



Hong Kong Association
for Applied Linguistics

香港應用語言學學會

SEMINAR

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What Research Tells Us about Writing Portfolio Assessment in Practice: Trends, Issues and Future Directions

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Portfolio assessment is broadly considered an alternative approach to teaching and assessing student writing, emphasizing multi-drafting, self-reflection and delayed summative evaluation. Despite its pedagogical and evaluative properties, research on writing portfolio assessment primarily examines its affective and linguistic impacts on student writing, namely motivation and text quality. Not much has been done to understand how the results of portfolio-based scholarship can be productively translated into practice. With this in mind, the paper aims to take stock of what research tells us about writing portfolio assessment in practice. First, the paper discusses the definition and rationale of writing portfolio assessment and historicizes its emerging trends in L1 and L2 writing literature. Second, it reviews state-of-the-art research evidence that (1) supports classroom-based portfolio application; (2) constrains portfolio assessment practices; and (3) requires further investigation into using portfolios as a classroom feature. Based upon the review, I propose four recommendations which could advance our understanding of the research/practice nexus in portfolio assessment, and further promulgate the portfolio approach in Hong Kong writing classrooms and beyond.

Ricky Lam is Associate Professor and Programme Director of Master of Education in the Department of Education Studies at Hong Kong Baptist University. His publications have appeared in *Assessing Writing*, *Language Testing*, *TESOL Quarterly* and other international journals. His research interests are assessment for learning, portfolio assessment, and second language writing assessment.



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