



Study of Electronic Portfolio and Its Application on College English

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Abstract. Based on the research and investigation of the applications of EP assessment at home and abroad, and with the integration of computer and Internet technology being brought into full play, this research designed an EP assessment framework with web-based multimedia college English learning system. With learning guide and various exercises, the EP assessment system can monitor and assess students' learning from content selection, goal and objective setting, self-reflection, assessment to improvement. With diversified learning resources, it's likely that EP assessment could satisfy students' needs of individualized learning.

Keywords: electronic portfolio · assessment · web-based learning · individualized learning

1 Introduction

In the year 2020, the Education Ministry of the People's Republic of China issued College English Curriculum Requirements(2020 edition), which called for cultivating college students' comprehensive language competences, in particular, listening and speaking competences, renovating the traditional assessment modes, namely, promoting the combined use of both formative and summative assessment [1]. Electronic portfolio (EP) assessment which comes onto stage on the basis of constructivism as well as computer and Internet technology can best meet the requirement of the Curriculum Requirements since it adopts a student-centered learning mode, aiming at enhancing students' self-regulated learning and self-development competences, and focusing on formative assessment and the cultivation of students' problem-solving skills.

2 Electronic Portfolio

2.1 Introduction

According to the Northwest Evaluation Association, a portfolio is “a purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's efforts, progress, and achievements. The collection must include student participation in selecting contents, the criteria for selection, the criteria for judging merit, and evidence of student self-reflection” [2] Portfolio

assessment was an innovative movement beginning in 1980s, which greatly activated learners' motivation by releasing more control to students, focusing more on individualized learning and giving more diagnostic and positive feedback, so it was highly praised by many educationalists. However, a series of questions were put forward at the same time and threatened the application and utilization of portfolio assessment such as the storage and management of students' work and the increase of teachers' workload. With the development of Internet and computer technology portfolio assumes an advanced electronic version: electronic portfolio, selective and purposeful collections of student work made available on the Internet and thus solved the above problems.

2.2 Theoretical Basis

Constructivism provides solid theoretical foundation for electronic portfolio assessment. Constructivism considers the engagement of students in meaningful experiences as the essence of learning and emphasizes that learners create their own interpretations of the world of information. [3] This is in accordance with the recent shift from passive information transfer to active problem solving.

The constructivists argue that students should situate the learning experience within their own experience and that the goal of instruction is not to teach knowledge but to create situations in which students can interpret information for their own understanding. They believe that learning occurs most effectively when students are engaged in authentic tasks that are related to meaningful contexts [4]. Electronic portfolio assessment just provides students with such kind of learning environment in which they play the leading role and take the responsibilities of their own learning.

2.3 Applications at Home and Abroad

In the last few decades, the idea of portfolio assessment is quite acclaimed by schools, universities and many other non-educational institutions around the world. There are plenty of applications of portfolio assessment both at home and abroad.

The application of portfolio assessment in China has just taken its first step. The pilot researches and studies have mainly conducted on the elementary educational level. From the perspectives abroad, the idea of portfolio assessment has been developed for more than two decades. And many successful applications of electronic portfolio are available online, but the use in the field of language learning just takes a small proportion.

3 Application of EP on College English

3.1 Objectives of This Research

This research is conducted on how to bring the advantages of electronic portfolio assessment: all-round, positive, formative, diagnostic, fostering individualized, self-regulated, cooperative, self-reflective learning and students' practical language ability into full play. After a period of application and a case study of the applicability and feasibility of the adapted EP model, the questions of whether the adapted model of EP assessment is

applicable and operable in the college English learning context and with the adoption of this kind of assessment system whether teaching and learning efficiency can be enhanced are dealt with.

3.2 EP Assessment Framework

The construction of ELT center and EP assessment system is based on constructivism, CEF (Common European Framework) [5] and 5Cs (communication, culture, comparison, connections and community) of the United States. With reference to constructivism our focus is on the creation of authentic or simulated language contexts, the elicitation of real-life conversation, the promotion of cooperation between learners and the conscious meaning construction of learners. With CEF, we get a much clearer and more comprehensive view of language learning: a much detailed classification of general competence and communicative competence; an introduction to context in detail which helps us understand better the domains and situations of language use; conditions and constraints of language learning, and learners' mental context, which enables us to create authentic tasks with appropriate difficulties to suit the different levels of learners. With 5Cs, a holistic view of language learning in the real life context displays a vision, therefore, we can take a full-scale consideration of language learning process.

Because Chinese learners tend to perceive teacher as an authoritative figure and prefer to follow and be fed by the teacher, individualized learning maybe a challenge for them. Therefore, we cannot release too much control to them at one blow, which will only make them feel at a loss. Based on these assumptions, the EP assessment framework in ETL center does not follow EP assessment theory strictly, but adapts a little bit to meet the learning needs of Chinese learners.

The first adaptation is that students will have the right to select their preferred learning content, but they will not be bothered by what are to be collected and what are the criteria for collection. The system will record every task students complete. The second adaptation is that most of the criteria are provided by the system but not by the joint effort of students and teachers, but students have the right to negotiate or give suggestions and their ideas really count. These adaptations are made to make greenhorn self-access learners feel more comfortable at this kind of learning. After a period of practice, when the learners feel more at ease with this kind of learning, they will enjoy more freedom to satisfy their learning needs.

When students log on this system, they may follow the following learning sequences (Fig. 1):

This framework of learning may renovate the conventional mode of teacher-centered, textbook-centered and classroom-centered ways of learning with a novel mode of learner-centered, experience-centered and activity-oriented ways of learning. Through various ways it brings the main advantages of electronic portfolio assessment: promoting self-regulated, individualized, cooperative learning and self-reflection into full play. It is, thus, a kind of positive, process-oriented, all-round assessment, which gives diagnostic feedback and focuses on practical language use.

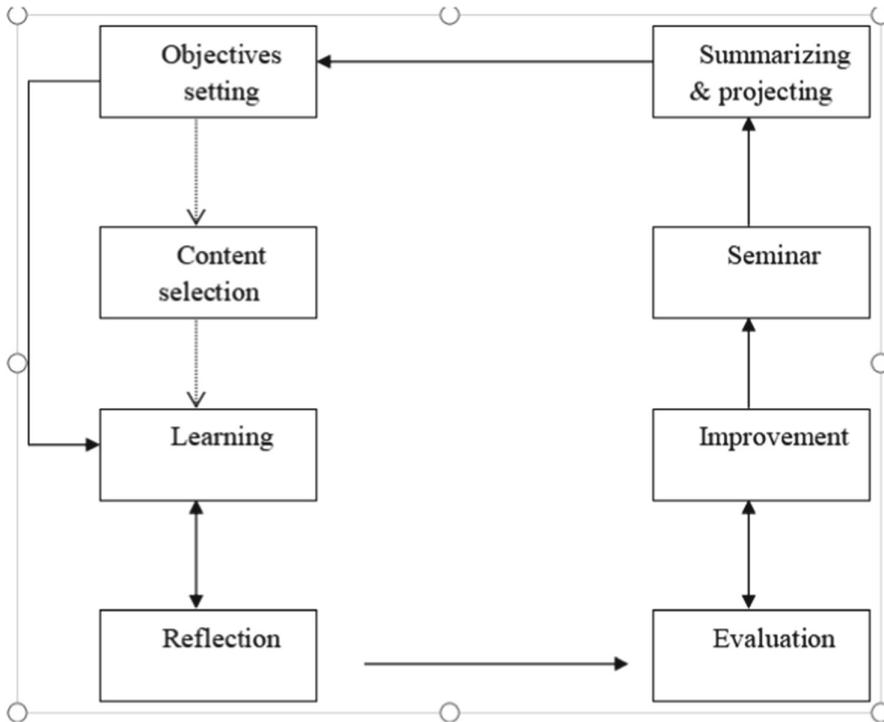


Fig. 1. Learning sequence flow chart Photo credit: Original

4 Conclusion

The framework that has been discussed in this paper is just some preliminary research. More research can be further explored on this newly developed field. With the development of Internet technology and the deep-going study of web-based large-scale data mining and intelligent agent technology, and furthermore, our better understanding of learning theories and learning process, the author believes that EP assessment will play an increasingly important and constructive role in our University and China's college English teaching reform.

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