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EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PORTFOLIO-BASED ASSESSMENT COMPARED TO TRADITIONAL TESTING IN SECONDARY ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

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Annotation: Assessment plays a crucial role in shaping both teaching practices and student learning outcomes in secondary English language classrooms. In recent years, there has been a growing shift from traditional testing methods toward alternative forms of assessment, particularly portfolio-based assessment. This paper evaluates the effectiveness of portfolio-based assessment in comparison with traditional testing, focusing on its impact on learners’ language development, motivation, and critical thinking skills. The analysis demonstrates that while traditional testing offers reliability and standardization, portfolio-based assessment provides a more comprehensive and learner-centered evaluation framework.

Keywords: portfolio-based assessment, traditional testing, secondary education, English language teaching, formative assessment, summative assessment, learner autonomy, student motivation, authentic assessment, language proficiency, classroom assessment, educational evaluation, alternative assessment methods, communicative competence.

Assessment has always been a central component of the educational process, particularly in language learning contexts where progress is multifaceted and complex. Traditional testing methods, such as multiple-choice exams and standardized tests, have



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long been used to measure students’ knowledge and skills. However, these methods often fail to capture the full range of learners’ abilities, especially in communicative competence and real-life language use [1].

Traditional testing remains widely used due to its efficiency, objectivity, and ease of administration. Standardized tests allow for quick comparison of student performance across large groups and provide measurable data that can be used for institutional decision-making [3].

However, traditional testing has several limitations. Firstly, it often focuses on discrete language items such as grammar and vocabulary, rather than integrated language skills [4]. Secondly, it tends to encourage rote memorization rather than meaningful learning. Students may perform well on tests without being able to use the language effectively in real-life situations [5].

Portfolio-based assessment offers a more dynamic and comprehensive approach to evaluating student performance. It involves collecting a variety of student work over a period of time, allowing both teachers and students to observe progress and identify strengths and weaknesses [7].

Additionally, portfolios provide a more authentic representation of language use. They include tasks such as writing essays, participating in discussions, and completing projects, which reflect real-life communication more accurately than traditional tests [9].

Another significant benefit is increased motivation. When students see their progress over time, they become more engaged and confident in their abilities. Portfolio assessment also allows for personalized feedback, which supports individual learning needs [10].



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Despite its advantages, portfolio-based assessment is not without challenges. One major issue is the time required for both teachers and students. Collecting, reviewing, and providing feedback on portfolios can be labor-intensive [11].

Furthermore, implementing portfolio assessment requires training and support for teachers. Without proper preparation, educators may struggle to integrate it effectively into their teaching practice [13].

When comparing portfolio-based assessment with traditional testing, it becomes clear that each approach serves different purposes. Traditional testing is useful for measuring specific knowledge and ensuring standardization, while portfolio assessment provides a broader view of student learning.

Research suggests that combining both methods may be the most effective approach. For example, traditional tests can be used for summative assessment, while portfolios can support formative assessment and ongoing learning [14].

In conclusion, portfolio-based assessment offers a more holistic and learner-centered approach to evaluating students in secondary English language classrooms. While traditional testing provides reliability and efficiency, it often fails to capture the complexity of language learning.

Portfolio assessment, on the other hand, supports the development of critical thinking, creativity, and communicative skills. Despite its challenges, it has the potential to significantly enhance the learning experience when implemented effectively.

Therefore, educators should consider integrating portfolio-based assessment into their teaching practices, alongside traditional testing methods, to achieve a more balanced and comprehensive evaluation system.

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