

Thursday 4 June

2:20pm - 3:00pm

Room: Block Y, Room Y402

Presentation Title: ePortfolios for independent language learning:
Episodic innovation or lasting reform?

Presenter / Co-presenters:	Juliana Chau, Hong Kong Polytechnic University
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Theme:	E-learning initiatives
Presentation Type:	Paper presentation

Abstract

Research on ePortfolios raises concerns that users may view ePortfolios as a one-shot endeavour rather than a device of lasting usefulness. This paper discusses the findings of an ePortfolio project for developing English skills and learning communities at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. The study aims to investigate teachers' and students' perceptions of ePortfolios from three perspectives: linguistic (relationship between ePortfolio, language learning and learning community), technical (the extent to which technology helps or hinders ePortfolio use), and referential (meaning of ePortfolio with respect to self and community).

Participants included 250 students and 17 teachers involved in several English language courses between 2007 and 2008 at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Students were asked to identify the purpose of their ePortfolio, collect artefacts, showcase their best work, and make connection between self and the community as a student, a member of the community and a beginning professional. Questionnaires and focus group interviews were conducted to solicit feedback from students and teachers.

The findings of this paper suggest differing perceptions of the ePortfolio between teachers and students, which in turn affects their attitude and level of engagement. This carries implications for practitioners using ePortfolios for developing learner independence and language competence.

Biodata

Juliana Chau is currently teaching at the English Language Centre of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. She has researched, presented papers at conferences and published book chapters and journal articles on portfolios and ePortfolios, learner motivation, language and pedagogic development, collaborative learning and assessment. Her PhD thesis examines the effects of reflective portfolios on English language development and learning.