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**A Study of Saudi EFL Students' Attitudes  
Towards Writing Portfolio Assessment**

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## Abstract

This research examines Riyadh College of Technology students' attitudes towards the application of portfolio assessment in a writing course as the only assessment method. Using a 43-item questionnaire, the researcher, over a period of three years, collected data from 250 EFL students about their beliefs and perceptions of using this alternative form assessment to measure their writing performance. The other objective of this study is to explore the advantages and disadvantages associated with the use of this form of assessment from the perspective of language learners. The findings from the study show that the majority of participating students have positive attitudes towards this kind of writing assessment. The findings also show that the students exhibit high degree of realization as to how difficult it is to apply this form of assessment to the college context. Based on the results, the researcher recommends that more attention should be paid at implementing this form of assessment into English language teaching at the college level in Saudi Arabia.

**Keywords:** Saudi EFL Learners, Attitudes, Portfolio assessment

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى استكشاف اتجاهات طلاب كلية التقنية بالرياض صوب تطبيق التقييم من خلال الملف التجميعي لنشاط الطالب كمصدر تقييم وحيد في مادة الكتابة. وقد قام الباحث خلال أكثر من سنوات بجمع المعلومات من ٢٥٠ طالب يدرسون اللغة الانجليزية كلغة أجنبية عن انطباعاتهم وما يظنونه عن استخدام هذا النوع البديل من التقييم لقياس مهارة الكتابة لديهم. كما أن الهدف الآخر من هذه الدراسة هو محاولة التعرف على إيجابيات وسلبيات هذا النوع من التقييم من وجهة نظر المتعلمين. تكل نتائج هذه الدراسة على أن غالبية المشاركين لديهم انطباعات إيجابية عن هذا التقييم كما أنها تكل على امتلاك الطلاب لدرجة عالية من القدرة على إدراك مدى صعوبة تطبيق هذا التقييم على مستوى الكلية. وعلى ضوء نتائج هذه الدراسة فإن الباحث يوصي بإعطاء هذا النوع من التقييم اهتماما أكبر في مجال تدريس اللغة الانجليزية على مستوى الكليات في المملكة العربية السعودية.

## Introduction

The interest among Language testing specialists to use alternative forms in language assessment is well-documented (Apple & Shimo, 2005; Arter & Spandel, 1992; Bachman, 1990; Bachman & Palmer, 1996; Backer, 1998; Hamp-Lyons & Condon, 2000; Herman, Geahart, & Aschbacher, 1996; Lau, n.d.; Lynch, 1996; Lynch & Shaw, 2005; Moya & O'Malley, 1994; Müller, n.d.; Shimo 2003; Valencia & Calfee, 1991; Wiggins, 1989; Wolf, 1989). It is "because of the incompatibility of process learning and product assessment and the discrepancy between the information needed and the information derived through standardized testing, educators have begun to explore alternative forms of student assessment" (Moya & O'Malley, 1994, p. 1). Traditional assessment forms have been criticized on the basis that they neither measure the complexity of learning processes nor do they trigger the use of higher order thinking skills among language learners (Barootchi & Keshvarz, 2002; Ghoorchaeei, Tavakoli, & Ansari, 2010; O'Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996; Segers, & Dochy, 2001; Tsagari, 2004).

In addition to being mostly indirect, traditional assessment methods have been downplayed for not properly reflecting the real abilities the learners will be in need of in real-life situations (Tannenbaum, 1996). It is presumed that traditional testing methods do not provide language instructors with accurate and reliable information about the process of learning and the product that result from learning (Archbald, 1991; Barootchi & Keshvarz, 2002; Genesee and Hamayan, 1994; Herman, & Winters, 1994; Madaus, 1988; Murphy, 1994; Wiggins, 1989; Wolf, 1991; Tsagari, 2004). "Educators have become increasingly convinced that rich, descriptive information about the process and products of learning cannot be gathered by conventional teaching and testing methods" (Barootchi & Keshvarz, 2002, p. 281)

Languages testing specialists, in general, and writing assessment practitioners, in particular, have sought assessment forms designed to present a broad, direct and authentic manifestation of student learning abilities (Darling-Hammond, 1994; Hamayan, 1995; Lynch & Shaw, 2005; Shohamy, 1996). The desire to bring writing assessment in line with current cognitive and social views of writing that are process-oriented contributed to the emergence of portfolio assessment (Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Ansari, 2010; Graziano-King, 2007; Moya, & O'Malley, 1994; Park, 2005). Portfolio assessment is an alternative form of assessment in which there has been considerable interest recently as part of recognizing the significance of performance assessment.

The premise that portfolio assessment can, in addition to linking teaching, learning and assessment within a single context, improve direct assessment practices and involve students in their own learning attracted the attention of language testing specialists (Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Ansari, 2010; Graziano-King, 2007; Park, 2005). As language assessment has become more performance-based, learner-directed and classroom-centered, portfolio assessment has emerged as a personal, multiple-use tool for both teachers and students (Clemmons *et al.* 1993; De Fina, 1992). Portfolio assessment proved to present a more accurate estimate of language learners' writing abilities. Qinghua (2010) states that "some scholars go even further, claiming that the use of portfolios is more beneficial to ESL/EFL students" (p. 103).

Exploring the argument that portfolio assessment contributes to better achievement in language learners' writing ability has been the theme of recent studies. In line with this, Baturay & Dalöglu (2010) point out that "portfolio assessment is important for EFL learners, because the outcomes of language proficiency can be assessed effectively, and the observable behaviors gathered through it provide evidence of students' acquisition of skills" (p. 414). However, there is a lack of research on portfolio assessment within the context of EFL that can provide us with solid evidence about the contribution of portfolio assessment to language learning development (Al-Serhani, 2007; Caner, 2010; Qinghua, 2010). The fact that language learners are involved in every step in portfolio assessment adds to the significance of examining how these learners feel about using this form of assessment. A review of the available literature on writing assessment clearly indicates that most of the studies are conducted within the L1 context with little attention being given to the application of portfolio assessment to the ESL/EFL context.

## Portfolio Assessment

The early roots of portfolio assessment can be traced back to the mid-1980s, with the work of Peter Elbow and Pat Belanoff (1986) who were dissatisfied with the indirect and product-oriented traditional methods of writing assessment (Lucas, 2007). A review of the available literature indicates that there is disagreement on the precise nature and exact definition of the portfolio assessment because of its recent introduction to the field of education (Adams, 1995; Kennedy, 1992; Parson, 1998; Lau, n.d.). As a result, it not surprising that many descriptions and definitions of portfolios exist (Flood & Lapp, 1989; Lamme & Hysmith, 1991; Segers, & Dochy, 2001; Tierney, Carter, & Desai, 1991; Valencia, 1990; Wolf, 1989). This, however, does not mean that specific features have emerged as distinguishing characteristics that discriminate this kind of assessment from other types of assessment.

Portfolio assessment can be identified as a compilation of students' work, which demonstrates how much effort they have put into their work, their progress and achievement in their learning, and their reflection on the materials chosen for the portfolio (Yang, 1993). Portfolio assessment is "s purposeful collection of examples of learning collected over a period of time, and give visible and detailed evidence of a person's attainment of competences" (Segers, Gijbels, & Thurlings, 2008, p. 36). Valeri-Gold, Olson, & Deming, (1991) define portfolio assessment as an assessment wherein students become "active learners and questioning thinkers" (p. 298). To Lucas (2007), portfolio assessment is a collection of students' works over time that "often document students' best works and may include other types of process information such as drafts of the students' work, the students' self-assessment of the work, and the parents' assessment" (p. 23).

Within the ESL/EFL writing context portfolio assessment could "be defined in a number of ways, but they generally comprise selections of a given student's work over a period of time, and demonstrate performance in a variety of rhetorical types and genres" (1997, p. 16). To Brown & Hudson (1998), portfolio assessment means "purposeful collections of any aspects of students' work that tell the story of their achievements, skills, efforts, abilities, and contributions to a particular class" (p. 664). It is an "assessment based on purposeful collection of student work that exhibits the student's evidence/artifacts related to the knowledge, skills, or abilities taught" (Luyegn, 2009, p.14). Hamp-Lyons (1991) defines portfolio assessment as "a collection of texts the writer has produced over a defined period of time to the specifications of a particular context" (p. 262).

Paulsen, Paulsen, and Meyer (1991) define portfolio assessment as a purposeful compilation of students' works that exhibit the student's efforts, progress, and achievements in one or more areas. Portfolio assessment is "a procedure used to plan, collect, and analyze the multiple sources of data maintained in the portfolio" (Moya & O'Malley, 1994, p. 2). It is "a folder containing the student's best-written works and the student's evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of his/her works. It may also contain one or more works-in-progress that illustrates the creation of a product, such as an essay, evolving through the various stages of conception, drafting, and revision" (Lucas, 2007, p. 86). Overall, portfolio assessment is "a purposeful collection of materials assembled over a period of time by a learner to provide evidence of skills, abilities and dispositions as they relate to the learners' field of interest" (Barootchi & Keshvarz, 2002, p. 281).

Generally speaking, portfolio assessment may be defined as a systematic collection of a variety of teacher observations and student products, collected over time, that reflect a student's developmental status and progress made in writing. Thus, portfolio assessment is not a random collection of observations or student products. Rather, it is a systematic process in that the observations that are noted and the student products that are included relate to major instructional goals. Whatever the definition is, portfolio assessment has gained considerable momentum within the field of language testing because of its appealing features. Unlike traditional measures that "tend to evaluate students' possession of knowledge, portfolio assessment judges students' ability to apply knowledge" (Barootchi & Keshvarz, 2002, p. 281). In brief, the summative and formative functions of assessment can be both executed by portfolio assessment (Chetcuti, Murphy, & Grima 2006).

The observation that portfolio assessment can be adopted for different purposes to serve a variety of functions tops the list of justifications for the use of this alternative form of assessment. "The purpose of portfolio assessment is to maintain a long-term record of students' progress, to provide a clear and understandable measure of student productivity, to improve student self-esteem through demonstrating progress and accomplishment, to recognize different learning styles, and to provide an active role for students in self-assessment" (Díaz-Rico, 2008). This form of alternative assessment focuses on keeping a record of individual growth and learning rather than comparing students with each other (Klenowsky, 2002; Luyegu, 2009; Nunes, 2004; O'Malley & Pierce, 1996). It is the observation that portfolio assessment increases the level of students' motivation and gives them a sense of accomplishment and ownership in their won learning which makes it appealing (Crosby, 1997). Portfolio assessment showcases learners' writing skills and strategies and provides evidence of the process that leads to text production (Gottlieb, 2000; Hamp- Lyons and Condon, 2000; Yancey 1992).

It is being documented that one of the benefits of portfolio assessment in language learning, in general, and writing learning, in particular, is the authority and power it hands to learners by means of making decisions and selecting what materials they produced to hand in (Lucas, 2007; Luyegu, 2009; Song & August, 2002). That it is learner-directed represents another important appealing feature of portfolios assessment (Hamp-Lyons, 2006; Nunes, 2004; Klenowsky, 2002) since it engages students in activities that encourage them to learn while becoming more perceptive about that learning. Portfolio assessment empowers language learners with the ability to revise what they produce which enables them to reflect more and think deeper (Chetcuti, Murphy, & Grima 2006; Logue & Murphy 1996; White, 1994). Overall, using portfolio assessment provides students opportunities to "value their work," increase their "learning and autonomy," "reflect on their performance," "take responsibility for their learning" and learn how to "think holistically" (Yang, 2003, p. 295). It is also found that the use of portfolio assessment could lead to the development of higher cognitive skills and integration of skills among language learners. Brown & Hudson (1998) believes that portfolio assessment encourages "students to learn the metalanguage necessary for students and teachers to talk about language growth" (p. 664). The observation that portfolio assessment represents a holistic method of assessment contributes to its potential to properly evaluate higher-order thinking skills (Henkin, 1993).

Moreover, portfolio assessment subverts the way writing has been graded traditionally and institutes a grading system whereby the teacher shares control and works collaboratively with students (Arter, & Spandel, 1992; Aschbacher, 1991). It also allows the teacher to avoid making complex decisions about validity and reliability (White 199; Yang, 2003). According to Hamp-Lyons & Condon (2000), using portfolio assessment can help in measuring students' writing ability in a wider spectrum. Crosby (1997) adds the benefit of possibly modifying and adjusting the criteria used in portfolio assessment to take into account the individual differences. Dysthe (2008) argues that portfolio assessment, in addition to its summative function, enables teachers to provide ongoing feedback that informs both teaching and learning practices.

The benefit of portfolio assessment for second language learners with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds is research-supported (Klenowsky, 2002; Nunes, 2004; and O'Malley & Pierce, 1996). One of the features of language teaching classrooms in which portfolio assessment is used is that they are more student-centered, collaborative and holistic than classrooms that are dominated by traditional forms of assessment. The findings from different studies indicate that portfolio assessment can be a useful tool in promoting teaching, learning, assessment and accountability (Cook-Benjamin, 2001; Luyegu, 2009; O'Malley & Pierce, 1996). Song & August (2002) argue that it seems that the implementation of portfolio assessment is a more appropriate evaluation alternative for the ESL students. It is assumed that portfolio assessment plays a significant role in raising students' motivation to learn a foreign language since it focuses on students' strengths rather than weaknesses (Brown & Hudson, 1998).

In conclusion, Brown & Hudson (1998) believe that the advantages of portfolio assessment advantages fall into three categories: (1) strengthening students' learning; (2) enhancing the teacher's role; (3) and improving testing processes. According to Davis *et al* (2009), the educational value of portfolio assessment "is accepted with regard to the promotion of student-centered learning, deep learning, and reflective learning" (p. 90).

### **Disadvantages**

The available literature on portfolio assessment, however, addresses some potential problems that are associated with the application of this form of alternative assessment. To Brown & Hudson the issues of design decisions, logistics, interpretation, reliability, and validity represent major disengages in the use of portfolio assessment. Personal-response forms of assessment, one of which is portfolio assessment, have the general drawbacks of being relatively difficult to produce and organize and of involving subjective scoring. Moreover, the attempts to standardize grades across writing classes in which portfolio assessment is used have not produced consistent results, and teachers' judgments are often descriptive and narrative, and cannot be assessed statically. The reliability of portfolio assessment is questionable. "Without a quantitative measure, it is difficult for teachers to score students' work consistently because students' work is not graded based on right or wrong answers, and there is an increase of subjectivity" (Lau , n.d., p. 28).

Cumming (1997) argues that the idea of using portfolio assessment in ESL writing courses "has hardly caught on at a system level" (p. 59). Norton (1997) points out that "there is little research to support the validity of more learner-oriented assessment such as performance assessment and portfolio assessment" (p. 318). It is obvious that resolving all of these issues, and others to emerge as more research is conducted, needs some time. One potential weakness of portfolio assessment is the amount of time and effort it requires from teachers which means adding more weight to their workload (Brown & Hudson, 1998; Song & August, 2002).

### **Portfolio Assessment in ESL/EFL Contexts**

Studies on the use of portfolio assessment can be classified into two categories. There is a line of research concerned with the possible effect of portfolio assessment on English learners' overall writing performance (Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Ansari, 2010). This line of studies is aimed at examining whether portfolio assessment contributes to improvement in English languages writing ability. The second line of research is concerned with examining the perceptions and attitudes of language learners towards the use of portfolio assessment.

In regard to studies on the impact of portfolio assessment on English learners' achievement in writing, a study by Barootchi & Keshavaraz (2002) examined the possible effect of portfolio assessment on a group of Iranian EFL learners' writing achievement (EFL learners' achievement and their feeling of responsibility towards monitoring their progress. Comparing the performance of one group of learners, where teacher-made-tests were used, to another group of learners with which portfolio assessment was utilized, the researchers found that portfolio assessment contributed positively to the overall learners' achievement. Barootchi & Keshavaraz (2002) found that "portfolio assessment, which was received positively by the subjects, contributed to Iranian EFL learners' achievement and their feelings of responsibility towards monitoring their progress" (p. 279). Their findings show that "while both groups of subjects were taught using the same methods of instruction, the group that was provided with the portfolio assessment (the experimental group) not only benefited from their teacher's reflections and comments on their learning, but also gave the teacher a clearer picture of their learning status which positively affected the whole instruction" (Caner, 2010, p. 226).

Similar results were reported by Caner (2002) who found that young language learners with which portfolio assessment was utilized outperformed the other group of learners with whom traditional testing methods were used. Song & August (2002) found that portfolio assessment is as valid as any standardized test in regard to predicting students' success in an English course. Their research findings indicated that nonnative English students were likely to pass their English courses when they are evaluated by portfolio assessment than when they are required to pass their standardized final written test. Song and August (2002) believed that using portfolio assessment seems to be a more appropriate evaluation alternative for the ESL students.

Elahinia (2004) found that portfolio assessment had a significant positive effect on writing performance. "The students in the experimental group (i.e. portfolio assessment group) outperformed those in the control group on a writing test given at



the end of the experiment. Moreover, the participants in the study had a positive attitude toward their writing experience" (Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Ansari, 2010, p. 38). Al-Serhani (2007) found that the use of portfolio assessment as a strategy to teach and evaluate writing among 63 female Saudi students at the third year of the secondary school had a positive effect on the English writing performance of the students. The results showed that there was "a remarkable improvement in English writing performance of the portfolio group students in general and in their writing product skills in particular as compared with the non-portfolio group. "Likewise, findings indicated a statistically significant increase in the students' use of writing processes as a result of the portfolio assessment strategy" (p. xi).

Examining the impact of portfolio assessment on a group of Turkish secondary school students' reading, listening and writing skills, Yurdabakan and Erdogan (2009) found that portfolio assessment had noteworthy constructive effective on students' writing skills. "The mean score of writing in the portfolio assessment group was significantly higher than that in the control group. The same results were not found for reading and listening skills. In other words, portfolio assessment did not affect students' reading and listening skills" (Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Ansari, 2010, p. 38).

Similar to Al-Serhani's (2007) study, Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Ansari (2010) explored the effect of portfolio assessment on sixty one Iranian EFL students' English writing ability. Dividing the students into two groups, the researchers found that the experimental group, with which portfolio assessment was used, outperformed the control group, which underwent the traditional assessment, in their overall writing ability and in the sub-skills of focus, elaboration, organization and vocabulary. The findings from the semistructured interviews with the students suggested that portfolio assessment "empowers students' learning of English writing, hence emphasizing the formative potential of portfolio assessment in EFL classes" (Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Ansari, 2010, p. 35). When comparing their research to other studies, Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Ansari (2010) point out that some of the differences in their research findings with Al-Serhani's (2007) study can be attributed to the gender of participants. Taking into account the fact that the participants in Al-Serhani's (2007) study were all females, Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Ansari (2010) state that the " factor of gender might moderate the effect of portfolio assessment on "conventions" of writing" (p. 45).

Another recent study by Qinghua (2010) was conducted to explore the effect of portfolio assessment on the writing product of Chinese EFL learners. Participants were divided into two groups; one of which portfolio assessment is used. The results show that the students with which portfolio assessment is used outperformed their counterparts in the other group in two particular aspects: accuracy and coherence. Qinghua (2010) attributes the accuracy difference to the assumption that the students in the portfolio assessment group developed awareness of identifying errors. "Engaging in criteria-designing, revision and assessment might contribute to the changes" (Qinghua, 2010, p. 111). The better coherence ability among the portfolio assessment group can be attributed to the fact the students "planned a more detailed organization and made use of strategy on revision of coherence" (Qinghua, 2010, p. 111). As far as the aspects of complexity and fluency concerned, the two groups of participating students did not show apparent differences.

Aydin (2010) carried out a study aimed at exploring the contributions of portfolio keeping to the language skills of 39 EFL pre-service teachers. The researchers used a background questionnaire, interviews, a survey and composition texts to examine the contributions of portfolio keeping in EFL writing and the problems encountered during portfolio keeping process. Aydin (2010) found out that "portfolio keeping in writing in EFL has some significant contributions to the writing skills of foreign language pre-service teachers", and "that there exist some potential problems on portfolio keeping in EFL writing. Mainly, portfolio keeping has some beneficial effects on vocabulary, grammar, reading and research skills, organization of paragraphs and essays, punctuation and capitalization, giving and receiving feedback, paragraph and essay development methods and techniques, and the characteristics of paragraphs and essays" (p. 485-86).

The other line of research on portfolio assessment is directed at exploring the perceptions and attitudes that learners and teachers have towards the use of such a form of assessment. The available literature on perceptions of assessment show how recent the studies that examined learners' perceptions of alternative assessment are. A study by Slovin (cited in Qinghua, 2010) found that "portfolios gave the students a new level of freedom by increasing their motivation, their independence, and their self-confidence and enabled them to take risks in their writing and promotes great thinking about the writing process itself" (p. 104). Slater (1996) found that students prefer the use of portfolio assessment. This form of alternative assessment is thought to remove the students' perceived level of 'test anxiety'. This reduction shows up in the way students attend to class discussions, relieved of their traditional vigorous note-taking duties. "Students thought that they would remember much better and longer what they were learning, compared with material learned for other assessment formats, because they had internalized the material while working with it, thought about the principles and applied concepts creatively and extensively over the duration of the course. Students enjoyed the time they spent on creating portfolios and believed it helped them learn" (Struyven, Dochy, and Janssens, 2005, p. 338).

Janssens, Boes and Wante (2002) report the results of a study in which they investigated student teachers' perceptions of portfolios as an instrument for professional development, assessment and evaluation. The participants believed that portfolios motivated them to reflect and demonstrated their professional development as prospective teachers. They considered portfolios as an instrument for professional development and personal growth. They however, thought that the advantages were especially seen in relation to evaluation. When students did not get grades for their portfolios, much lesser efforts were made to construct the portfolio. Although portfolios are an important source of personal pride, students assumed portfolios to be time-consuming and expensive. Portfolios appear very useful in learning environments in which instruction and evaluation form integrated parts.

Alabdelwahab (2002) examined Saudi EFL students', EFL teachers', and school administrators' perceptions about the use of self-assessment portfolio as a method of EFL assessment. The findings show that the majority of students reported enjoying the use of self-assessment portfolio. Moreover, they found that "process of reflecting on one's own learning to be helpful" (Alabdelwahab, 200, p. iii) Apple & Shimo (2004) report the findings of a study in which the perceptions of Japanese learners of English at two universities about the benefits of portfolio assessment were examined. The results indicate that the participants strongly believe that the implementation of portfolio assessment contributed positively to their compositional

and expressive writing ability. Apple & Shimo (2004) state that "portfolios encourage learner autonomy and increase linguistic competence while assessing the learning process over an extended period of time" (p.1).

A related study by Marefat (2004) investigated twelve Iranian students' views on portfolio use in an email-based EFL writing class. The majority of the participants found that the portfolio approach was a positive and refreshing opportunity for their writing repertoire. In addition, some students developed a personal understanding of their learning process. Hirvela and Sweetland (2005) report the findings of two case studies that were directed at investigating student experiences with portfolios in two ESL writing courses. The results reveal that the participants liked the idea of using portfolios. Sarker & Hu (2006) conducted a study in which in a group of undergraduate students from the Curtin University of Technology in Malaysia expressed their perceptions about the fairness and acceptance of portfolio assessment. The results showed that sixty eight percent of the participating students agreed or strongly agreed that the use of portfolio assessment accurately reflected their ability. Moreover, 72% of them agreed or strongly agreed that portfolio assessment was a fair measurement of their understanding of the subject. Paesani (2006) conducted a writing portfolio project whose goal was to integrate the learning of skills, content and language competencies through literary study. In addition to the observation that students' reactions to the portfolio writing project were positive, Paesani (2006) found that portfolio keeping helps learners integrate the development of proficiency skills, content knowledge, and grammatical competence.

Wang and Liao (2008) conducted a study in which they investigated whether students under portfolio assessment experience greater satisfaction in writing class than those under traditional test. They found that students in their portfolio assessment group experienced greater satisfaction than those in their control group. Besides that, they also found after some interviews that this alternative form of assessment has a positive effect on the students' English learning process, specifically they liked being involved in the English writing process and with the help of portfolios they could understand and further address their writing problems. This is evident when they reported that the writing portfolio enabled them to understand their grammar and

However, a study by Caner (2010) showed that the 140 Turkish EFL students enrolled in the intermediate and upper intermediate prep classes at the School of Foreign Languages of Anadolu University generally prefer to be evaluated by the traditional paper and pencil tests. Moreover, the results of the study indicated that it was also found out that "a number of the subjects have negative attitudes towards portfolio assessment in their writing courses" (p. 223). Robinson & Bennett (n.d.) explored the attitudes of 187 undergraduate students who finished taking a course in computer applications to explore their beliefs regarding the use of portfolio assessment. They found that in comparison to traditional assessment, students found that portfolio assessment "better allowed them to: integrate the skills learned in the class; address their learning needs; reflect on and assess their own learning; and work at their own pace" (p. 5). To sum up, "the related literature has shown that portfolio keeping has positive effects on improving the language skills and knowledge of EFL learners" (Aydin, 2010, p. 478).

## **The Study**

### **Purpose of the Study**

The current study was designed to explore the orientation of Saudi EFL students towards the use of portfolio assessment to measure their writing ability. This investigation was conducted to (1) identify Saudi EFL students attitudes about the use of portfolio assessment as the major measure of their writing ability; (2) recognize their beliefs about the applicability of portfolio assessment to the context of teaching English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia's higher education institutes; (3) identify the difficulties that the participants think are associated with the utilization of portfolio assessment; and (4) find about the advantages and disadvantages of using portfolio assessment from the language learners' perspective.

### **Significance of the Study**

The available literature on portfolio assessment clearly shows a lack of research on the use of this alternative form of assessment within the EFL context (Al-Serhani, 2004; Caner, 2010; Ghoorchaei, Tavakoli, & Ansari, 2010; & Lau, n.d.). The use of portfolio assessment as an alternative method of assessment has been a continued topic of discussion among educators. "Although portfolios have been a consistently popular topic at recent TESOL (Teaching of English to Speakers of Other Languages) conferences and other professional gatherings of ESL teachers, there is very little published literature on the use of portfolio assessment in ESL" (Hirvela, & Pierson, p. 105). Most of the literature on the use of portfolios comes from first language writing and there is little literature on the use of portfolios for L2 learners either in teaching and learning or assessment domains (Hamp-Lyons, 2006). Despite its observed potential contribution to improving students' overall writing ability, the use of portfolio assessment is not a common practice within the Saudi EFL Context.

Park (2005) observes that that research on the use of portfolio for second language learning is generally recognized to be practically nonexistent. He believes that "studies on how portfolios influence ESL/EFL instructional and assessment practices are desperately needed in order to provide clarification to stakeholders as to their respective roles and contributions to the learning process" (p. 2). Reviewing studies on students' perceptions about assessment, Struyven & Janssens's (2005) found that the perceptions students have about a particular assessment approach can have a considerable effect on their learning approaches. They state that "assessment procedures that are perceived to be 'inappropriate' ones tend to encourage surface approaches to learning" (p. 342).

### Research Questions

This research was conducted to answer the following questions:

1. What are the attitudes of Saudi EFL students towards the use of portfolio assessment to measure their L2 writing learning ability?
2. What are the attitudes of Saudi EFL students towards the application of portfolio assessment at the college level?
3. What are the beliefs of Saudi EFL students about the difficulties associated with the use of portfolio assessment?
4. What are the perceptions of Saudi EFL students about the advantages of using portfolio assessment?

### Subjects

In total, 250 Saudi male students from Riyadh College of Technology participated in this study. They were learners of English as foreign language taking a course in academic writing as a prerequisite for their graduation with a Bachelor degree in Engineering. The participants were randomly selected from different majors. The participants' native language was Arabic, and their ages ranged from 21 to 43 years old. Their proficiency level in English as a foreign language varied from lower intermediate to upper intermediate at the time of data collection.

### Materials

For the purpose of this study, a four-point Lickert-scale questionnaire (Lickert, 1932) was used (See Appendix A). The questionnaire ranged from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The questionnaire items were drawn from the available studies in the area of language attitudes in general and portfolio assessment attitudes in specific. The questionnaire was administered to a sample of 25 students who had completed the same writing course one semester prior to conducting this research. The results of the pilot questionnaire were taken into considerable account when designing the final draft of the questionnaire. The final draft of the questionnaire was written in Arabic to avoid potential misunderstanding. The use of the native language also has the merit of avoiding forcing participants to translate their thoughts from their mother tongue to the target language. As a result, we can make sure that the possibilities of losing information due to the limits of memory capacity and the accuracy of translating thoughts are minimized and, thus, the process of reporting the attitudes and perceptions is not affected.

### Procedures

The process of data collection took place at Riyadh College of Technology over a period of three years (six semesters). The first step in conducting this research was to introduce the concept of portfolio assessment to the participating students.

Information about portfolio assessment that included definitions, examples, and illustrations were delivered to the participating subjects. The second step was to get students involved in the process of portfolio design. According to Lau (n.d.), Nunes (2004) and Lucas (2007), an ideal portfolio assessment should include materials that reflect the following processes: collection, selection, reflection and projection. A typical portfolio should include processes through which students can think about the goals to be achieved, the needs to be met and the strengths to be enforced, the assessment procedures to be incorporated and the themes to be included. Thus, the second step involved deciding upon the components of the portfolio to be used. Based on collaboration with the students, the agreed upon portfolio was to include the following:

1. A checklist of the written products to be included in the portfolio
2. One major essay
3. Autobiography
4. Presentations
5. Evaluative essays (written evaluations of other students' essays and autobiographies)
6. Reflective essays (personal reflections on the whole experience)
7. Grading rubrics and assessment procedures

At the end of each of the four semesters, the subjects were asked to respond to the questionnaire about their attitudes toward portfolio assessment. The questionnaire was designed to include items whose answers provide information related to the four research questions.

## Results

Table 1 shows the overall attitudes the participating subjects have towards portfolio assessment. The table indicates that learners generally have positive attitudes towards portfolio assessment and its application inside the language teaching classroom. The results also indicate a high level of awareness among the students as to the difficulties associated with the application of this form of assessment. Moreover, the table shows that this form of alternative assessment should not be, despite its observed benefits, the only measure of their writing competence.

Concerning the first research question (the attitudes of Saudi EFL students towards the use of portfolio assessment to measure their L2 writing learning ability), the table shows that most of the subjects believe in the constructive effect of this alternative assessment form on their writing learning. The table indicates that 51.2% of them strongly agree that portfolio assessment contributes to learning. It is a result with which 42.8% of subjects also agree. The data also points to the participants' strong belief in this form of assessment potential to measure students' achievement across various learning contexts. Moreover, 88.4% of the participants think that portfolio assessment is more powerful than single measures of student achievement such as tests. 94% of the subjects hold the assumption that this form of alternative assessment views learning and development longitudinally.

Similar findings are applicable to the statements pertaining to the subskills needed in language learning development, in general, and writing ability improvement, in particular. For example, 43.6% of the participating subjects strongly believe that portfolio assessment develops students' planning and organizational skills and facilitates students' application of knowledge. To 52.45 of the subjects, this form of assessment fosters critical thinking ability among students. 90% of them think that portfolio assessment increases students' participation, independence, and self-direction, and promotes students' self-improvement through reflection, self-assessment and self-analysis.

As for the second research question (what are the attitudes of Saudi EFL students towards the application of portfolio assessment at the college level?), the table clearly reveals the high degree of awareness that the participants have about the applicability of this form of alternative assessment at the college level. The table indicates that 71.6% of the subjects assume that portfolio assessment is labor intensive for faculty members. The majority of subjects express the need for previous training with this form of assessment in addition to the necessity to provide clearly written instructions about this form of assessment from the beginning. Almost more than 90% of the subjects call upon college administrators and instructors to pay more attention to the application of portfolio assessment.

In relevance to this aspect, the greater part of participants (almost 90%) stresses the importance of using portfolio assessment in conjunction with other assessment forms to measure students' competencies. 64.8% of the participants believe that this form of alternative assessment cannot be relied on as the only assessment method to measure students' competencies. The majority of subjects (77.6%) also think that faculty members lack the experience needed for this form of assessment to be implemented properly and effectively. Of considerable importance here is the fact that the participants caution against the possibility of cheating among the students. Almost half of the students think that this alternative assessment method might allow students to cheat

When it comes to the third research question (the beliefs of Saudi EFL students about the difficulties associated with the use of portfolio assessment), the subjects list the extensive time and efforts portfolio assessment requires on top of these difficulties. More than 82% of the subjects assume that the college faculty members think that this form of assessment involves a lot of time and efforts. Moreover, 71.6% of them consider this form of assessment to be labor intensive for faculty members. In addition, more than 71% of the participants believe that portfolio assessment is time consuming since it takes students a lot of time to spend on organizing, filing, and archiving documents.

As for the fourth research question (the perceptions of Saudi EFL students about the advantages of using portfolio assessment), the table explicates interesting attitudes that are of significant importance to the future use of portfolio assessment within contexts similar to this study. In terms of the attitudes towards the advantages of portfolio assessment, the participants believe in the benefit of portfolio assessment in developing individual capabilities needed for enhanced self-directed learning among students. More than 84% of participants think that the use of portfolio assessment fosters critical thinking ability among students. To almost 91% of the participants, portfolio assessment contributes to the process of identifying their

strengths and increasing the level of awareness about their weaknesses. 86% of the subjects presume that this alternative form of assessment involves the simultaneous use of thinking ability.

Another advantageous aspect of portfolio assessment lies in the assumption that it promotes interaction between the different parties involved in language learning. In addition to the belief held by 91% of subjects that this form of assessment increases the possibilities of interaction between teachers and students, almost 81% of the participants think that portfolio assessment will need to help each other to execute tasks.

Finally, the table indicates that portfolio assessment as a genuine assessment tool (almost 88% of subjects report that this form of assessment contains samples that present more authentic evidence of students' competencies) helps in making language learning more student-centered. Most of the students (89.6%) report that portfolio assessment facilitates students' application of knowledge. Almost 70% of the subjects assume that this type of assessment provides them with the opportunities to set the appropriate instructional goals to be achieved. This comes in line with Barootchi & Keshvarz's (2002) position that "portfolio assessment improves learners' attitude towards monitoring their learning experiences and awareness of their progress" (p. 285).

## Discussion

The findings of this study seem to support the results reported in previous research. The students with whom portfolio assessment is used report favorable attitudes towards the application of this form of alternative assessment into EFL writing classrooms. The results voice out the positive perceptions Saudi EFL learners have about using portfolio assessment to measure their writing ability. It is the assumption that portfolio assessment provides them with tools with which they can be free to choose what instructional goals to be accomplished, make decisions as to what to include, modify their products when needed, and provide evaluative comments upon request. It is a reflection of students' desire to be more autonomous. This finding is of considerable significance to the situation of teaching English as a foreign language in Saudi Arabia since it indicates the need to take into account the craving of Saudi students to adopt nontraditional methods in teaching.

The results of the current study also point to the great awareness among Saudi EFL learners about the complications associated with the use of portfolio assessment. The fact that such an alternative form of assessment is newly introduced to the students must have its impact on its applicability to a context used for long time to implement traditional single measures of performance. Students must have developed such awareness as a result of their exposure to portfolio assessment which, in turn, enabled them to properly evaluate and make calculated judgments.

The findings also show that the favorable attitudes students have towards portfolio assessment do not come to expense of other traditional testing methods. This finding supports Challis' (2001) observation that portfolio assessment simply needs to be seen in terms that recognize its own strengths and its differences from other methods, rather than as a replacement of any other assessment methods and procedures. Barootchi & Keshvarz (2002) state that "using a combination of both



traditional and non-traditional assessments enables educational programs to make their evaluations practical, viable and accurate. Thus, it is not proposed that non-traditional assessment be used in place of standardized tests; rather that it is used in conjunction with standardized tests" (p. 281). Introducing new pedagogical and assessment tools should be gradual and in conjunction with other traditional and previously applied tools.

In line with the available literature, the results also show that the application of portfolio assessment is a time consuming process. Such a finding means that well-planned preparation should be an integral part of implementing this form of alternative assessment. The attitudes revealed by this study evidently indicate that the amount of time and effort demand that portfolio assessment imposes on both students and instructors has to be dealt with carefully. As mentioned in the previous section, a drawback of portfolio assessment is that it can be very time consuming for the teacher to grade. Lau (n.d.) points out that, according to Routman (1991), "when teachers feel that using the portfolio in their classrooms will add too much their workload, they will reject the idea of using it, or they will wind up collecting all the work from students without actually using it immediately" (p. 26). A possible solution for this is to form cooperative groups in which four students collaboratively create a single portfolio.

Another interesting finding is the variation in the degree of importance students assign to the different personal and pedagogical traits involved in the language learning process such as developing students' abilities in reflection, self-assessment and self-analysis, identifying their strengths and increasing the level of awareness about their weaknesses. In this regard Müller (n.d.) states that it is "important to take note of something like Howard Gardner's multiple intelligence theory (1993), which stresses that individuals have different areas of intelligence and that learning and assessment should recognize these differences (Christison, 1995 – 1996). This is important in second language learning because it can be beneficial to students to recognize their learning style, strengths and abilities" (p. 12).

## Conclusion and Implications

To conclude, this study, which is one of the few studies aimed at exploring the perceptions of Saudi learners of English as foreign language towards the implementation of portfolio assessment in writing, supports the findings from previous studies conducted within both contexts: L1 learning and L2 learning. Students have positive attitudes towards the application of portfolio assessment as the major evaluation method to judge their writing performance in L2, specifically English. The participants voice their preference for the use of alternative methods of assessment that provide them with more opportunities to participate in the setting instructional goals that meet their actual needs, engage them in tasks of different features that involve the use of various abilities at the same time, and encourage them to self-monitor and assess their progress. According to Barootchi & Keshvarz's (2002), portfolio assessment is "a learning experience that is part of the ongoing course and serves as a guide to the student as well as the teacher" (p. 286).

The study indicates that students should be provided with more authentic opportunities to participate in the language learning experience from beginning. The availability of handy, multipurpose sources of information that today learners can

access is one of the defining characteristics of the current learning and teaching context. Portfolio assessment is a good example of an instructional and constructive practice that makes it possible for language learners to set the goals, select the materials, judge their abilities, develop self-awareness and consequently learn something that lasts for long. It is evident from the results of this research that Saudi EFL learners are willing to accept new teaching methods and to embrace creative strategies inside the classrooms. Despite some logistic psychometric problems, portfolio assessment is a new tool whose implementation has considerable potential as a vehicle for developing the professional knowledge of Saudi students.

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## Appendix

### الاستبانة

عزيزي الطالب:

إن الهدف من هذه الاستبانة هو التعرف على بعض العناصر الهامة والمؤثرة في عملية استخدام التقييم من خلال الملف التجميعي لنشاط الطالب. المطلوب منك هو الإجابة عن الأسئلة التي تحتويها هذه الاستبانة بحيث تكون معبرة عن شعورك الشخصي واعتقادك تجاه هذه العناصر وإعطاء الإجابات الصادقة لأن ذلك سيلعب دوراً مهماً في معرفة عناصر مهمة في عملية تدريس اللغة الإنجليزية داخل الكلية التقنية. علماً بأنه سوف يتم التعامل مع إجاباتك بسرية تامة وسيتم استخدامها لأغراض إحصائية فقط ولن يطلع على إجاباتك سوى الباحث فقط.

أقدم لك شكري وتقديري على تعاونك ومشاركتك في هذه الدراسة.

الباحث/ عبد العزيز عبد الرحمن أبانمي.

هاتف/ ٥٥٥٥٧٧٢٥٢

## القسم الأول

- ١- اسمك (اختياري): .....
- ٢- عمرك: .....
- ٣- التخصص: .....
- ٤- المستوى الدراسي: .....

القسم الثاني: توضح البنود التالية اتجاهاتك وانطباعاتك عن استخدام التقييم من خلال الملف التجميعي لنشاط الطالب أقرأ كل بند ثم ضع علامة (✓) في المربع الذي يصف شعورك بشكل صحيح				
٢	أوافق بشدة	أوافق	لا أوافق	لا أوافق بشدة
١				يسمح هذا النوع من التقييم بقياس أداء الطالب وقدرته على التعلم في مختلف الظروف والأحوال.
٢				هذا النوع من التقييم ذو مغزى وهدف واضح للمدرسين والطالب.
٣				هذا النوع من التقييم أفضل وأقوى من أدوات التقييم المنفردة كالاختبارات وغيرها.
٤				هذا النوع من التقييم ذو درجة كبيرة من الفائدة في التعامل مع عملية التعلم على أنها عملية مستمرة و طويلة المدى.
٥				هذا النوع من التقييم يحتوي على نماذج تمثل دليلاً أكثر واقعية على قدرات الطالب المتقلبة في تعلم اللغة.
٦				يساعد هذا النوع من التقييم على زيادة درجة لمسؤولية ندى الطالب والوعي بما هو مطلوب منه.
٧				يساهم هذا النوع من التقييم في رفع قدرة الطالب التنظيمية والتعلمية.
٨				يلعب هذا النوع من التقييم دوراً إيجابياً واضحاً في زيادة قدرة الطالب على تطبيق لمعرفة التي يمتلكها على الواقع العملي.
٩				يساهم هذا النوع من التقييم في تعزيز التفكير النقدي لدى الطالب.
١٠				يسهئ هذا النوع من التقييم في زيادة مستوى وعي الطالب بنفسه.
١١				يساهم هذا النوع من التقييم في زيادة درجة مشاركة الطالب واستقلاليته والاعتماد على نفسه في اتخاذ القرارات.
١٢				يشجع هذا النوع من التقييم الطالب على تطوير نفسه عبر التفكير العميق وتقييمه وتحليله لأدائه الشخصي.
١٣				يمثل هذا النوع من التقييم أداة تقييم شخصية تساعد الطالب على تدوين مواطن قوته وزيادة درجة الوعي لديه بمواطن ضعفه.
١٤				يقدم هذا النوع من التقييم الفرصة للطالب في أن يرسد الأهداف المناسبة التي يرغب في تحقيقها.
١٥				لا يمكن الاعتماد على هذا النوع من التقييم الطالب.
١٦				لا يمكن هذا النوع من التقييم قياس قدرات الطالب بشكل دقيق.
١٧				يمثل هذا النوع من التقييم عبئاً واضحاً على كاهل للمدرسين.
١٨				طريقة توزيع الدرجات في هذا النوع من التقييم لا يمكن فهمها.
١٩				طريقة توزيع الدرجات في هذا النوع من التقييم غير عادلة.
٢٠				لا يحمل هذا النوع من التقييم أي مغزى أو هدف واضح للمدرسين أو الطالب.
٢١				هناك فرصة كبيرة لأن يقوم الطالب بالمش والاحتيال في بعض المهام المطلوبة ضمن هذا النوع من التقييم.
٢٢				يستنزف هذا النوع من التقييم الكثير من وقت الطالب في ترتيب الأعمال والأوراق والحفاظ عليها.
٢٣				يحتاج الطالب إلى تدريب مسبق على هذا النوع من التقييم.

٢٤				يجب أن تكون هناك تعليمات واضحة مكتوبة بخصوص هذا النوع من التقييم منذ البداية.
٢٥				يحتاج الطالب إلى مساعدة زملائه في بعض الأحيان لتحضير الأعمال المطلوبة لهذا النوع من التقييم.
٢٦				يحتاج هذا النوع من التقييم إلى درجة أكبر من اهتمام لمدروس وعنايته.
٢٧				يحتاج هذا النوع من التقييم إلى اهتمام أكبر من قبل إدارة الكلية.
٢٨				يجب استخدام هذا النوع من التقييم مع أنواع أخرى من التقييم لقياس مستوى الطالب.
٢٩				يجب أن تتوفر معلومات أكثر بشأن هذا النوع من التقييم لدى الطالب.
٣٠				لا يمكن الاعتماد على هذا النوع من التقييم كوسيلة وحيدة لقياس مستوى الطالب.
٣١				يحتاج هذا النوع من التقييم إلى درجة عالية من التخطيط والتجهيز المنظم.
٣٢				يتخوف لمدروسون من تطبيق هذا النوع من التقييم حتى لا تكشف طريقتهم في توزيع الدرجات.
٣٣				يتخوف لمدروسون من تطبيق هذا النوع من التقييم لأنه يكشف قدراتهم التدريسية.
٣٤				يفتقد لمدروسون للخبرة مع هذا النوع من التقييم.
٣٥				يتعارض هذا النوع من التقييم مع أنواع التقييم الأخرى.
٣٦				هناك نقص في المعلومات الخاصة بمواليد وإيجابيات هذا النوع من التقييم.
٣٧				يعتقد لمدروسون أن هذا النوع من التقييم يحتاج الكثير من الوقت والجهد.
٣٨				يساهم هذا النوع من التقييم في زيادة التعامل بين الطالب والمدرس.
٣٩				يلهي هذا النوع من التقييم احتياجات التعلم العقلية لدى الطالب.
٤٠				يتعامل هذا النوع من التقييم مع قدرات كل طالب على حدة بشكل أكبر من أنواع التقييم الأخرى.
٤١				يساهم هذا النوع من التقييم في زيادة التعلم.
٤٢				يتطلب هذا النوع من التقييم استخدام قدرات التفكير لمختلفة في وقت واحد على عكس أنواع التقييم الأخرى.
٤٣				أتمنى أن يتم استخدام هذا التقييم في جميع المواد.

هل لديك أية ملاحظات، الرجاء كتابة أي اقتراح أو آراء في المساحة المخصصة.

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## **The Questionnaire**

Dear Student:

The goal behind the design of this questionnaire is to identify some of the important and influential elements in the implementation of portfolio assessment at Riyadh College of Technology. You're kindly requested to answer the questionnaire questions in a way that expresses your personal feelings towards these elements, and to provide correct answers because that would contribute to process of teaching of English to the students of Riyadh College of Technology. Your answers will be treated as confidential, and will be used only for statistical purposes. Only the researcher will look at your answers.

I appreciate your cooperation and participation in this study. Thank you very much.

Researcher: Abdulaziz Abdulrahman Abanomey  
Phone Number 0555577252

**Section One: Information about you. Please complete the following items:**

1. Your name (Optional): .....
2. Your age: .....
3. Major: .....
4. level: .....

**Section Two:** The following items show your attitudes towards portfolio assessment. Read each item, and then put (✓) in the box that describes your feelings correctly.

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
This form of assessment allows for measurement of students' achievement across various learning contexts ad experiences				
This form of assessment is meaningful and purposeful for students and teachers				
This form of assessment is more powerful than single measures of student achievement such as tests				
This form of assessment is useful to view learning and development longitudinally				
This form of assessment contains samples that present more authentic evidence of students' competencies.				
This form of assessment develops students' accountability and responsibility.				
This form of assessment develops students' planning and organizational skills.				
This form of assessment facilitates students' application of knowledge.				
This form of assessment fosters critical thinking ability among students				
This form of assessment helps students come to know themselves better				
This form of assessment increases students' participation, independence, and self-direction				
This form of assessment promote students' self-improvement through reflection, self-assessment and self- analysis				
It is a self assessment tool that helps students identify their strengths and increases the level of awareness about their weaknesses.				
This form of assessment provides students with the opportunities to set the appropriate goals to be achieved.				
It is a form of assessment that cannot be relied on				
This form of assessment cannot measure students' abilities and competencies accurately				
This form of assessment is labor intensive for faculty members				
The grading system of portfolios is difficult to understand.				
The grading system of portfolios is unfair				
There is no obvious objective or justification behind the use of portfolio assessment.				
This form of assessment allows students to cheat				

It takes students a lot of time to spend on organizing, filing, and archiving documents.				
Students need previous training with this form of assessment				
There should be clearly written instructions about this form of assessment from the beginning				
Sometimes students will need to help each other to execute tasks.				
Instructors are called to pay this form of assessment more attention				
College administration is called to pay this form of assessment more attention				
This form should be used in conjunction with other assessment forms to measure students' competencies				
Students should have more information about this form of assessment				
This form cannot be relied on as the only assessment method to measure students' competencies				
This form of assessment involves a high degree of planning and preparation				
Faculty members fear this form of assessment as possible reflection of their grading practices				
Faculty members fear this form of assessment as possible reflection of their teaching abilities				
Faculty members lack experience with this form of assessment				
This form of assessment is inconsistent with other assessment forms.				
There is a lack of information about the advantages of this form of assessment				
Faculty members think that this form of assessment involves a lot of time and efforts.				
This form of assessment increases the possibilities of interaction between teachers and students.				
This form of assessment meets the mental needs of language learners.				
In comparison to other assessment forms, portfolio assessment deals better with students' competencies separately.				
This form of assessment increases learning				
This form of assessment involves the simultaneous use of thinking abilities				
I wish this form of assessment used with other subject areas.				

**If you have other observations or comments, please write them down here.**

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Table (1) Frequencies of Attitudes

Item	SA*	A*	DA*	SD*	Mean	Std. D.	Rank
This form of assessment allows for measurement of students' achievement across various learning contexts ad experiences	34.8	58.0	6.4	0.8	3.27	0.61	23
This form of assessment is meaningful and purposeful for students and teachers	45.2	45.2	9.6	0.0	3.36	0.65	14
This form of assessment is more powerful than single measures of student achievement such as tests	52.8	35.6	10.4	1.2	3.40	0.72	10
This form of assessment is useful to view learning and development longitudinally	55.6	38.4	5.6	0.4	3.49	0.62	3
This form of assessment contains samples that present more authentic evidence of students' competencies.	42.0	45.6	11.2	1.2	3.28	0.71	21
This form of assessment develops students' accountability and responsibility.	53.6	39.2	6.4	0.8	3.46	0.65	4
This form of assessment develops students' planning and organizational skills.	43.6	46.8	9.2	0.4	3.34	0.66	17
This form of assessment facilitates students' application of knowledge.	43.6	46.0	10.0	0.4	3.33	0.67	19
This form of assessment fosters critical thinking ability among students	32.0	52.4	14.8	0.8	3.16	0.69	25
This form of assessment helps students come to know themselves better	46.4	47.2	5.6	0.8	3.39	0.63	11
This form of assessment increases students' participation, independence, and self-direction	52.0	38.0	9.2	0.8	3.41	0.69	9
This form of assessment promote students' self-improvement through reflection, self-assessment and self- analysis	44.4	46.0	9.2	0.4	3.34	0.66	17
It is a self assessment tool that helps students identify their strengths and increases the level of awareness about their weaknesses.	47.2	43.6	9.2	0.0	3.38	0.65	12
This form of assessment provides students with the opportunities to set the appropriate goals to be achieved.	29.6	48.0	20.4	2.0	3.05	0.76	29
It is a form of assessment that cannot be relied on	6.8	22.8	44.0	26.4	2.10	0.87	41
This form of assessment cannot measure students' abilities and competencies accurately	10.4	29.6	36.4	23.6	2.27	0.94	40
This form of assessment is labor intensive for faculty members	36.0	35.6	19.2	9.2	2.98	0.96	31
The grading system of portfolios is difficult to understand.	16.8	28.0	42.8	12.4	2.49	0.92	38
The grading system of portfolios is unfair	7.6	16.4	51.2	24.8	2.07	0.85	42
There is no obvious objective or justification behind the use of portfolio assessment.	6.0	13.2	44.8	36.0	1.89	0.85	43

This form of assessment allows students to cheat	15.2	34.4	29.6	20.8	2.44	0.99	39
It takes students a lot of time to spend on organizing, filing, and archiving documents.	33.6	38.0	19.6	8.8	2.96	0.94	32
Students need previous training with this form of assessment	30.8	41.2	24.0	4.0	2.99	0.84	30
There should be clearly written instructions about this form of assessment from the beginning	47.2	48.8	4.0	0.0	3.43	0.57	7
Sometimes students will need to help each other to execute tasks.	28.4	62.4	7.6	1.6	3.18	0.63	24
Instructors are called to pay this form of assessment more attention	53.6	42.8	3.2	0.4	3.50	0.58	2
College administration is called to pay this form of assessment more attention	56.4	32.4	7.6	3.6	3.42	0.78	8
This form should be used in conjunction with other assessment forms to measure students' competencies	40.4	48.8	9.2	1.6	3.28	0.70	21
Students should have more information about this form of assessment	44.4	49.6	6.0	0.0	3.38	0.60	12
This form cannot be relied on as the only assessment method to measure students' competencies	19.6	45.2	27.6	7.6	2.77	0.85	35
This form of assessment involves a high degree of planning and preparation	51.6	42.8	4.4	1.2	3.45	0.64	5
Faculty members fear this form of assessment as possible reflection of their grading practices	25.2	30.0	34.0	10.8	2.70	0.97	36
Faculty members fear this form of assessment as possible reflection of their teaching abilities	34.0	27.6	32.0	6.4	2.89	0.95	34
Faculty members lack experience with this form of assessment	40.0	37.6	19.6	2.8	3.15	0.83	27
This form of assessment is inconsistent with other assessment forms.	15.2	31.6	44.8	8.4	2.54	0.85	37
There is a lack of information about the advantages of this form of assessment	24.4	46.0	24.8	4.8	2.90	0.82	33
Faculty members think that this form of assessment involves a lot of time and efforts.	35.2	47.2	13.6	4.0	3.14	0.80	28
This form of assessment increases the possibilities of interaction between teachers and students.	64.0	31.2	2.4	2.4	3.57	0.66	1
This form of assessment meets the mental needs of language learners.	48.4	40.4	9.6	1.6	3.36	0.72	14
In comparison to other assessment forms, portfolio assessment deals better with students' competencies separately.	46.0	44.8	8.8	0.4	3.36	0.66	14
This form of assessment increases learning	51.2	42.8	5.2	0.8	3.44	0.63	6

This form of assessment involves the simultaneous use of thinking abilities

I wish this form of assessment used with other subject areas.

44.4	41.6	12.8	1.2	3.29	0.73	20
116	79	33	22	3.16	0.96	25

\*SA: Strongly Agree; A: Agree; DA: Disagree; SD: Strongly Disagree.