

THE E-PORTFOLIO IN JAPANESE LANGUAGE TEACHING: HOW AND WHY?

Peter A. Lafford, Arizona State University

Miko Foard, Arizona State University

Abstract: There is great interest in e-portfolios in education today. “A portfolio is a purposeful collection of a student’s work that represents their accomplishments.” (Arter & Spandel, 1992) The technology to create electronic documents which add depth to the e-Portfolio, especially in the context of language study, is widely available. This presentation will present the rationale for implementation of electronic portfolios in a university-level Japanese program, in both study abroad and domestic classrooms. The presenters will show online examples of e-Portfolio modules incorporating the National Standards, created in three different e-Portfolio environments.

Keywords: e-portfolio; assessment; technology; PowerPoint; online

INTRODUCTION

There is great interest in e-portfolios in education today. The e-Portfolio is turning up in many contexts, from elementary school through higher education, and on through continuing professional development and career tracking. While artistic portfolios may represent creative work in a physical format, an academic portfolio typically has a more specific function: “A portfolio is a purposeful collection of a student’s work that represents their accomplishments. It typically shows their best work, the progress of their learning over time, and/or samples of different types of work.” (Arter & Spandel, 1992)

DISCUSSION

The technology to create electronic documents which add depth to the e-Portfolio is widely available. Especially in the context of language study, the audio or video clip documenting a student’s linguistic skill and progress over time can serve to motivate the student to further study. It can also provide the “stage” on which the student abroad can perform for family or friends back home. The student who becomes familiar with the e-Portfolio in the classroom will be better prepared to use it in future professional contexts.

The e-Portfolio can be implemented in a university-level Japanese program, in both study abroad and domestic classrooms. This has been done at Arizona State University, with a design incorporating the National Standards, so far, in two different e-Portfolio environments: a simple template-based .html web page (Figure 1), and a PowerPoint-based e-Portfolio, based on templates by A. Abrams (2005)(Figure 2). Future plans call for an OSP online portfolio on a Sakai course management system, though these are still in development.

While the electronic or digital format of a portfolio can make it an engaging project for the student, care must be taken to assure that the technology does not overwhelm the project. The purpose is still to document student progress and achievement. The technological experience is a by-product, so the process of creating the e-Portfolio must be easy enough for the student to accomplish without undue effort.

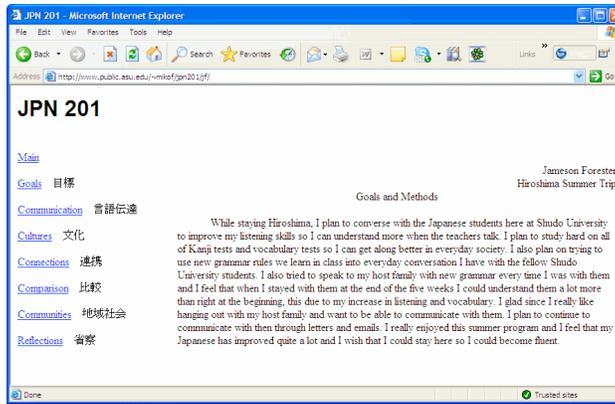


Figure 1. E-Portfolio based on simple .html template.



Figure 2. E-Portfolio based on PowerPoint presentation.

CONCLUSION

The e-Portfolio is a valuable tool, providing a record for assessment, a motivational tool for the student, and technological experience which should benefit the student. The design of the e-Portfolio, the process followed to accomplish it, and the ability to continue to add to it are important considerations for those implementing such a tool. This presentation is intended to provide the audience with an understanding of the potential of the e-Portfolio in the language classroom, some concrete ideas about implementing an e-Portfolio component in their classes, and knowledge to help them investigate e-Portfolio resources available to them at their institutions.

REFERENCES

Arter, J.A., and Spandel, V. (1992) Using portfolios of student work in instruction and assessment.” *Educational Measurement: Issues and Practice*, 11, 36-44.

Abrams, A. (2005). *Portfolio Builder 2 for PowerPoint*. Eugene, OR: Visions Technology.