

**Informing Decisions on Language Ability Development Through Assessment**

**E-portfolio in the English Class**

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### **Abstract**

This study intended to assess how the implementation of the assessment E-portfolio informed decisions regarding students' language ability development in the English class. The research was developed with 12 students of seventh grade at a private school in Medellín, Colombia. It was conducted under the approach of action research, and the data collection techniques used were a questionnaire, an interview and analysis of artifacts. Finding revealed the “added-value” that E-portfolio has since it provides information not only for the teacher but also for the students about their language learning progress. Additionally, results evidenced the need to generate a cultural school change to make students aware of the importance of using alternative assessment tools. Results allow to conclude that through the implementation of the assessment E-portfolio, the teacher can make fair, transparent and valid judgments regarding learners’ progress in their language learning process.

**Keywords:** alternative assessment, traditional assessment, assessment, E-portfolio, language ability.

## **Resumen**

Este estudio pretende identificar cómo la implementación del E-portafolio informa decisiones sobre el desarrollo de la habilidad lingüística de los estudiantes. El estudio fue desarrollado con 12 estudiantes de séptimo grado en un colegio privado de la ciudad de Medellín, Colombia. Este estudio fue guiado por el enfoque acción-investigación y las técnicas de recolección de datos fueron un cuestionario, una entrevista y análisis de artefactos. Los hallazgos demuestran el valor agregado que el E-portafolio tiene, ya que provee información no solo para el maestro, sino también para el estudiante sobre su progreso en el aprendizaje de la lengua extranjera. Los hallazgos también evidencian la necesidad de generar un cambio en la cultura escolar para hacer conscientes a los estudiantes de la importancia de usar herramientas de evaluación alternativa. Los resultados permiten concluir que a través del e-portafolio, el maestro puede emitir juicios justos, transparentes y válidos sobre el desarrollo de la habilidad lingüística del estudiante en la clase de inglés.

***Palabras clave:*** Evaluación Alternativa, Evaluación Tradicional, Evaluación, E-portafolio, Habilidad Lingüística.

## Introduction

Education offers multiple ways to assess the students' process. One of them is the Traditional Assessment. Brown and Abeywickrama (2010) affirm that "first, a traditional assessment tool is likely to be considered a standardized test with decontextualized test items. Second, the focus is on discrete answers. Third, it tends to be a summative test which is oriented towards the product. Finally, it evaluates non-interactive performance, so it fosters extrinsic motivation" (p. 18). Brown and Hudson claim traditional assessment belongs to selected-response assessment which include true-false, matching and multiple-choice assessment (1998). On the other hand, we have Alternative Assessment, which "concentrate on measuring student knowledge to use language spontaneously in real life and are normally realized over a certain period of time. In addition to this, the more authentic variety of assessments, as projects, performance assignments, concept maps, self-assessment, peer-assessment, observation, portfolio, drama, diagnostic tree, journals, posters, instructors and student interviews" (Anıl & Acar, 2008; Büyüktokatlı & Bayraktar, 2014). Therefore, there are some advantages in the implementation of alternative assessment.

Considering the last information, it is important to highlight that one of the best types of assessment to achieve success in the assessment process is the alternative assessment. According to Law and Eckes (1995) "alternative assessment assesses higher-order thinking skills and students have the opportunity to demonstrate what they learned. This type of assessment tool focuses on the growth and the performance of the student". Moreover, Phongsirikui (2018) claims that "alternative assessment can be continuous long-term assessment with contextualized communicative tasks. In addition, it encourages

open-ended, creative answers. It is considered a formative assessment which is oriented towards the process. Finally, it involves inter-active performance, so it fosters intrinsic motivation” (p,63). Also, alternative assessment is presented as a way to motivate and inspire students to learn just like assessing students' language ability in a more authentic way (Phongsirikul, 2018). However, it is evident that many school contexts do not include alternative assessment in their classroom practices.

In the research context, it was observed that the teacher did not implement the alternative assessment, it was evident that her ways to assess students were still traditional. This was the reason why, the focus continued being that students approved or failed the subject, without making any effort to go beyond the language and demonstrate their knowledge both in an oral and/or in a written way. Therefore, the researchers could realize that the traditional assessment used by the teacher limited students' production and the teacher did not have enough information to assess students in a more reliable way. Consequently, this issue encouraged the researchers to look for a way to intervene.

The researchers selected one tool of alternative assessment called “Assessment E-portfolio” which consists in a systematic collection of student work demonstrating competencies and achievement of set criteria, standards, and/or goals (O'Malley & Valdez, 1996). We, as researchers, chose to use this type of E-portfolio because it would allow us to make summative judgments of the students' progress in a more informed way. Besides, the context in which we developed the research was totally virtual and the assessment E-portfolio achieved this characteristic. For this reason, students could perform this strategy in an easier way.

The purpose of this intervention was to evaluate the impact of the assessment E-portfolio on decisions regarding learners' language ability development in the English class. The research question that guided this study was "How can the implementation of an assessment E-portfolio inform decisions regarding 7th graders' language ability development in the English class at a private school in Medellín?"

### **Literature Review**

#### **Traditional Assessment.**

"Law and Eckes (1995) underline the same issue and state that traditional assessments are single-occasion tests". "First, a traditional assessment tool is likely to be considered a standardized test with decontextualized test items. Second, the focus is on discrete answers. Third, it tends to be a summative test which is oriented" (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010, p. 18). Bertrand (1994) noted that traditional assessments evaluated student's work based on tests, and their final scores were representative of their learning, disregarding the how and why of student learning, hence separating the process from the product. (Anderson, 1998).

#### **Alternative Assessment**

"Alternative types of assessment come into play with the purpose of filling up a space where traditional types of assessment leave it empty. Alternative types of assessment such as journals, logs, portfolios, self-assessment, and peer-assessment help reveal what students can do with language" Phongsirikul, M. (2018, p.2). "Alternative assessment is an ongoing process involving the student and teacher in making judgments about the student's progress in language using non-conventional strategies". Charles R. (1994).

## **E-portfolio**

“A number of factors contribute to the interest in E-portfolios in higher education. The main reasons are related to the impact of pedagogical changes in higher education, whereby a student-centred approach and more active learning experiences are encouraged.” (Joyes et al., 2010). “The rapid growth of technologies for learning – and certainly also of social media platforms – gives students the opportunity to document and publish across a number of platforms that contribute to the accessibility of E-portfolios to different educational needs.”(Clark & Eynon, 2009).

### **Types of E-Portfolio**

The developmental e-portfolio is one type of E-portfolio that also has other names like learning portfolios, reflection portfolios, formative portfolios and working portfolios. With this type of E-portfolio the audience is the students, they can demonstrate their work in progress and the goal is helping students examine and reflect on their learning.

Another type of E-portfolio is called *Showcase*, known by the name of professional portfolios, formal portfolios, presentation portfolios, representational portfolios, career or employment portfolios. Therefore, the person that is using this portfolio can demonstrate exemplary work, skills, illustrate experience, achievement and focus on the portfolio as a product. Finally, the last type of e-portfolio is called *Assessment* as well known by the name of, summative portfolios and assessment E-portfolio. Here the audience is internal to the institution and the portfolios are generally used by educators where students provide work in the format of a developmental or showcase portfolio. It is typically a

systematic collection of student work demonstrating competencies and achievement of set criteria, standards, and/or goals (O'Malley & Valdez, 1996).

### **Language Ability**

“Language ability was described for each of the languages of Europe in terms of what learners should be able to DO with the language”. (James, 1990, p. 208).

Our research started like a funnel, from the general information about traditional assessment and alternative assessment to the specific information about what a portfolio and an E-portfolio is. Due to this, in the research, we found few studies about the use of E-portfolio as an alternative assessment tool. These studies presented a lot of information in other specific areas such as science, technology, online courses, among others. Therefore, the information that we found related to the English Language area is limited.

In their study, Marissa Phongsirikul, (2018) researched Traditional and Alternative Assessments in ELT: Students' and Teachers' Perceptions. The study took into account 2 types of methods, the use of exams and quizzes as a traditional assessment tool and portfolio, “Wecreate activity, and iLearn & Teach Project” as an alternative assessment technique. In the findings, the use of exams and quizzes was a significant grade both in teachers and students because they consider that these tools can help students to improve in covering all the topics seen during the term and this gives a grade clearly, and helps in a bigger way to understand grammar. Besides, this method can help to assess individual students' knowledge and it is a more reliable tool. Therefore, some students and teachers think that traditional assessment can create a big stress in students, learners consider that it is difficult to pass, and it is not a method that assures knowledge and learning. In contrast, the alternative assessment technique showed positive effects such as they are

tools that can be used in a daily routine, students can use all skills, and finally, this helps to develop the autonomy in students' processes. In their perceptions, they consider that the problem with alternative assessment is the lack of knowledge and how to apply it in class. To conclude, the study presented the following results; traditional assessment had a big preference to assess the students' procedure, this is because teachers and students are used to implementing this type of method. These results are because teachers do not have a complete knowledge about these new techniques and for this reason, they consider that traditional assessment is easier to apply.

On the other hand, there are studies that explain more specifically the alternative assessment. As in the case of Salomi Papadima-Sophocleous (2017) explored L2 Assessment and Testing' Teacher Education: An Exploration of Alternative Assessment Approaches using New Technologies. Their finding shows that the implementation of the alternative assessment was difficult. But also, they showed the positive perception of students in front of the implementation of alternative assessment. Besides, students saw that they became more participative thanks to these tools. In the same vein, Kafrani & Mohammad Reza Afshari (2017) investigated Alternative Assessment: Student Designed Test Evidence in an Iranian EFL Context. The findings demonstrate that the study took the alternative assessment as a process in which students made their own assessment. Thanks to this implementation, they manifested a great motivation and a lower anxiety, allowing students to be in charge of their process. The research concluded that when they involve students in the assessment process, they become more active in the classroom. Besides, the research shows concerns because teachers are not prepared in terms of alternative assessment and this area should be further explored to have more information.

Following this, from the paper of Muhammad Saeed, HafsaTahir and Iqra Latif (2018) explored Teachers' Perceptions about the Use of Classroom Assessment Techniques in Elementary and Secondary Schools. They found that most of the public and private school teachers use summative assessment. They believe that formative and summative assessment can play a more essential role in promoting students' learning in the classroom. Moreover, teachers use alternative assessment techniques as peer assessment and portfolios. Implementing these assessment techniques will result in more effective and holistic development of elementary and secondary grade students both in public and private schools. The conclusion of this research recommends that teachers should use portfolios and peer-assessment because it makes the students feel independent and self-confident, also it gives them a sense of leadership with their peers, consequently students will feel more engaged with their process.

As a matter of fact, during the time that we were researching, we found those authors that talked about the use of Portfolio. In the study of Lijuan Wang and Chunyan He (2020) explored Review of Research on Portfolios in ESL/EFL Context. The findings indicated that students support the idea of using the portfolio, they came to the reflection that the use of portfolios helps them think critically. Besides that, students show a great motivation and an improvement of their autonomous learning. To conclude, portfolios provide a lot of evidence to the teachers about their development and encourage the students to plan their goals and meditate in their learning process. Also, they said that there is a lack of information about the effect of the use of Portfolio. Along with, the study of Halisdem (2016) investigated A Meta-analysis of the Effectiveness of Alternative Assessment Techniques. Based on the findings, he used different tools to assess the

students, the one who had the largest effects in the students was the use of Portfolio. Additionally, the teacher said that this had a meaningful impact on students' achievement. In conclusion, despite the positive effects of the use of Portfolio, researchers said that the most use of it has been in primary grades and they consider that the other techniques should be further explored. Lastly, in the Isa Kaya's research Examination of Preschool Teachers' Opinion on Alternative Assessment (2018), the findings reveal that preschool teachers found helpful and important the use of Portfolio since they could collect information, observation and even observational recording. One of the teachers that participated in the research said "I think the portfolio is important in preschool education. I put in activities through which I get information about children. They have information about the family history of the child. I keep similar activities and painting activities in the activity file daily". In conclusion, Kaya said that teachers had found problems with the implementation of Portfolio, because they didn't know how to use alternative assessment and that they implemented it without knowing how to use it.

Furthermore, the use of e-portfolio is the focus of this study. Alekasir et al. (2020) investigated the Iranian EFL learners' attitudes towards the implementation of e-portfolios in English Learning and Assessment. This study found that this inquiry presented a good perspective with the use of this tool. The participants considered the e-portfolio offers the opportunity to receive feedback and create the possibility to collaborate with other learners. The E-portfolio platform can offer a feedback cycle within its assessment system which will provide the learners with opportunities to collaborate and share their works with their group members. The researchers concluded that it is necessary to investigate more about the use of e-portfolio and other types of platforms that facilitate the employ of

this technique and be applied in other subjects, not only in ESL classrooms. Finally, this tool helps both the teachers and learners to have a major shift in the assessment results. Similarly, Aghazadeh (2020) discovered in her study, the Effect of E-portfolio on EFL Learners' Writing Accuracy, Fluency, and Complexity, that e-portfolio helps students in increasing the readiness in the use of the language, also students could learn about cooperative work, assess their own process, discover their weaknesses and strengths and with the use of this tool, students could provide multidimensional perspectives about the process of learning and assessment. On the other hand, teachers' perception about the use of E-portfolio shows the following aspects; E-portfolio helps assess learning procedure, increase teacher-student interaction and provide a good diary experience. For both teachers and students, it had a positive effect in the use of E-portfolio into class. To conclude, this study could prove that the use of E-portfolio had a positive attitude, students can improve in their writing reflection and with the use of this technique, they had the possibility to develop students' autonomy and self-assessment regulation.

As a conclusion, traditional assessment has been used over the years and it doesn't mean that it is a wrong method, but it is evident that it is necessary the implementation of new ways to assess students and they help teachers to achieve and support students' goals. One of these types of assessment is alternative assessment, with this tool, students become more active, autonomous and reflective about their own learning process. Although this happens as well as in the implementation of other techniques, the e-portfolio is a great option because with this, students are involved in their learning process. However, there is not enough research about English E-portfolio assessment; but we found several information about it focused on other areas. Furthermore, in the studies of E-portfolio,

researchers confirm that there is a lack of information about the implementation of this tool in EFL context.

### **Methodology**

This study was conducted by the approach “action research” which according to Creswell (2014) is similar to mixed research methods, since it uses a collection of data of a quantitative, qualitative or both, only that it differs from these by focusing on the solution of a specific and practical problem. Therefore, Bell (as cited in Cohen and Manion, 1994) claims that “specific knowledge is required for a specific problem in a specific situation, or when a new approach is to be grafted onto an existing system”. Action research is also known for its flexibility and for how it is structured, the same author classifies action research into two characteristics, practical action research and participatory action research. These are divided in cycles; the difference between the one and the other is that the practice focuses on taking action and the participatory on ideas that promote a change the life of the research participants.

Action research never stays at the same point because it constantly transforms as the study progresses, until the solution to the problem is found. Authors such as Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2014) assure that detecting a problem or a gap implies going further, knowing its context, how it is composed, who is involved, how this problem was presented, also affirm that once this information is precise and concise, tools such as concept maps, cause-effect diagrams, matrices, hierarchies, organization charts or network analysis, among others, helps to make the idea more structured and allows to create a respective report on the case. Once the case is reported, and eventually approved, an action plan will be applied to act on it.

## **Context and Sample**

The study was conducted in the context of English language teaching at a private school with twelve students of 7th grade, in Medellín, Colombia. It corresponded to high school education. One of the main purposes of school was to lead or let students achieve a higher English level, the school boards wanted students to learn to communicate using the language in an easy way, they hoped the learners were proficient in the language and that they had good results in the standardized national test Icfes. Besides, it is important to mention that the school had two modalities, face to face education and virtual education. The investigation was developed in the virtual modality in which the students came from Ecuador and different parts of the country (Colombia) such as Bogotá, Santander, Bucaramanga, Pasto, Santa Marta and Medellín.

The participants were 12 students who were between the ages of 12 and 13 years old. That specific group was very dynamic and active. They enjoyed participating during the English classes and they liked to go beyond what the teacher proposed to the class. Instruction involved 3 hours per week, it means about 30 hours per term. Finally, it is relevant to indicate that the school implemented a way to assess students in which it included quizzes during each term and at the end, a bimonthly test which included all the topics board during the classes. It had to achieve some requirements from the school such as including True / False items, multiple choice, fill in the blanks, writing production, and all the language skills in general (listening, reading, writing, speaking, grammar and vocabulary)

## **Data collection and Analysis**

### *Analysis of artifacts*

Tidwell et al. (2006) claim that “analysis of artifacts, often providing tangible evidence of the realities of teaching and learning. These may include paper evidence of teaching activities... narratives written by students, posters drawn by them, notes on newsprint produced during class activities”. This technique helped us to determine the extent to which E-portfolio assessment facilitates decision making regarding learners’ language ability development in the English class (our first objective). We, as researchers, selected this tool because our proposal was based on an E-portfolio that is an online document, and this technique is based on the examination of documents. Consequently, we could analyze all the information and evidence collected from the E-portfolio.

### ***Group interviews***

According to Frey and Fontana (1991), “group interviews can be formal with a specific, structured purpose such as a marketing focus group, or, it can be informal taking place in a field setting where a researcher stimulates a group discussion with a topical question. The data generated can be instrumental and factual, or, it can be subjective and qualitative.” We, as researchers, selected this technique because it helped us to achieve our second goal, which consisted in “establish learners’ perspectives on the use of E-portfolio assessment to make informed decisions on their language ability development in the English class”. It allowed students to express their experiences and opinions, regarding the use of the e-portfolio and to achieve evidence of the impact of this tool on learners.

### ***Questionnaires***

To explain this technique in a deeper way, it is important to mention Gillham (2000). “Questionnaires are just one of a range of ways of getting information from people (or answers to our research questions), usually by posing direct or indirect questions. Incidentally, one of the weaknesses of questionnaires is that they seek to get answers just by asking questions”. The purpose with this technique was to get information from the participants of the investigation and identify if the goal had been achieved. Therefore, the third goal was “To contrast learners’ views with the teacher’s judgments on their performance regarding language ability development through the implementation of e-portfolio assessment in the English class”. Through the use of questionnaires, we evidenced the perceptions that students had related to the use of e-portfolio. Also, we could prove if those answers had some similarities with the teacher’s judgments according to their language ability development and their improvement in producing in a second language.

### **Intervention**

This intervention was developed during the third and fourth term of the academic year 2021. The third term began on July 12th and on that day the teacher explained to the students what the E-portfolio was, the activities that should be included, why she decided to use that strategy along the course, explained its different uses, the purpose and the tool for implementing the E-portfolio. The teacher and students used the tool “OneNote” and the teacher created a folder called “My assessment e-portfolio” where students uploaded the production tasks.

The first task that students developed and delivered consisted in a short reflection about their learning process which was presented in a periodic way, it means, week by

week, starting from the second week (July 19th) until October 4th, with a total of 16 reflections. In the third week, it means on July 30th, students delivered the second task which consisted in designing a poster related to food preferences and recording a short audio about it. In the fourth week, it means on August 9th, students presented a typical food list, but evidently in English. In the sixth week, it means on August 20th, students wrote a recipe about their favorite food and recorded a video making it, and the last delivery that the student made on October 25th consisted in telling a story about the Saint everyone selected, in both oral and written way.

### **Findings and Discussion**

The purpose of this research was to evaluate the impact of the assessment E-portfolio on decisions regarding learners' language ability development in the English class. Results revealed that 1) Not just the teacher, but also the students could see their progress through the assessment E-portfolio. 2) Students' perceptions of their performance match the teacher's judgments. 3) Most of the students understood the importance of using the E-portfolio as an assessment tool; however, half of the participants still expressed their preferences for traditional assessment (multiple choice) and the other half for the assessment E-portfolio. 4) Through the assessment E-portfolio students could develop different skills. 5) Students' perceptions of individuals follow-up through the assessment E-portfolio.

#### **Students can see their progress through the assessment E-portfolio**

Data analysis revealed that most of the students could realize their progress towards the development of their language ability; for instance, participant 7 claimed that she felt she was learning more, that she had improved a lot compared with the first

classes, when she didn't understand anything to the teacher. Participant 10 expressed that at the beginning, with the reflections she just wrote 2 lines and she wasn't able to continue writing more, but during the fourth period when she was writing the final reflections, she could realize she wrote more and she had improved a lot.

On the other hand, throughout the implementation of the assessment E-portfolio, the teacher said she could notice that some of the students improved a lot in their writing skills and even during the class, the way how students expressed themselves. Regarding participant 8, the teacher explicitly stated that the goal was achieved to her progress evidenced both in the E-portfolio and during the class.

Therefore, it is evident that most of the participants were able to see their progress regarding the language. On that subject, Karami, Sadighi, Bagheri and Riasat (2018) through their research about the effect of e-portfolio on the students' writing proficiency, confirm that e-portfolio significantly enhanced EFL learners' writing proficiency. Additionally, in the questionnaire, students expressed they could notice through the use of the assessment E-portfolio that they improved in the use of the language; also, participant 3 claimed: "the E-portfolio helped me to understand the language because before I didn't understand anything of English." This finding supports what the author Charles R. (1994) said "Alternative assessment is an ongoing process involving the student and teacher in making judgments about the student's progress in language using non-conventional strategies".

Nevertheless, it is important to mention that 2 of the 12 participants expressed that at the end of the process, they couldn't understand the purpose or the use of the assessment E-portfolio and consequently, they couldn't see their progress in the learning

process, but it was also evident that these students didn't develop the activities in a complete way nor on time; so, it could be a reason for the participants' perspectives.

### **Students' perceptions of their performance match the teacher's judgments**

Data analysis revealed that all the students agreed with the teacher's judgments about the quality of the performances. They thought the teacher's score was fair. Participant 7 said that the grades were fair, "saqué lo que tenía que sacar" and the teacher gave the appropriate time. Participant 8 said that she was satisfied with the assessment. On the other hand, participants 1, 2 and 5 claimed that they considered there was fairness in the grades provided by the teacher to the assignments of the E-portfolio. Regarding this information, Maturana (2005) mentions that alternative assessment tools are the first step to achieve a democratic and fair assessment process, from the design until the administration and the interpretation of the results.

Additionally, it is possible to claim that based on the students' perceptions about the teacher's judgment we can see that effectively, the information obtained by the teacher is accurate, complete and it evidences students' development. Therefore, students' perceptions provide the teacher a sense of calm and security, because his/ her judgments are fair, transparent and valid.

### **Students' appraisal of the assessment E-portfolio in contrast to traditional assessment tools**

Data analysis revealed that although at the beginning most of the students preferred alternative assessment (multiple choice quizzes), after implementing the interview students could analyze the importance of the assessment e-portfolio and the

majority of the students evidenced understanding of the role of this alternative tool.

However, the preference on the use of E-portfolio was divided: approximately half of the participants preferred multiple choice tests and the other half, the assessment E-portfolio.

Some common comments were: The E-portfolio helps more than the multiple-choice tests, but students always like the easiest. I like the multiple-choice tests because they are easier (participant 8). Also, participant 7 said that he prefers multiple choice because it's easier and you don't have to provide an opinion. Likewise, participants 6 and 1 also claimed they like more multiple choice.

On the other hand, other students expressed they preferred the E-portfolio; participant 9 said that although multiple choice is easier, she thinks that students must learn and push themselves to do it; so, she prefers the E-portfolio. Also, participant 3 expressed she preferred all the activities and the E-portfolio because they push her to think more and to be immersed in the language, and she added that if a student use just multiple-choice tests, they are not going to learn as much as if they used all the strategies (E-portfolio). Participant 11 said that in the e-portfolio everything is registered and the others (Traditional Assessment) are used just for the moment. Finally, participant 10 also claimed her preference on the use of the E-portfolio.

Based on the information gathered, it is evident that students still find it difficult to adopt other kinds of assessment tools (in this case, the alternative); due to most of their assessment events in the school correspond to multiple choice quizzes and the majority of the students think they are easier to do. However, it was also evident that a significant number of participants discovered many advantages and the relevance of using the E-portfolio.

Having this in mind, Dikli (2003) expresses that according to Bailey (1998), traditional assessments are indirect and inauthentic, also adds that traditional assessment is standardized and for that reason, they are one-shot, speed-based, and norm-referenced. Law and Eckes (1995) underline the same issue and state that traditional assessments are single-occasion tests. Alternative assessments, on the other hand, assess higher-order thinking skills. Students have the opportunity to demonstrate what they learned. This type of assessment tools focuses on the growth and the performance of the student. That is, if a learner fails to perform a given task at a particular time, s/he still has the opportunity to demonstrate his/her ability at a different time and different situation.”

#### **Other skills developed by students through the assessment E-portfolio**

Data analysis revealed that most of the students expressed the other skills they developed through the use of the E-portfolio, such as order, confidence, punctuality and autonomy. Participants 2, 3, 11 and 9 expressed that the use of the E-portfolio helped them to be more organized; also, participant 9 through the questionnaire said that she realized the e-portfolio help to many things: to practice while we upload the activities and it motivates us to be punctual and to have confidence to ourselves, because we can know what we have learned.

Therefore, we have to take into account what Lorenzo and Ittelson (2005) said: “an E-portfolio is more than a simple collection, however; it can also serve as an administrative tool to manage and organize work created with different applications and control who can see or discuss the work”. As a result of this, it is important to highlight that in the extent to which the students deliver and develop the tasks on time, in an organized way, and with autonomy, it would be easier for the teacher performing the

assessment process and he/she can get enough information to make informed decisions about students' language ability development.

In this way, students can show in a better way their progress and they can be aware of what they have achieved. Besides, all of these skills are fundamental for the implementation of the E-portfolio as an alternative assessment tool. If students have their products disorganized, the teacher couldn't evidence students' progress. Moreover, it is important to mention that 2 of the 12 participants had difficulties with the order and they were the same students with difficulties in the assessment process.

### **Student's perceptions of individuals follow - up through the assessment E-portfolio**

Data analysis revealed that some students remarked one of the advantages of the use of E-portfolio which corresponds to the fact that the teacher can make a following of each student and everyone can know how his/her process is. Participant 8 said that it is an advantage that E-portfolio lets the teacher provide individual feedback about what every student must improve and it wasn't a general comment for everyone. It is more personalized. Also, participant 3 claimed through the use of E-portfolio students could receive individual feedback and they could know how their English progress was, because during the classes it is something difficult to achieve.

According to Lorenzo and Ittelson (2005) "E-portfolios can also be defined as "personalized, web-based collections of work, responses to work, and reflections that are used to demonstrate key skills and accomplishments for a variety of contexts and time periods" and also, Ahn (2004) claims that providing learners with the opportunity to reflect on their own learning and more importantly giving teachers valuable chances to provide detailed feedback on their students' work are two main advantages of

implementing E-portfolios into teaching-learning contexts. Consequently, the fact that a teacher can make a personalized follow up indicates that the E-portfolio provides more information/criteria to determine students' progress in an individual way.

### **Conclusions**

In conclusion, the implementation of the Assessment E-portfolio as an alternative assessment tool to inform decisions regarding students' language ability development in 7th grade allowed evidence that in real life teachers consider just their own perception about students' progress. In this way, the assessment E-portfolio has an "added-value": it allows both the teachers and the students to have a general overview of the progress from the beginning of the course until the end. Consequently, teachers can have a wider information about the students' process and make more fair judgments not just with their own perception, but with the students'. Therefore, it is possible to affirm that E-portfolio could be a very pertinent assessment tool to inform the teacher when s/he must make decisions about students' language ability development.

Keeping in mind that the gap we identified: The teacher had little information to make informed decisions when assessing, and the students felt very comfortable with the traditional assessment; it is necessary to mention students are still in their comfort zone regarding the assessment methods, although most of the students recognized the importance of the E-portfolio, a part of them still prefer the use of assessment tools such as multiple-choice tests, matching exercises, etc.

Therefore, it is completely necessary to generate a significant impact on the school culture, because students are used to be assessed with traditional assessments (especially multiple-choice tests) and as we saw before, they prefer easy things, but if teachers

continue implementing alternative assessments tools there is a great possibility to make students aware of the importance of using these strategies and they can feel more motivated.

Taking into account that with the short intervention that was developed, most of the students recognized and accepted the importance, and advantages of the E-portfolio as an assessment tool; it is possible to affirm that there is a great possibility to achieve a cultural change if teachers continue implementing these kinds of strategies.

Finally, based on the students' perceptions about the teacher's judgment we can see that effectively, the information obtained by the teacher is accurate, complete and evidence of the students' development. Therefore, students' perceptions provide the teacher a sense of calm and security, because his/ her judgments are fair, transparent and valid. Seeing that the students agreed with the judgments made by the teacher, it could be said that there was complete and correct information to reach such conclusions.

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