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檔案式評量在診斷國中生英文學習之效益研究

**DIAGNOSING ENGLISH LEARNING FOR JUNIOR HIGH
SCHOOL STUDENTS BY PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT**

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論文名稱：檔案式評量在診斷國中生英文學習之效益研究

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論文提要：

本研究旨在探討檔案式評量在診斷國中生英文學習之效益研究。文中探究了在檔案式評量中，學生對英文學習的態度，學生對自評、互評、與檔案評量活動單的反應、以及學生對檔案式評量的態度。

參加本實驗之受試者為七十六位國中七年級學生。在實驗前，學生先回答一份有關英文學習態度的問卷。在實驗進行的七週中，研究者觀察學生在課堂上的反應、讓學生針對學習檔案進行自評、互評以及撰寫個人感想。在實驗結束後，學生回答一份有關整個檔案式評量計劃的問卷，以及再回答同一份有關英文學習態度的問卷。所有實驗資料收集完後，進行質的分析與量的分析。

本研究的主要發現如下：

1. 檔案式評量有助於提升學生英文閱讀與寫作學習的興趣。
2. 學生們肯定互評有助於英文閱讀與寫作能力的提昇。
3. 學生們肯定自評有助於增強英文閱讀與寫作興趣。
4. 學生們肯定寫檔案評量活動單有助於發展個人思考能力。
5. 多數學生肯定老師使用檔案式評量來評量他們的英文學習。

基於研究結果，茲提供以下教學建議：

1. 外語教師可以使用檔案式評量來評量學生的個別差異。
2. 外語教師可以使用檔案式評量有效地把教學與評量統整在一起。
3. 外語教師可以使用檔案式評量來協助增加學生自信與自尊。
4. 學生們可以藉由檔案式評量來進行英文閱讀與寫作的合作學習。
5. 外語教師可以使用類似檔案評量活動單的另類教材來教授英文。

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effects of a portfolio assessment project on English learning for junior high school students. Specifically, students' attitudes towards English learning, and their responses to peer-evaluation, to self-evaluation as well as to worksheets of portfolios, and their attitude towards the portfolio assessment, are investigated and discussed.

The subjects of the study included 76 seventh-grade students in junior high school in Kaohsiung. A seven-week study was conducted in the portfolio assessment project. In the data collection, all the students' portfolios were collected. The researcher collected the data of the students' attitudes towards English learning in a questionnaire, the student responses to the portfolio assessment project in a questionnaire, and the student responses of the self-evaluation and peer-evaluation after the study. Based on quantitative and qualitative data analyses, the findings of the portfolio assessment project are described as follows:

1. The project helped inspire the students to learn English. Most of the students become more interested in English reading and writing at the end of the project.
2. The students showed positive responses to peer-evaluation in the project. Many of the students expressed that their reading and writing abilities were enhanced by peer-evaluation of portfolios.
3. The students showed positive responses to self-evaluation in the project. Many of the students expressed that they had more dominance over learning to read and write English by doing self-evaluation. Thus, they became motivated to read and write English.
4. The students showed positive responses to the English worksheets of portfolios in the project. Most of the students developed their thinking abilities by doing the English worksheets of portfolios.
5. The students showed positive responses to the portfolio assessment.

To maximize the effects of the portfolio assessment on English learning in Taiwan, the researcher makes some pedagogical implications as follows:

1. EFL teachers should use the portfolio assessment to meet the individual differences of students.
2. EFL teachers should integrate instruction and assessment by portfolio assessment effectively.
3. EFL teachers should help students gain self-esteem and self-confidence over their English learning by portfolio assessment.
4. Students can collaborate with their peers to learn English reading and writing by portfolio assessment.
5. EFL teachers can use alternative teaching materials, such as the worksheets of portfolios, to help their students learn English.

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INTRODUCTION

1. Background and Motivation

Giving students a test or an assessment is an important issue for a teacher. Hughes (1989) indicated that the effect of testing on teaching and learning was known as *backwash* which could be harmful or beneficial. For many years, traditional multiple-choice tests have been mainly adopted to evaluate students in Taiwan (Yeh, 2000). Such traditional standardized multiple-choice tests may function well on the narrow perspective of students' learning products, but fail to function on the broad perspective of the whole learning process (Yeh, 2000). According to Mills (1989), "standardized test measure a narrow band of performance and trivialized the curriculum"(p.8). Abruscato (1993) further indicated that standardized tests were deficient in providing useful information for teachers in their instruction. Shepard (1989) also pinpointed the negative effect of multiple-choice tests by indicating that multiple-choice tests have a negative effect on teaching and learning as soon as they become the focus of instructional effort.

Due to the drawbacks of traditional standardized multiple-choice tests, many alternative methods of assessment have been recommended (Shepard, 1989; Tierney, 1992; Valencia, 1990). The portfolio assessment, for instance, is an alternative method of assessment. It is used to evaluate students' longitudinal process of performance by purposefully collecting accomplishments with time and offering reliable information about students (Morton, 1991; Options, 1993).

2. Purpose of the Study

This study aims to investigate the effects of the portfolio assessment on English learning of students in junior high school. Specifically, it attempts to examine the students' background of English learning before the portfolio assessment is implemented in this study. It also intends to explore how the students respond to the peer-evaluation, the self-evaluation, and the worksheets of portfolios in this study. Moreover, the students' attitudes towards the portfolio assessment in this study are investigated.

3. Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the students' attitudes towards English learning before and after the portfolio assessment project?
2. How do the students respond to the peer-evaluation in this study?
3. How do the students respond to the self-evaluation in this study?
4. How do the students respond to the worksheets of portfolios in this study?
5. What are the students' attitudes towards the portfolio assessment in this study?

4. Significance of the Study.

This study may show that the portfolio assessment is an optimal method of assessing students' English learning in multiple ways. The EFL teachers in junior high school may evaluate their students' English learning by portfolios.

The portfolio assessment may also give students a model to examine their English learning process and products. In composing portfolios, students are encouraged to monitor their own English learning and to study English by themselves. Students can understand their own learning better by collecting the works in their portfolios.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. EFL Literacy

To discuss EFL literacy is complex because it involves different variables, such as age, sex, learning environments, the first language, and so on. These variables directly or indirectly help or interfere with the development of EFL literacy. According to the theory of contrastive analysis, especially, a language learner's first language (L1) has crucial influence over one's acquisition of a second language or a foreign language (L2) (Gass, 1983; Jakobovits, 1970; Odlin, 1989; Selinker, 1978). For example, L1 literacy learning experiences causes positive transfer to L2 literacy development. Lado (1957) pointed out that "individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture" (p.2). Osgood (1953) summarizes his research of two decades defining the phenomenon of transfer as "the effect of a preceding activity upon the learning of a given task" (p. 520).

2. Conventional Assessment

Conventional assessments include objective tests and constructed-response tests. Conventional assessments are called summative assessments because they are used at the end of instruction. They are usually used at the end of a segment of instruction, such as an unit or a course, for examining whether students achieve the intended learning outcomes. In other words, summative assessments refers to the end-of-instruction tests which are usually used for certifying students' accomplishment at the end of a course or for assigning grades to students at the end of semester (Gronlund & Linn, 1990).

But, over a number of years, standardized tests have been attacked by a great deal of criticism. First of all, standardized tests are often criticized for putting overemphasis upon trivial subject points (Gronlund & Linn, 1990). Some objective tests, such as multiple-choice, true/false, cloze, and matching tests indeed do this, either intentionally or unintentionally. Secondly, the results of the tests yield a single score used to assess a student's ability (Tierney et al., 1991). Some objective tests and constructed response tests indeed do this, intentionally or unintentionally. Perhaps the biggest drawback of standardized tests is that standardized tests have negative effects on teachers' instruction in the classroom. When the results of standardized tests are overemphasized, teachers will often teach to the test. Teaching to the test means that teachers teach testing skills to students to get high scores in the tests. In this way, their instruction will be devaluated, and the reliability of the test scores as indicators of what students really learned is undermined.

3. Alternative Assessment

To deal with the problems of the conventional assessment, teachers may take alternative assessment into consideration. There are some specific characteristics in alternative assessment of learning. First, alternative assessment occurs continually in the context of a meaningful learning environment and reflects actual learning experiences that can be documented through various ways, including observation, anecdotal records, journals, logs, work samples, conferences, portfolios, writing, discussions, experiments, presentations, exhibits, projects, performance events, and the other methods (Winograd,

Martinez, & Noll, 1999). In addition, alternative assessment involves students in the tasks related to the students' background knowledge in the real world. In other words, the content of the tasks used in the alternative assessment fits to what students realistically know about the world. Generally, alternative assessment is innovative to traditional standardized tests. It benefits changing the structure of traditional literacy assessment. The traditional literacy assessment may change to a model of collaboration between the teacher and students. In this way, students may learn better, and teachers may teach more efficiently.

4. The Portfolio Assessment

The portfolio assessment is one of the alternative assessments. Though it is used in only a few settings, it is widely adopted because of its several strengths. So, more and more language teachers have employed the portfolio assessment in reading and writing instruction and assessment. However, no assessment is perfect without any limitations, and there is no exception to the portfolio assessment. The portfolio assessment is also criticized by some scholars because several limitations. The relevant studies to the strengths and limitations of the portfolio assessment are reviewed as follows.

Strengths:

- (1) The portfolio assessment provides teachers and students with an appropriate way of illustrating the process of learning (Paulson, Paulson, & Meyer, 1991).
- (2) The portfolio assessment helps teachers closely link assessment with their instruction and students' learning (Tierney et al., 1991; Nolet, 1992).
- (3) The portfolio assessment helps students gain self-esteem and ownership of their language learning.
- (4) The portfolio assessment helps improve social communication (Hamm & Adams, 1991).
- (5) Finally, the portfolio assessment enhances students' independent learning.

Limitations:

- (1) Implementing the portfolio assessment is time-consuming for teachers and students (Short, 1993).
- (2) The portfolio assessment is too subjective to be used as an ideal for summative assessment, such as the assignment of course grades and the certification of achievement in school, district, or national accountability systems (Gronlund & Linn, 1990).

METHODOLOGY

1. Subjects

The subjects for this study included two classes (Class 1 and Class 2) of 76 seventh students in Yan Chen Junior High School, located in Kaohsiung city. Class 1 consisted of 37 students, and Class 2 consisted of 39 students. Most of these students have learned English for more than one semester. But none of them has experience in composing their portfolios for English subject before. In addition, they were all taught by the same English teacher five periods per week, and each period fifty minutes.

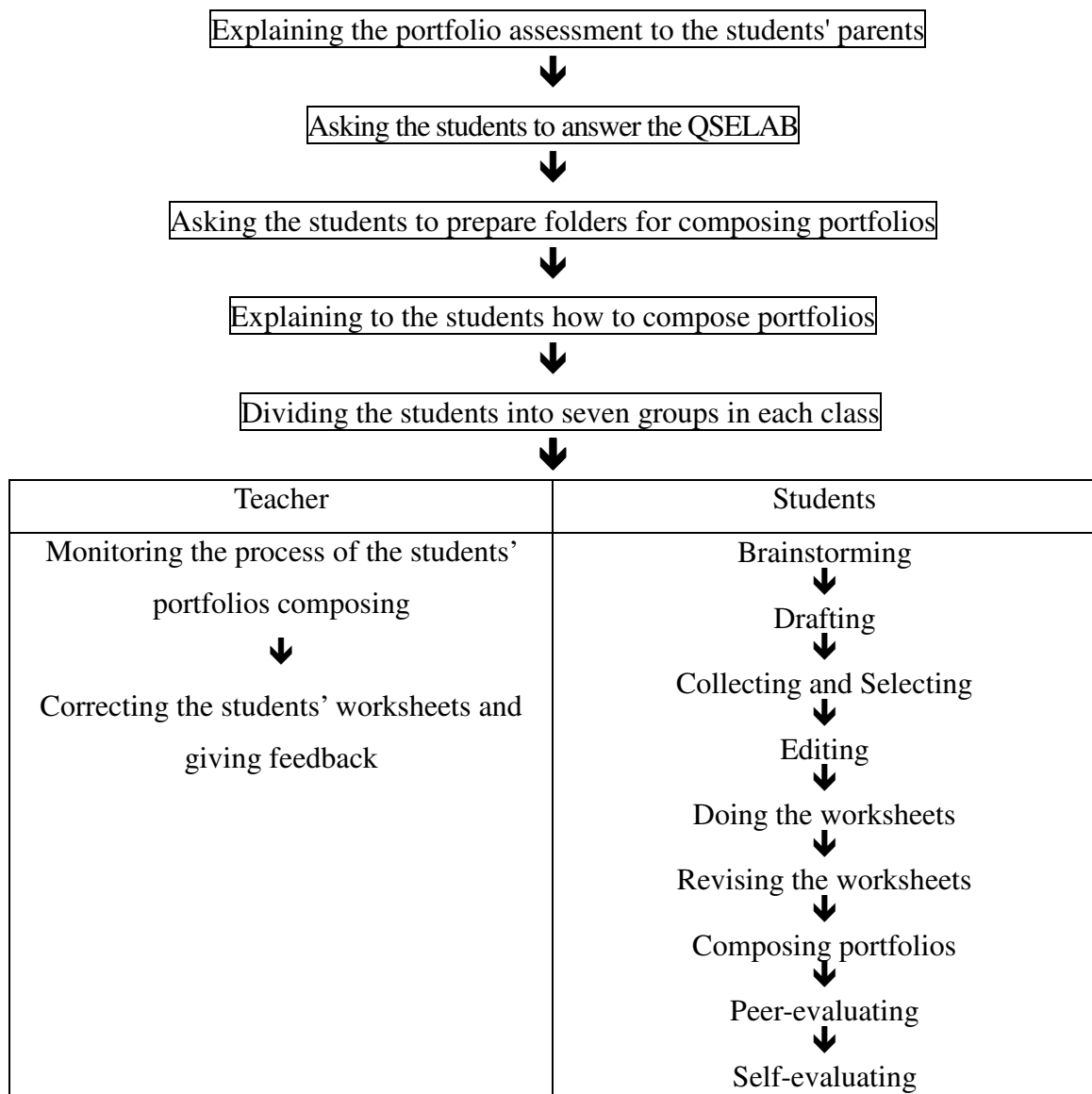
2. Instruments

To conduct this study and collect data for this study, the researcher adopted six instruments for data collection as follows:

- (1) An Introductory Letter to the Portfolio Assessment for Parents
- (2) A Questionnaire on the Student English Learning Attitudes and Background (QSELAB)
- (3) A Questionnaire on Student Responses to the Portfolio Assessment (QSRPA)
- (4) The Peer-Evaluation Form (PEF)
- (5) The Self-Evaluation Form (SEF)
- (6) The Worksheets of Portfolios

3. Procedures

The study project was implemented in two English classes in a junior high school for seven weeks. The study procedures can be explicated in Figure 1.



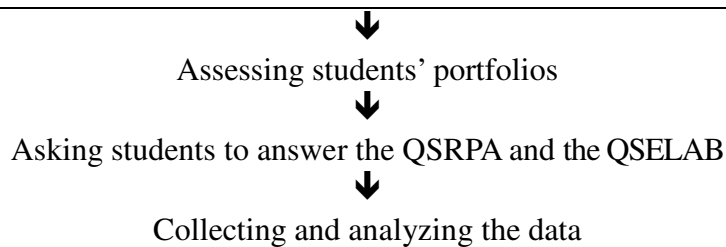


Figure 1. A Flow Chart of the Study Procedures

From Figure 1, first of all, the teacher wrote an introductory letter to explain to parents the portfolio assessment and its procedure. Then, the teacher asked the students to answer the QSELAB. The results of the questionnaire might provide information about the students' background of and attitudes towards English learning for the researcher before the students started to compose portfolios. Next, the teacher asked the students to prepare file folders to collect their own written works.

Moreover, the teacher explained to the students the portfolio assessment and the procedures of composing portfolios. Then, the teacher divided the students in each class into seven groups for group discussion and peer-evaluation. In each group, the students are encouraged to brainstorm some ideas about the selected topics for this study. As soon as the relevant ideas to the topics occurred to their mind, they jotted down the ideas on their notebooks. And then, the students had to make drafts of what they were going to write. They could discuss with their partners, or ask parents and teachers for help. But parents and teachers could not do the worksheets of portfolios for the students. Rather, they could suggest the students how to collect related information and data to the selected topics.

After collecting the information and data, the students had to select and edit what they collected. The students could discuss the data they collected with their partners. Later on, they did the worksheets of portfolios based on the data and the related information. These worksheets of portfolios included three selected topics, "Asking Age", "The Verb 'Have'", and "Telling Time". In doing the worksheets, the students were encouraged to do the worksheets by themselves rather than copy their partners' answers. Then, they had to revise and rewrite the worksheets corrected by their teacher. After that, all the students composed portfolios with their written worksheets. Then, the students in each group had to evaluate their partners' portfolios. After that, the students had to evaluate their own portfolios. Finally, the teacher assessed the students' portfolios and asked the students to answer the QSRPA and the QSELAB.

4. Data Analysis

According to the research questions, the data collected in this study were analyzed in two ways. One is a quantitative analysis, and the other is a qualitative analysis. As to quantitative analysis, the students' background of and attitudes towards English learning, and the student responses to the peer-evaluation, the self-evaluation, the worksheets of portfolios, and portfolios composing were analyzed and discussed. On the other hand, the students' self-evaluation and peer-evaluation of portfolios were analyzed and discussed qualitatively.

(1) A Quantitative Analysis

A quantitative analysis was executed by a statistical tool, *SPSS* for Windows Program. Items 5-12 in the QSELAB were used to explore the students' attitudes towards English learning before and after the portfolio assessment. Any significant difference among the students in their attitudes towards English learning before and after this portfolio assessment project were analyzed and displayed by a paired sample t-test of the *SPSS* for Windows Program. In addition, Items 1-31 in the QSRPA were used to explore the student responses to the peer-evaluation, the self-evaluation, the worksheets of portfolios, and portfolios composing in this portfolio assessment project. The differences among the student responses to the peer-evaluation, the self-evaluation, the worksheets of portfolios, and portfolios composing were displayed and analyzed in percentage and frequency.

(2) A Qualitative Analysis

A qualitative analysis was executed in two ways. On one hand, the students' self-reflections, self-evaluations and peer-evaluations of the assigned writing activities and portfolios were illustrated and probed. On the other hand, the students' supplementary comments on and suggestions for the portfolio assessment were illustrated and explored through the student responses to the two open-ended questions on SEF and to the three open-ended questions on QSRPA. From the qualitative analysis, the researcher could have better understanding of the effects of the portfolio assessment on the students' English learning.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter aims to display the results and discussions of diagnosing English learning for junior high school students by portfolio assessment. In the first section, the results and discussions of the students' attitudes towards English learning before and after the portfolio assessment project are shown and analyzed. Then, the student responses to the peer-evaluation, to the self-evaluation, and to the worksheets are discussed. Finally, the student responses to the portfolio assessment are investigated and interpreted.

All of the data are collected from questionnaires, students' self-reflections, self-evaluations, and peer-evaluations, and students' portfolios. The study results are presented and discussed qualitatively and quantitatively. Although 76 subjects' data are examined in this study, the other three subjects' data are invalid because they are obscure and disgressive. Therefore, 72 subjects' data are displayed and analyzed.

Table 1
Comparison of the Attitudes Towards English Learning of the Students Between the Pre-test and the Post-test

| Item | Pre-test | | Post-test | | <i>p</i> | <i>t</i> |
|--------------------------------------|----------|------|-----------|------|----------|----------|
| | Mean | S.D. | Mean | S.D. | | |
| 5. I like to attend English classes. | 2.92 | .82 | 3.05 | .88 | .47 | -.72 |
| 6. I like to read English. | 3.47 | .93 | 4.04 | .82 | .00 | -4.54 |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|-----|-------|
| 7. I like to write in English. | 3.39 | .93 | 3.77 | .84 | .01 | -2.63 |
| 8. My English reading is good. | 3.58 | .99 | 3.62 | .99 | .78 | .27 |
| 9. My English writing is good. | 2.57 | .92 | 2.78 | .80 | .19 | -1.29 |
| 10. My English proficiency is good. | 2.77 | .89 | 3.05 | .98 | .06 | -2.07 |
| 11. English reading is easy to me. | 2.95 | .96 | 3.24 | .95 | .07 | -1.83 |
| 12. English writing is easy to me. | 3.55 | 1.07 | 3.62 | 1.05 | .36 | .90 |

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree N: No Comment D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

Note. * $p < .05$

Table 1 shows the statistical results of the differences in the attitudes English learning of the students before and after the portfolio assessment. According to Table 1, it shows some significant differences found in Item 6 (I like to read English.) ($t = -4.54$, $p < .05$) and Item 7 (I like to write in English.) ($t = -2.63$, $p < .05$). In other words, the students' attitudes towards English reading and writing were positively reinforced in this study. To illustrate, the portfolio assessment did help the students enhance their interests in English literacy learning because most of the students liked to read and write English better after the implementation of the portfolio assessment. By contrast, Item 5 and Items 8-12 in Table 8 show no significant differences before and after the implementation of the portfolio assessment because the p -value in them was higher than .05. But the mean scores of Item 6 and Items 8-12 increased. Accordingly, it implies that some of the students may start to positively change their attitudes towards English learning because of the effects of the portfolio assessment. Perhaps, it just took six weeks to implement the portfolio assessment. Six weeks for implementing the portfolio assessment are not enough for making effects on the most students' attitudes towards English learning. If the portfolio assessment was prolonged and the students became more aware of the learning process of composing portfolios, more students might positively change their attitudes towards English learning.

Table 2
The Student Responses to the Peer-Evaluation

| Item | Frequency (%) | | | | | Total | Mean | S.D. |
|------|---------------|---|---|---|----|-------|------|------|
| | SA | A | N | D | SD | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-----------|------------|------|-----|
| 1. I can have more opportunities to review others' English writings by peer-evaluation. | 25 34.7% | 35 48.6% | 12 16.7% | 0 0% | 0 0% | 72 100% | 4.18 | .49 |
| 2. I like to attend English classes by peer-evaluation. | 10 13.9% | 33 45.8% | 27 37.5% | 2 2.8% | 0 0% | 72 100% | 3.71 | .55 |
| 3. I like to read English by peer-evaluation. | 12 16.7% | 25 34.7% | 32 44.4% | 3 4.2% | 0 0% | 72 100% | 3.64 | .66 |
| 4. I like to write in English by peer-evaluation. | 9 12.5% | 28 38.9% | 30 41.7% | 5 6.9% | 0 0% | 72 100% | 3.57 | .64 |
| 5. Peer-evaluation enhances my English reading ability. | 16 22.2% | 28 38.9% | 24 33.3% | 4 5.6% | 0 0% | 72 100% | 3.78 | .74 |
| 6. Peer-evaluation enhances my English writing ability. | 10 13.9% | 31 43.0% | 22 30.6% | 9 12.5% | 0 0% | 72 100% | 3.58 | .78 |
| 7. Peer-evaluation enhances my English proficiency. | 14 19.4% | 28 38.9% | 24 33.3% | 5 6.9% | 1 1.5% | 72 100% | 3.68 | .84 |
| Overall Items | | | | | | 72 | 3.66 | .70 |

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree N: No Comment D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

Table 2 shows the statistical results of the student responses to the peer-evaluation of the portfolios. The mean of the overall items is 3.66 which is higher than 3.00. It indicates that many of the students confirmed that the peer-evaluation was helpful to the students in their English literacy learning by portfolios, their attitudes towards English literacy learning by portfolios, and their English literacy proficiency. Specifically, the mean (4.18) of the student responses to Item 1 (I can have more opportunities to review others' English writings by peer-evaluation.) is the highest. 34.7% of the students strongly agreed and 48.6% of them agreed that the peer-evaluation provided them with more opportunities to review their peers' English writings of portfolios. It indicates that they had more chances to look over the strengths and weaknesses of their peers' writings of portfolios, and further improved their own writings of portfolios. This exactly signifies one of the major functions of the peer-evaluation.

Table 3

The Student Responses to the Self-evaluation

| Item | Frequency | | | | | Total | Mean | S.D. |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------|------|
| | SA | A | N | D | SD | | | |
| 8. I can evaluate the process of my English learning by self-evaluation. | 11 15.3% | 31 43.1% | 26 36.1% | 3 4.2% | 1 1.3% | 72 100% | 3.67 | .71 |
| 9. I like to attend English classes by self-evaluation. | 11 15.3% | 21 29.2% | 36 50.0% | 4 5.6% | 0 0% | 72 100% | 3.54 | .67 |
| 10. I like to read English by self-evaluation. | 8 11.1% | 24 33.3% | 33 45.8% | 7 9.7% | 0 0% | 72 100% | 3.46 | .67 |
| 11. I like to write in English by self-evaluation. | 8 11.1% | 29 40.3% | 31 43.0% | 4 5.6% | 0 0% | 72 100% | 3.57 | .59 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|-----------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|------------|------|-----|
| 12. Self-evaluation enhances my English reading ability. | 5 6.9% | 34 47.2% | 28 38.9% | 4 5.6% | 1 1.3% | 72 100% | 3.53 | .59 |
| 13. Self-evaluation enhances my English writing ability. | 7 9.7% | 29 40.3% | 30 41.6% | 5 6.9% | 1 1.3% | 72 100% | 3.50 | .68 |
| 14. Self-evaluation enhances my English proficiency. | 7 9.7% | 36 50.0% | 26 36.1% | 3 4.2% | 0 0% | 72 100% | 3.65 | .51 |
| Overall Items | | | | | | 72 | 3.54 | .62 |

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree N: No Comment D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

Table 3 shows the statistical results of the student responses to the self-evaluation of the portfolios. The mean of the overall items is 3.54 which is higher than 3.00. It indicates that many of the students confirmed that the self-evaluation of their English literacy learning, their attitudes towards English literacy learning by portfolios, and their English proficiency. Specifically, the mean (3.67) of the student responses to Item 8 (I can evaluate the process of my English learning by self-evaluation.) is the highest. It shows that the students felt that they could evaluate their English learning process. 15.3% of the students strongly agreed and 43.1% of them agreed that the self-evaluation really helped them evaluate their own English learning. It signifies that they had more dominance over their own English learning by self-evaluation than traditional standardized tests. By using the self-evaluation, many students felt that they could understand the strengths and weaknesses of their own writings of portfolios, and thus improved their own writings of portfolios.

Table 4
The Student Responses to Doing English Worksheets of Portfolios

| Item | Frequency (%) | | | | | Total | Mean | S.D. |
|---|---------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-------|------|------|
| | SA | A | N | D | SD | | | |
| 15. I can do more thinking by doing English worksheets. | 22 30.6% | 33 45.8% | 13 18.1% | 3 4.2% | 1 1.3% | 72 | 4.00 | .79 |
| 16. Doing English worksheets enhances my abilities of using vocabulary and sentences. | 18 25.0% | 33 45.8% | 17 23.6% | 2 2.7% | 2 2.7% | 72 | 3.88 | .84 |
| 17. I like to attend English classes by doing English worksheets. | 8 11.1% | 28 38.9% | 30 41.7% | 6 8.3% | 0 0% | 72 | 3.53 | .65 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----|------|-----|
| 18. I like to read English by doing English worksheets. | 11 15.3% | 28 38.9% | 28 38.9% | 5 6.9% | 0 0% | 72 | 3.63 | .69 |
| 19. I like to write in English by reading and writing English worksheets. | 9 12.5% | 31 43.1% | 25 34.7% | 6 8.3% | 1 1.3% | 72 | 3.57 | .76 |
| 20. Doing English worksheets enhances my English reading ability. | 14 19.4% | 30 41.7% | 24 33.3% | 2 2.7% | 2 2.7% | 72 | 3.72 | .82 |
| 21. Doing English worksheets enhances my English writing ability. | 13 18.1% | 34 47.2% | 23 31.9% | 1 1.3% | 1 1.3% | 72 | 3.80 | .65 |
| 22. Doing English worksheets enhances my English proficiency. | 15 20.8 | 32 44.4 | 22 30.6 | 2 2.7 | 1 1.3 | 72 | 3.81 | .72 |
| Overall Items | | | | | | 72 | 3.68 | .73 |

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree N: No Comment D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

From Table 4, according to the statistical results of Item 15, it shows that writing English worksheets of portfolios really helped most of the students do more thinking which was advantageous to good writing ability. In other words, the students could think more in doing the English worksheets, requiring abundant thinking.

Table 5

The Student Responses to Composing Portfolios

| Item | Frequency | | | | | Total | Mean | S.D. |
|---|------------|------------|------------|----------|----------|-------|------|------|
| | SA % | A % | N % | D % | SD % | | | |
| 23. Composing my portfolio helps me effectively demonstrate my English writing performance. | 16 22.2 | 34 47.2 | 21 29.2 | 0 0 | 1 1.3 | 72 | 3.89 | .64 |
| 24. Composing my portfolio helps me have more understanding of my English writing process. | 13 18.1 | 37 51.4 | 19 26.4 | 2 2.7 | 1 1.3 | 72 | 3.82 | .66 |
| 25. I like to join English classes by composing my portfolio. | 11 15.3 | 29 40.3 | 27 37.5 | 3 4.2 | 2 2.7 | 72 | 3.61 | .80 |
| 26. I like to read English by reading my portfolio. | 9 12.5 | 32 44.4 | 27 37.5 | 3 4.2 | 1 1.3 | 72 | 3.63 | .66 |
| 27. I like to write in English by composing my portfolio. | 8 11.1 | 35 48.6 | 24 33.3 | 4 5.6 | 1 1.3 | 72 | 3.63 | .66 |
| 28. Composing my portfolio enhances my English reading ability. | 10 13.9 | 29 40.3 | 27 37.5 | 3 4.2 | 3 4.2 | 72 | 3.56 | .87 |
| 29. Composing portfolios makes my English writing proficiency better. | 9 12.5 | 36 50.0 | 22 30.6 | 2 2.7 | 3 4.2 | 72 | 3.64 | .80 |
| 30. Composing portfolios makes my English proficiency better. | 11 15.3 | 40 55.6 | 18 25 | 0 0 | 3 4.2 | 72 | 3.78 | .74 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|----------|------------|------------|----------|----------|----|------|------|
| 31. I agree that the portfolio assessment can help evaluate the students' learning achievement. | 18 25 | 29 40.3 | 19 26.4 | 2 2.7 | 4 5.6 | 72 | 3.76 | 1.08 |
| Overall Items | | | | | | 72 | 3.67 | .78 |

SA: Strongly Agree A: Agree N: No Comment D: Disagree SD: Strongly Disagree

Table 5 shows the statistical results of the student responses to composing portfolios. The mean of the overall items is 3.67 higher than 3.00. It indicates that many of the students confirmed the advantages of composing portfolios. Specifically, the mean (3.89) of the student responses to Item 23 (Composing my portfolio helps me effectively demonstrate my English writing performance.) is the highest. It shows that composing portfolios helped most of the students effectively show their writing performance. Composing portfolios was helpful in demonstrating the students' writings.

Table 6
The Students' Comments on the Strengths of the Portfolio Assessment

| Aspects | Strengths | Frequency |
|---|---|-----------|
| Content of Portfolios | 1. The design of worksheets was interesting. | 12 |
| | 2. Students felt that the content design of worksheets and writing tasks was continuous and coherent. | 9 |
| | 3. Students felt that it was interesting to draw pictures for some certain writing tasks. | 7 |
| | 4. The direction for each writing task was clear and easy to read. | 3 |
| Composing Portfolios | 1. Students felt that they could know the process of their writing more clearly. | 14 |
| | 2. Students felt that they could express their own ideas and viewpoints. | 13 |
| | 3. Students felt that they could flexibly organize and apply what they learned by doing English worksheets. | 10 |
| | 4. Students felt that they could review the words, phrases, and sentences they learned before. | 7 |
| | 5. Students felt that they could know the mistakes they make. | 7 |
| | 6. Students felt that they could know their own writing ability more. | 3 |
| | 7. Students felt that they could make themselves read and write more. | 3 |
| | 8. Students felt that they could know whether they do good jobs or not | 1 |
| | 9. Students felt that they would look for more relevant vocabulary to do the tasks. | 1 |
| Comparison Between the Portfolio Assessment | 1. Students felt that the portfolio assessment was more interesting than the conventional assessment. | 8 |
| | 2. Students had less pressure in the portfolio assessment than in the conventional assessment. | 6 |

| | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| and the Conventional Assessment | 3. Students could express more opinions in the portfolio assessment than in the conventional assessment. | 6 |
| | 4. Students felt that they could become more imaginative in the portfolio assessment than in the conventional assessment. | 3 |
| | 5. Students could work better on their English literacy learning in the portfolio assessment than in the conventional assessment. | 3 |

In terms of the student responses to the content of portfolios, 12 students in this study expressed that the design of worksheets was interesting. Nine students in this study confirmed that the content design of worksheets and writing tasks was continuous and coherent. Seven students in this study expressed that it was interesting to draw pictures for some certain writing tasks. The statistical results of the student responses to the content of portfolios show that the students were interested in a variety of worksheets. Being interested in the English worksheets inspired the students to learn English literacy. In other words, the students could learn certain reading and writing skills by doing the English worksheets. As to the student responses to composing portfolios, 14 students in this study expressed that they knew the process of their writing more clearly, and 13 students expressed that they could express their own ideas and viewpoints on the worksheets of their portfolios. Ten students in this study expressed that they could flexibly organize and apply what they learned in completing writing tasks. It indicates that the students understood the process of their writing clearly in the portfolio assessment. They also could fully express their own ideas and opinions by composing their portfolios in this project. In terms of the student responses to the comparison between the portfolio assessment and the conventional assessment, eight students in this study expressed that the portfolio assessment was more interesting than the conventional assessment. Six students in this study had less pressure in the portfolio assessment than in the conventional assessment. Six students in this study could express more opinions in the portfolio assessment than in the conventional assessment. It implies that the students liked the portfolio assessment more than the conventional assessment because their voice could be heard in the portfolio assessment than in the conventional assessment.

Table 7
The Students' Comments on the Limitations of Portfolio Assessment

| Aspects | Limitations | Frequency |
|--------------------------|---|-----------|
| Content of Portfolios | 1. Students felt a little unclear about some format designs of writing tasks. | 7 |
| | 2. Students felt that the content designs of worksheets and writing tasks were confusing. | 5 |
| | 3. Students felt bored to read the directions of some assigned tasks. | 2 |
| | 4. The worksheets for students had better be copied in color. | 1 |

| | | |
|---|---|----|
| | 5. Some assigned tasks were too easy to be helpful to students. | 1 |
| Composing Portfolios | 1. It took students too much time to do the worksheets of portfolios. | 15 |
| | 2. Students felt that the teacher gave them too many assignments. | 10 |
| | 3. Students felt it troublesome to write self-reflections and peer-evaluation. | 7 |
| | 4. Students felt that they don't have enough time to finish the assigned tasks on time. | 4 |
| | 5. Students had difficulty in having the ideas of their writing tasks. | 3 |
| | 6. Low-achievement students did not understand how to do some assigned tasks and thus felt confused. | 4 |
| | 7. Students felt that the process of composing portfolios was complex and troublesome. | 2 |
| | 8. Students felt it tiring to select and collect sample of works in their portfolios. | 2 |
| | 9. Students didn't have enough practice and exercises in listening comprehension. | 1 |
| Comparison Between the Portfolio Assessment and the Conventional Assessment | 1. Students were used to the multiple-choice tests more than to portfolios. | 8 |
| | 2. Students felt that it took more efforts in composing portfolios than taking standardized tests, such as multiple-choice tests. | 5 |
| | 3. Students felt that it was easier to take standardized tests than to compose portfolios. | 4 |

In terms of the student responses to composing portfolios, 15 students expressed that it took too much time to do the assigned tasks and worksheets. To compose portfolios, the students had to spend a lot of time writing and sampling the worksheets. Therefore, the teacher should think how to give the students more time to do the assigned tasks and worksheets of portfolios. Moreover, ten students complained that the teacher gave them too many assignments. It took the students a lot of time to think how to do these assignments. But the students still had other assignments of math, Chinese, history, geography and science, so that they felt that they hardly afford doing the assignments well. Moreover, seven students felt that it was troublesome to write self-reflections and do peer-evaluations. When the students tried to write self-reflections and do peer-evaluations, they expressed that they "almost exhaust their minds." So, they expressed that it was troublesome to write self-reflections and do peer-evaluations. As to the comparison between the portfolio assessment and the conventional assessment, eight students were used to the multiple-choice tests more than to the portfolio assessment. Because it took only a couple of weeks to implement the portfolio assessment, it was impossible for most of the students to get used to it well. The students needed more time to become familiar with the portfolio assessment. In this way, they could understand how advantageous it is to implement the portfolio assessment. In addition,

five students expressed that it took more efforts in composing portfolios than taking standardized tests, such as multiple-choice tests. Because the students still did not become familiar with the use of portfolios, they were required to make more efforts on composing portfolios, which was really tiring for them to do something unfamiliar. If the students are given more time to become familiar with the use of portfolios, they would discover more advantages of the portfolio assessment in English literacy learning and assessment than the conventional assessment.

CONCLUSIONS AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

1. Conclusions

It has been proved that the portfolio assessment is an alternative assessment for diagnosing students' English learning in this study. While teachers understand students' learning preference and appreciate students' attitudes towards English learning, they may understand that the portfolio assessment is an appropriate assessment method to assess the process and products of English learning of their students. After analyzing the collected data and synthesizing the statistical results, the major findings of this study are concluded as follows.

First, the students showed positive attitudes towards English learning after the portfolio assessment project. According to the statistical results of the QSELAB and QSRPA, and the students' comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the portfolio assessment, most of the students agreed that they became interested in learning English reading and writing after the project. They liked to read and write English better after the project. In terms of the main factors influencing their interest in learning English reading and writing, most of the students liked to read and write English because they did the worksheets of portfolios. According to the statistical results of the student responses to doing worksheets of portfolios and the students' comments on the strengths of the portfolio assessment, they were motivated to read and write English by doing the cheerful and inspiring worksheets of portfolios. They also kept interested in doing the useful and absorbing worksheets of portfolios relevant to their background knowledge and real-life experiences. As to the design of worksheets of portfolios, they expressed several comments. From the students' reflections of their portfolios and comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the portfolio assessment, it is found that many students cared about the design of worksheets of portfolios. The inspiring design of worksheets of portfolios could motivate them in reading and writing English a lot. Therefore, the design of portfolios in this project was a key to English reading and writing of the students.

Second, the students showed positive responses to the peer-evaluation in the project. The reading and writing abilities of the students were enhanced by doing peer-evaluation. According to the statistical results of the QSELAB and the students' comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the portfolio assessment, many of the students expressed that their English reading and writing abilities became better after the peer-evaluation was implemented. By doing peer-evaluation, they had more opportunities to read their peers' English writings of portfolios. By doing so, they could look over the strengths and weaknesses of their peers' writings of portfolios, and further improved their own writings of portfolios. In addition, the peer-evaluation enhanced the

students' intentions of English reading and writing. Based on the statistical results of the QSELAB and the students' comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the portfolio assessment, they liked to read and write English because they could appreciate their peers' drawings and writings on the worksheets of portfolios, and thus they became motivated to write English.

Third, the students showed positive responses to the self-evaluation in the project. According to the statistical results of the QSELAB and the students' comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the portfolio assessment, many of the students expressed that they could evaluate their learning process by doing self-evaluation. By doing self-evaluation, they had more dominance over learning to read and write English. Thus, they became motivated to read and write English. In addition, the students' writing ability was enhanced by the self-evaluation was implemented. By doing self-evaluation, they looked over their own writings of portfolios, reviewed the strengths and weaknesses of their writings, and thus improved the weaknesses of their writings. In this way, their writing ability became promoted.

Fourth, the students showed positive responses to the English worksheets of portfolios in the project. According to the statistical results of the QSRPA and the students' comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the portfolio assessment, most of the students expressed that they could do more thinking by doing the English worksheets of portfolios. By doing the worksheets, they had to do a lot of thinking by reading and writing the English worksheets of portfolios, so that their thinking abilities became promoted. Especially, their thinking skills, such as creativity and analysis, were enhanced. The students had to create unique writing responses to the worksheets, such as drawing a picture and describing it in English. The students' creativity was involved in drawing a picture, and they had to think how to describe it in English. The students not only wrote English sentences but also had to organize the sentences. They had to describe the picture in coherent sentences. By doing so, they had to do a lot of thinking. In addition, by doing self-evaluation of peer-evaluation of portfolios, the students had to examine the portfolios and English writings. They had to think whether or not the portfolios and English writings were done well. By doing so, they could identify the strengths and weaknesses of the portfolios and English writings. So, their thinking abilities were promoted in this study.

Fifth, the students showed the positive responses to the portfolio assessment. According to the statistical results of the QSRPA and the students' comments on the strengths and weaknesses, many of the students liked their teacher's use of portfolios to assess the process and products of their English learning. They positively confirmed that their teacher used the portfolio assessment to assess their English learning. In this portfolio assessment project, the students had to compose their portfolios. To facilitate their portfolios well, they had to think how to do well on the worksheets. They knew that they had to work hard on reading and writing. They had to work hard to read and write the English worksheets of portfolios. To do the worksheets well, they had to do a lot of thinking. They had to think how to use appropriate vocabulary and how to make coherent as well as meaningful sentences on their worksheets. Therefore, composing portfolios indeed helped promote the students' English proficiency.

2. Pedagogical Implications

First, EFL teachers can use the portfolio assessment to meet the individual differences of students. Teachers have to know that every student is unique and has individual differences. So, they cannot adopt standardized tests to assess their students' individual differences in learning. To deal with the problem, teachers can adopt the portfolio assessment to assess their students' learning. The portfolio assessment provides both teachers and students with an appropriate way to understand the process of learning of students (Paulson, Paulson, & Meyer, 1991). The portfolio assessment provides teachers with a window on a student's minds, reflecting how much they have learned of something in a certain period of time. Implementing the portfolio assessment, teachers can understand every student's learning process and assess it appropriately.

Second, EFL teachers can use the portfolio assessment to integrate instruction and assessment effectively. Traditionally, the scores of standardized tests are not meaningful measures of achievement and they can be quite misleading because they do not fit the instructional objectives. In other words, teachers cannot examine whether or not their instruction makes effects on students' learning by the scores of standardized tests. Instead, the portfolio assessment helps teachers closely link assessment with their instruction and students' learning (Tierney et al., 1991; Nolet, 1992). For example, to teach the use of the verb "have", the students were asked to do the worksheet for the verb "have". According to the direction on the worksheet, they had to draw and write what they have in their rooms. Doing the worksheet for the verb "have", the students not only drew pictures creatively but also practiced making sentences with the verb "have" based on their drawings. By reviewing what the students wrote on their worksheets, teachers can understand whether or not their instruction makes effects on the students' learning of the verb "have".

Third, EFL teachers can help students gain self-esteem and self-confidence over their English learning by portfolio assessment. Standardized tests are used to compare a student's or a group of students' scores to the norm or the criterion of the scores set and used by teachers (Valdés & Figueroa, 1994). The outcome of standardized tests is frustrating to low-achievement students. Instead, the portfolio assessment provides students with self-evaluation and self-reflection on their own works. Self-evaluation and self-reflection help students gain confidence, self-esteem, and a great deal of ownership (Tierney, Carter, & Desai, 1991). Once students gain self-esteem and confidence, they will become active in English learning.

Fourth, students can collaborate with their peers to learn English reading and writing by portfolio assessment. Teachers can help students do peer-evaluation of their writings of portfolios. Through the peer-evaluation, teachers encourage students to review their peers' writings of portfolios and give comments on the writings. Students will benefit from their peers' comments and thus improve their writings. In this way, students can promote their writing abilities by collaborative learning of English.

Last but not least, EFL teachers can use alternative teaching materials, such as the worksheets of portfolios, to help their students learn English. By doing worksheets of portfolios, students will become motivated to learn English. For example, in the portfolio assessment project, the teacher helped students learn how to tell time by using Worksheets for Time Telling. Students were asked to tell time in complete English sentences based on the picture cues on the worksheets. By the picture cues, students became motivated to learn how to tell time appropriately in English. Therefore, doing

worksheets of portfolios is a good way of learning English writing.

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