of working together
- Mahara accounts were set up on Moodle to facilitate collaborative work on the written report and film
- **Students didn't use accounts because:**
 - They were insufficiently familiar with the platform (little time to prepare them on how to use it)
 - They had many other platforms available to them to exchange information and contact each other
- **Conclusion:** It would have been preferable to have project work centrally located and mutually accessible.

World Café

3 Thematic Groups

Material: posters and worksheets

Tasks:

- Write down your comments on the poster
- Use worksheets as inspiration for discussions
- In the next round add new comments or add a “+/-” or “😊/😞” if you agree or disagree with comments that you can already find on the poster

Time:

- 1. round: 20 minutes
- 2. round: 10 minutes
- 3. round: 10 minutes



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STUDENTS LEARN
TO SELF-REFLECT



STUDENTS KNOW
THEIR MASTERY
LEVEL



STUDENTS CAN
SEE THEIR
GROWTH



STUDENTS LEARN
MULTIMEDIA
COMPOSITION



IT'S A CHANCE
TO CELEBRATE
LEARNING

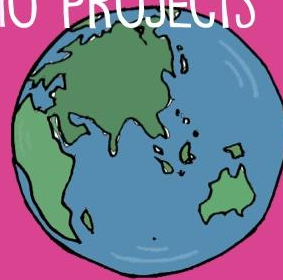


STUDENTS IMPROVE
IN THEIR
METACOGNITION



IT INCREASES OWNERSHIP
AND AGENCY IN THE
ASSESSMENT PROCESS

THE BENEFITS OF STUDENT PORTFOLIO PROJECTS



STUDENTS SHARE THEIR WORK
WITH A LARGER AUDIENCE



STUDENTS ARE
ABLE TO DETERMINE
NEXT STEPS



References

Abrar-ul-Hassan, Shahid, Douglas, Dan & Jean Turner (2021). Revisiting Second Language Portfolio Assessment in a New Age. *System* Volume 103. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102652>.

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JISC / HEFCE (2008). *Effective Practice with e-Portfolios Supporting 21st century learning*. Available at: <https://www.webarchive.org.uk/wayback/archive/20140614113958/http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearning/eportfolios/effectivepracticeeportfolios.aspx>. (Accessed 16.02.2023)

Spencer, John. "Getting Started with Student Portfolio Projects". Available at: <https://spencerauthor.com/student-portfolio-projects/>. (Accessed 22.02.2023).

Wang, Lijuan & He, Chunyan (2020). Review of Research on Portfolios in ESL/EFL Context. *English Language Teaching*, 13(12). DOI: [10.5539/elt.v13n12p76](https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v13n12p76).

Walland, Emma & Shaw, Stuart (2022) E-portfolios in teaching, learning and assessment: tensions in theory and praxis, *Technology, Pedagogy and Education*, 31(3), 363-379, DOI: [10.1080/1475939X.2022.2074087](https://doi.org/10.1080/1475939X.2022.2074087).

If you are interested in discussing and sharing more ideas about portfolio assessment, come to our **one-day symposium on May 12, 2023 at BHT**. More information can be found here:

https://projekt.bht-berlin.de/fileadmin/projekt/sprachen/cfp_portfolio_symposium2023_BHT.pdf