

Teaching Portfolios at Ehime University : The process and the product

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Introduction

In tertiary education teaching portfolios have been used for a range of purposes (Buckridge, 2008; Smith & Tillema, 2003). They have been used to demonstrate the complexity of teaching and provide authentic evidence of reflection and teacher practice for credentialing in teacher education programs (Kurita, 2013; Loughran & Corrigan, 1995), used as evidence for promotion, and as a useful tool for personal development and reflection. In recent times, portfolios have been seen as an integral part of assessing the quality of tertiary teaching, which is the purpose of teaching portfolios (TP) at Ehime University.

In general, the teaching portfolio is a factual description of a teacher's major strengths and teaching achievements, and portrays the teacher's role as an individual, a professional, and a reflective practitioner (Darling 2001, Seldin, Miller & Seldin, 2010). The portfolio contains thoughtfully chosen teaching activities, supported by evidence to portray their effectiveness, and which collectively suggest the scope and quality of a teacher's teaching performance. The portfolio should also "speak(s) for you, strongly and explicitly" (Toll, 2010, p.113). Creation of a portfolio requires time and commitment from both the institution and the individual; however, the specific procedures and the effects of creating a teaching portfolio on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Japan has not been extensively researched. This study developed as an investigation to explore how the adoption and adaptation of the teaching portfolio creation process at Ehime University may have contributed to EFL teachers varied emotions, while creating a portfolio, and proposes a reinterpretation of key aspects of the teaching portfolio process and product to contribute to further development of professional teaching competence at Ehime

University or other institutions.

The Teaching Portfolio in Japan

The concept of the teaching portfolio was introduced in Japan in the 1990s but did not receive much attention from university administrators or faculty at that time for a number of reasons, including the paradox of hiring faculty to teach but rewarding them for research, and no practical description of how the implementation and management of the portfolio would be conducted (Kurita, 2013). From the 1990s, to improve the quality of education in Japan, the Council for Higher Education issued a number of amendments and reports, which required institutions to focus on accountability for their actions and outcomes (Kurita, 2013, p.76). In 2008, in response to the Council's mandate requiring a system for faculty development at tertiary institutions, the validity of the teaching portfolio (as a way of assessing the quality of teaching) was investigated. In order to do this and to develop a deeper understanding of the concepts, eight participants experienced creating a teaching portfolio in the original workshop style, in conjunction with Dr Seldin and Dr Miller, well-known advocates of the portfolio concept, acting as mentors. After an analysis of the creation of the teaching portfolios and the initial workshop, changes were made to better suit the Japanese context. The language for presentations, workshops and creation of the portfolio was changed from English to Japanese to reduce any language barriers, the workshop was shortened from 3.5 days to 2.5 days, the sessions for exchanging ideas with other participants were increased, a new program of portfolio presentation was established, and a program to support new mentors with training and support was implemented.

The portfolio process is still being refined in order to

meet the requirements of different institutions. At present the teaching portfolio as a form of faculty development has been implemented in more than 30 universities and institutions in Japan, including Ehime University, and more than 500 participants have created a portfolio in Japan. The portfolio implementation has also led to collaboration among institutions with teaching portfolio programs and also fosters collaboration with other universities who do not have in-house teaching portfolio programs but actively support their faculty attending existing programs (Kurita, 2014).

The Teaching Portfolio

The teaching portfolio (TP) is a narrative of approximately ten pages, followed by a series of tabbed appendix files that provide documentation for the claims made in the narrative. Typically the TP is divided into teaching responsibilities, teaching philosophy (including background), teaching objectives, strategies and methodologies, course syllabi, teaching materials, instructional innovations, classroom observations, evidence of student learning (usually interspersed throughout the document), efforts to improve teaching and future teaching goals. Generic lists of evidence include: student ratings of instruction, copies of course assignments, study guides, exams and reading lists, examples of participation in teaching improvement activities, and contributions to curriculum design and course development (Seldin, Miller & Seldin, 2010).

The Teaching Portfolio Process

Roles. There are specialized roles that are integral to the workshop. The facilitator (a member of the faculty development department) ensures the smooth running of the workshop, leads the general sessions, such as the orientation and final presentation, facilitates the mentor discussion sessions (where mentors convene to discuss their mentees' progress), supports the mentors and advises and consults on teaching portfolio creation guidelines. The mentors are selected based on their prior creation of a teaching portfolio and their purpose is to help and guide their mentees in the creation of their portfolios. They also give feedback to the mentees on drafts of their portfolios and act as an intermediary between the facilitators and the mentees. The participant/mentee is charged with creating a teaching

portfolio. At the completion of the TP creation process and review by the mentors and facilitators, the mentees will be awarded a certificate of completion.

Format. The structure of the TP creation process follows a standardized format (Figure 1). There is standardized documentation that is utilized by the facilitator, mentors and mentees, such as a preliminary worksheet for participants, mentor checklists where mentors can record questions and suggestions for mentees and suggested reading for participants before they begin the workshop, including *The Teaching Portfolio* (Seldin, Miller & Seldin, 2010) and (セルディン, 2007). General sessions that everyone participates in are conducted in one or two large classrooms, including the orientation, which begins with a short introduction of the TP, the aims of the workshop, some general guidelines and then self-introductions by mentors and participants. The large classrooms are used as working spaces for the participants who are organized at desks or tables in mentor pairs. Participants are randomly assigned to mentors and mentors do not usually mentor someone from the same faculty. Participant pairings are randomly assigned too, so participants in a mentor pairing are not from the same faculty and usually do not know each other. Mentors provide individual guidance

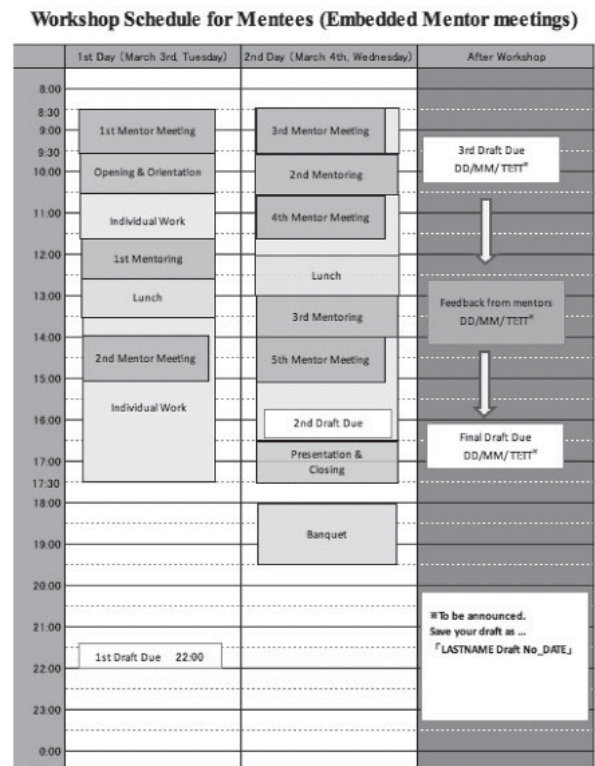


Figure 1: Teaching Portfolio Workshop Schedule for Workshop 1 held in March 2015

to their mentees and check on progress in mentor/mentee sessions in smaller designated meeting rooms or while mentees are creating their TP in the large room. Sharing lunch or dinner together enables participants to exchange ideas in an informal setting. Embedded in this schedule are mentor/facilitator meetings where mentors discuss their mentees with other mentors and the facilitator to track progress and maintain a certain level of consistency among the finished portfolios.

The TP at Ehime University

At Ehime University the TP program was established by the Office for Educational Planning and Research (OPAR) in August 2008 to evaluate teaching performance under the auspices of the Second Midterm Plan of National University Corporation Ehime University. To date 70 teachers representing all the departments (Education, Engineering, Law and Letters, Medicine, Agriculture) at Ehime University and faculty from other universities, have participated in the two-day or three-day workshops, which are conducted three times a year, with a maximum of 20 participants. Workshops are conducted in Japanese as the facilitators are Japanese and the majority of mentors and participants are Japanese. After completing the teaching portfolio participants are encouraged to complete their academic portfolio (AP), which focuses on research goals, and to date eight people have completed that process. For some departments at Ehime University, such as Faculty Development, completing the TP is a job requirement. It is also required for those teachers who are seeking tenure. For other staff it is suggested as a beneficial process but is not mandated. It is also a requirement for the employment of teaching staff. In recent years, a three-hour session about teaching philosophy development is held as the last activity of the two-day induction orientation for all new employees, to encourage them to think about their career development as they embark upon their new job. The participants are then invited to attend a full-length workshop sometime in their future careers. Under the auspices of the Shikoku Professional Organizational Development (SPOD) network, Ehime University collaborates with other universities by offering teachers from other universities a chance to attend the workshops. On completion of the TP, participants are awarded a certificate by SPOD.

The Study

In March 2015, as English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers at Ehime University voluntarily embarked upon creating a teaching portfolio within a 2-day teaching portfolio workshop (hereafter known as Workshop 1-WS1), they were perplexed at the range of emotions (anger, frustration, confusion, helplessness, guilt, exhaustion, ambivalence, accomplishment, elation and dejection) this process elicited. By an examination of the portfolio process at Ehime University the author of the study intended to discover the reasons and if possible, to suggest modifications to the process that would lead to a more successful implementation.

Background. Although the purpose of the TP at Ehime University is clearly summative within the career structure at the university, for those employees who are not part of the structure, the purpose may be seen differently. The English Education Center (EEC) at Ehime University is responsible for the General Education English classes that are designed to develop each student's practical ability to communicate in English. Prior to October 2014, the EEC consisted of full-time tenured professors and associate professors and part-time foreign language teachers. The part-time foreign language teachers taught twelve 90-minute classes a week, had shared offices, access to books and materials and two 90-minute sessions of professional development a semester. Due to a university policy change from October 2014, the foreign language teachers became full-time assistant professors but teaching continues to be the primary responsibility. After this change in status, the assistant professors requested a teaching portfolio workshop as a form of professional development (it has now become a mandatory job requirement). As assistant professors are on fixed term contracts (for a maximum of five years) and are not eligible to apply for tenure, the driving force behind the completion of the portfolio was to have documentation that could possibly help in future job searches (although participants had varying ideas about how useful the document would be in this regard), a desire for some kind of structured employee development, and a chance to improve teaching skills using a process of reflection. This view of the teaching portfolio having multiple uses with its blend of the formative (developmental) and summative (or evaluative) was, unknowingly, the beginning of disharmony.

Method. Five assistant professors, including the author of the present study, took part in WS1 held in March 2015 as participants/mentees (known as P1, P2, P3 and P4), with three tenured associate professors acting as mentors (known as M1, M2 and M3) and one mentor accepting the dual role as facilitator. Due to the differing Japanese proficiency of the assistant professors, the entire seminar was conducted in English, (including the translation of the preliminary worksheet, the schedule, the post-course questionnaire), the group sessions, the mentoring sessions and the final presentation. Feedback from the workshop facilitator was given to mentors in mostly Japanese but fed back to the participants in English. The preliminary worksheet was sent to participants a week before the workshop was held.

All participants and mentors agreed to be part of this study and after the completion of the workshop the participants and mentors were sent a questionnaire to act as prompts in semi-structured interviews. The questions were used as a guide to help participants and mentors reflect on what had occurred during the workshop and during the completion of the TP. The types of questions included general questions about the process and timings, more specific questions about expectations, suggestions, surprises, most beneficial aspects and feelings about the process. All the conversations were recorded and transcribed and in addition to participants' preliminary worksheets, completed questionnaires and completed portfolios, various themes emerged to form the basis of the study. To gain a deeper level of understanding and confirm conclusions from WS1, which had been held as a special workshop, the author attended a second workshop (WS2) held in

July 2015, as an observer, with the permission of the organizational staff and participants. WS2 was a two-day combined teaching portfolio/academic portfolio workshop. There were 20 participants (three of whom were doing their academic portfolios), seven mentors and two facilitators that were also mentors. All the general workshop meetings were conducted in Japanese and a high percentage of the mentor meetings. There were three non-Japanese participants so individual mentee/mentor meetings for them were conducted in English. The author observed the group sessions, the mentor/facilitator meetings and the mentor/mentee individual sessions for one mentee, and conducted a semi-structured interview with one participant. Some of the mentors consented to continuing their involvement in the study and by completing and returning a post-workshop questionnaire, in Japanese or English, the participants also consented to being part of the study. Participants and mentors that offered comments are named, 2P1, 2P2, 2P3, (and so on) and 2M1, 2M2 respectively. Of the five items on the questionnaire, one question asked what type of portfolio they created and another asked their reason for doing the portfolio. One item consisted of 4-point Likert scale statements (1 = Disagree - 4 = Agree) with two open response follow-up questions. The questionnaires (Japanese and English) were sent to the participants and twelve participants (*n*) responded (60% return rate), eight in Japanese and four in English. Questionnaires completed in Japanese were translated into English. Likert scale statements are tabulated in Table 1.

Findings. Although direct comparison of the workshops is not the aim of the study and different techniques were used to elicit responses from the participants, some

Table 1: Descriptive statistics and distribution of participant responses (*n* = 12).

Statement	Disagree			Agree	Mean	SD
	1	2	3	4		
I think doing the TP/AP was a good use of my time.	1	2	6	3	2.92	0.85
I would recommend the process to my colleagues.	1	1	7	3	3.00	0.85
I was prepared for the workshop.	0	2	8	2	3.00	0.60
My mentor really helped me a lot.	1	0	4	7	3.42	0.90
The process of creating a TP/AP was clear to me.	1	3	5	3	2.83	0.94
I would like to be a mentor in the future.	3	2	3	4	2.67	1.23
I think that creating the TP/AP will change how I do my job.	3	2	3	4	2.67	1.23
Doing the TP/AP will help me achieve my professional goals.	2	3	5	2	2.58	1.00
I learnt a lot about myself by creating a TP/AP.	1	2	5	4	3.00	0.95

There were two open response items:

Q4 "What had the biggest impact on you - creating a TP/AP or the TP/AP workshop?"

Q5 "What part of the process has been the most valuable to you? Why?"

(Note: Two respondents participated in the AP not TP but their comments are valid given that the creative process is the same.)

general comments can be made. Most participants from WS1 and WS2 thought that creating a TP or AP was a good use of their time, and they would recommend the process to a colleague and would consider being a mentor in the future. More than half WS2 participants thought that the TP or AP would help them achieve their professional goals whereas participants in WS1 were undecided. Participants in WS2 overwhelmingly agreed that they learnt a lot about themselves by creating a portfolio and their mentors helped them a lot. Ten participants also indicated that they were prepared for the workshop and the process of creating a TP/AP was clear to the majority. In contrast, the participants of WS1 were ambivalent about how much their mentors helped them, felt that they did not learn anything about themselves in the process and the majority stated that although they initially felt prepared for the workshop, they realized quickly that they were not and also thought that the process was very unclear. Half the participants from each workshop said that it would change how they did their jobs. After analyzing the rich data, a few themes emerged that provide information to explain these similarities and differences, the levels of emotion encountered by participants (WS1) involved in the process, including the differences between portfolio types, the importance of mentors and the impact of reflection. Modifications to the structure of the workshop and associated documents that could lead to a higher level of satisfaction and a reduction in frustration for the participants, at Ehime University, are also suggested.

Discussion

There are three main discussion points, portfolio types, the importance of mentors and reflection.

Portfolio Types

Smith and Tillema (2003) outline four different kinds of portfolios, among them the *dossier* portfolio which is a record of achievement or a collection of work which is needed for selection or promotional purposes and the *personal development* portfolio which is a personal evaluation and reflective account of professional growth over a period of time, reliant on opportunities for discussions with peers or colleagues as a means of building one's teaching identity. While it seems that the

dossier type portfolio is closest to the mandatory program at Ehime University, WS1 participants set about creating a multi-use portfolio. Buckridge (2008) contends that a portfolio used as a 'summative mechanism can become an end in itself and can actively limit progressive potential' (p. 117). The contention here is that creating a portfolio focusing on meaningful development to examine a teacher's growth process will include successes and failures which is not appropriate for institutional and managerial purposes (FitzPatrick & Spiller, 2010). By its nature a portfolio used for evaluation will only report achievements whereas the production of a developmental one may include rigorous exploration of the self as teacher (Leggett & Bunker, 2006). Creating a multi-purpose portfolio also led to uncertainty about the intended audience.

I finished my portfolio but its not really what I think, it's the one they (mentor/facilitators) wanted (2P9). It's difficult to know what to share with other mentors, in group discussions, the difference between private and public. What's the mentee's idea, is it a private portfolio, a personal thing? For me it was a public document, there's nothing I wouldn't share, but everyone's different (M2). It would be good to see other people's portfolios but I'm not sure other people would be comfortable. The TPs would be a good resource (P 3).

The importance of having a clear purpose for the TP is often not recognized at the outset of the TP process so a key role for mentors or facilitators would be to explore this issue in consultation with participants who may decide on creating one portfolio to achieve multiple purposes or create two portfolios, a career portfolio for institutional purposes and a second personal portfolio where key moments of learning are analyzed critically (FitzPatrick & Spiller, 2010).

The Importance of Mentors

As most faculty have no prior experience with the concept of creating a teaching portfolio (Seldin, Miller & Seldin, 2010), the role of the mentor is crucial in providing support and guidance during portfolio development to enable the participant/mentee to combine documents and materials into a cohesive portfolio. In creating a *dossier* type portfolio the feedback or metacognition may not be critical in contrast to the importance of feedback for a developmental

portfolio. Participants who had engaged in professional development programs previously had an expectation of external feedback, but were apprehensive about asking for it when their expectations were not met. Experiential knowledge of having created a teaching portfolio through the teaching portfolio workshop is the only formal criteria for mentor selection at Ehime University. Although in the case of WS1 as the participants had varying levels of Japanese ability, English proficiency was an additional criteria for mentor selection and also for the non-Japanese participants in WS2. This collaboration does not need to be discipline specific as the role of the mentor (as prescribed by Ehime University) is to ask questions about the content for readability issues and provide advice on formatting and mechanics. No specific training is given to mentors.

Support and guidance. In WS2, in answer to the open ended questions, eight out of the twelve respondents commented on their mentors help as being the biggest impact or most valuable part of the process. General comments such as ;

It was good to hear comments from my mentor (2P7), by talking to my mentor, I could recognize the ambiguous parts of my TP (2P2) and organize and clarify my ideas (2P3) and reflect on what I've done (2P4). I had been in touch with my mentor quite a lot before the workshop and they were very helpful answering my questions (2P1).

There were also more specific comments ;

My mentor helped me to look at things differently, it gave me a new point of view about what I find rewarding in my job (2P5).

The collaboration between mentor and mentee is usually inter-departmental and experienced program facilitators reason that this provides a number of benefits. A mentor from a different discipline may be able to provide the institution's view, the big picture and may be useful if the purpose of the portfolio is for tenure or promotion decisions and will be evaluated by faculty from other disciplines. Also, mentees may feel more comfortable expressing concerns and showing weaknesses, as well as asking questions of someone from another department (Boice, 1992, as cited in Lumpkin, 2011). Another positive element of this system is that professional jargon (e.g. TEFL – Teaching English as a Foreign Language) or accepted wisdom (e.g. the strongest predictors of students willingness to communicate are communication anxiety and perceived communication competence) that are used between

colleagues in the same discipline will need to be explained, and this leads to a more reader friendly portfolio.

On the first day of the workshop, when I was creating my own TP, I spent about four hours talking to my mentor about my philosophy and what I do. Making what I do understandable for my mentor made it easier to write about it succinctly (M2). When we (EFL teachers) talk about being 'comfortable' other people don't understand, does it mean the chairs are hard, the classroom is messy? For us it means being motivated or willing to speak so I was told I had to explain it more (P4).

In some cases, especially for less-experienced teachers, mentees may value a mentor's subject experience, more than a general mentoring role (Halai, 2006). Being mentored by someone from the same discipline, a subject specialist, may be able to guide teaching, research and service activities as well as providing assistance with other departmental issues such as discipline. Pre-existing relationships and friendships also proved advantageous although it has been shown that mentoring success depends less on personality matches than what mentees and mentors do together (Boyle & Boice, 1998).

I think it was an advantage knowing my mentee, we have a similar way of thinking and working, so I could be very direct with them and I think it saved time (M2). My mentees were experienced teachers so I didn't need to give them much advice, and it's easier because we know each other (M1). I think it helps knowing your mentor before you start this process so that you feel comfortable. My mentor was able to ask me questions that took me down a specific route for my portfolio because they know what I'm interested in (P4). The mentor should be more serious if they know each other (M3).

Role expectations. Perhaps due to the danger of their own beliefs and biases being reflected back on them (Darling, 2001) mentors usually only offer advice about general content, format and style of the portfolio. At times this led to a difference in expectations between what the mentee thought was the mentor's role and the mentor's action.

The TP is for mentees, we cannot give them strong advice, they have to discover it for themselves (M3). With the word mentor, it implies to me teaching, support and sort of helping growth ; a close sort of relationship so that's what I expected and I was a little disappointed. Had the word been guide, my expectations would have

been different (P2). I have to be careful about how to approach and give feedback to someone that is older than I am. (M1).

Future mentors. Mentors gave various reasons for becoming mentors; it was a committee requirement, in order to assist a colleague and also for continuing involvement and promotion of the teaching portfolio within the university. In response to the questionnaire completed by WS2 participants, only half of them said that they would like to be mentors in the future. While most participants in WS1 said they would like to be mentors, they also said that a good understanding of the TP process and some form of training would be necessary in order to help participants achieve the most from the process. There is no formal training given to mentors, (experiential knowledge in having created a portfolio is the only criteria for mentor selection) so mentors 'learn-by-doing'. Most of the mentor meetings are round table discussions outlining the progress of the mentees with the facilitator offering comments or advice on a particular concern (i. e. how to motivate a mentee to write more) with the majority of comments being on the format and style of the portfolio (e. g. the details should be moved to the appendix, more background should be added). Mentors said that these meetings were useful.

Each time I'm a mentor I learn different things that can help me explain or outline the process of creating a TP more easily to future mentees (2M1). It was really difficult for me to give advice to professors or teachers who are really researchers, who are not so concerned about teaching, so I just kept asking them 'why' (M1).

Although being a mentor was seen as more of a requirement rather than a voluntary effort, mentors talked about how much they learned from mentoring their mentees and participating in the group meetings and mentor/facilitator meetings. To take advantage of this perhaps the TP workshop could be used in a more formal way as a cyclical developmental tool for mentors. An opportunity exists for the expansion of the mentor role to include engaging in collaborative discussions, developing their subject knowledge and enhancing their pedagogical practices. With more training on how to help mentees reflect on their teaching and access to research databases, mentors may be able to assume a 'teaching' specialist role and also to use the time to engage in their own professional development which would enhance the quality of departmental and institution faculty.

Participants also acknowledged that they received a lot of help from other participants and colleagues.

Sharing it with my partner was very useful to see how we've approached it in slightly different ways (P2). It was good to get comparative advice from another participant or mentor (P4). It was good to talk with my partner (about the SAP chart) because then it helped me to see how unorganized I was (2P1).

Reflection

Although the purpose of the TP at Ehime University is not formative and portfolio construction will not automatically result in reflection (Orland-Barak, 2005), developing a portfolio for evaluative purposes can have a profound "beneficial and career-altering" (Pechone & Chung, 2006, p.31) impact on individuals. As previously discussed professional development was a goal for participants in WS1 but eight participants in WS 2 indicated that it was an opportunity for personal development and six participants also gave the reason of using the TP as a tool for reflection although it was not given as the sole reason.

Daily life is too busy, so having an intensive time to reflect was appreciated (2P3). Thanks to the mentor's feedback I could reflect on what has been accomplished (2P4).

The 'evidence of reflective practice' should not just have a "superficial discussion of having paused for thought from time to time, with no indication of analysis, no links to an underlying professional knowledge base and no hint of being able to draw out learning or new knowledge from the experience" (Thompson & Pascal, 2012, p.311). The most reflective teachers want feedback, to be able to learn from their learners, uncover difficulties, initiate various solutions, and focus on the dynamic life of the classroom (Willard-Holt & Bottomley, 2000). The participants made many comments about how creating the portfolio had encouraged reflection.

It wasn't a learning process but more a reflection of what you already know and what you already do, so maybe it helps you realize that you are not doing so much (P3). Helped me reflect on my teaching. I felt guilty about my past students (2P7). It has made me realize that I'm not a 'good' teacher (2P1).

Reflecting on our teaching practice can lead to: improved classroom interaction; awareness of practice;

awareness of the assumptions and values one brings to teaching; awareness of oneself as a learner; and collaboration with other teachers (Farrell, 2004). Some participants gave concrete examples of what reflection they engaged in and the actions they took.

The TP was difficult for me because I faced inconsistencies between what I'm doing in class, like giving a quiz at the beginning of each class, and my reasoning for doing that. There was a big gap. The most difficult thing is to look at what I'm doing and noticed it's really bad. I have to forgive myself. Doing the TP has changed the way I teach, I try to think about my responsibilities and how to teach the students more sincerely and seriously (M3).

However, participants in WS1 also acknowledged the difficulty between showing how their understanding of the teaching situation showcased their use of 'unofficial' theories, sometimes called 'theories-in-use', (Farrell, 2015), which are not part of the 'official' theories that may be taught in teacher education classes but are an important part of language education.

Just saying that my goal was to have fun lessons, so students can enjoy English, might not be seen as very professional, so I needed to add more examples (P1).

The participants said that when they wrote down their reflections, the process was more effective.

Writing the TP has almost been an action plan. I've got a lot of goals but it was also good to write them down and think about how to use student assistants, not only for support but also for the students to see what they can achieve within a few years (P4).

Black and Plowright (2010) also expressed similar findings about the importance of the written word, arguing that it enabled reflection to be realized in practice and led to making meaning from experiences that were potentially transformational. Participants in the study perceived that writing provided a structure and discipline for reflection. It provided permanence to their internal dialogue that could not be achieved without writing.

It took the TP to get them (all my ideas for short term and long term goals) written down and to actually think is this the direction I really want to go in? It's helped me organize my goals (P1). Good to have a chance to reflect to realize what was missing, philosophy was difficult but actually writing it down clarified ideas, it's a good method (2P6).

There were various levels of reflection, mostly of a

descriptive or dialogical nature but to make reflection transformational it should have a critical element to it (Hatton & Smith, 1995). How critical reflection is manifested in a summative TP often leads to focusing attention on success, rather than acknowledging the inevitability of failure and working to minimize its impact (Leggett & Bunker, 2006). It also shows the difficulty of using the same TP for a variety of purposes.

The feedback I got was don't focus on the negative, write about the positives, presenting a positive image of you and your teaching, but that's really not reflecting, it's showing off in a way (P4).

Although there is no set definition of reflection or reflective teaching that everyone agrees on, and there are many frameworks offered (Farrell, 2015; Larrivee, 2000) providing guidelines to help mentors and participants engage in critical reflection together, to improve their teaching while fulfilling the mandatory task of creating a summative portfolio may help to inform teacher development. (See Appendix 1 for a possible framework.)

Suggestions From Participants

From observation and detailed discussions with participants and mentors, adjustments to some of the TP processes may help to provide participants with a more rewarding professional and personal journey and reduce the frustration

Clear objectives. Define the purpose of the TP clearly to participants. If participants of WS1 had a clear idea of what the portfolio was and its intended purpose, their expectations of the process may have been different and the experience may have been less emotional. Also, make the objective and importance of the preliminary worksheet very clear so when the TP is held, participants can think about the difficult questions or sections (philosophy, methodology) before they get to the session. This will save a lot of time and ensure a quality product can be produced in the time allocated.

I took 5 hours to fill in the preliminary worksheet because the teaching philosophy was quite difficult to put into words, but it was worthwhile. I knew what was coming up (TP workshop) so I did bits of the worksheet that I knew would be helpful, so creating the 1st draft saved me a lot of time (P3). I spent about two hours and used about 70% of my worksheet in the first draft and the most useful things were the specific things about my teaching

(P2). *It was useful because it served as a template for the full version of the TP, I have to admit I got help on it because originally I wrote a few points and then (my colleague) showed me ten pages, and I thought I'd better pull my socks up. A good example of a completed worksheet would be useful (P4). When the worksheet is sent out to participants they can think about their ideas of teaching so we don't start from zero. People from other departments are not motivated to fill in the preliminary worksheet, they don't want to spend time on it but you can easily see the progress they make from the worksheet to the 1st draft. In WS1 the starting point (preliminary worksheet) was so high so the gap wasn't big, everyone was really motivated (M3).*

Document template. Prepare and send all participants a file already set up with margins, headings, and perhaps, fonts, so that the time outlining cosmetic or mechanical changes can be reduced.

The feedback on my 1st draft was more about the style.

The font size was wrong and it had to be ten pages so I thought by making the font smaller I could do that because you can't change the borders, that was annoying (P3).

Collection of evidence. Types of evidence to include in a summative portfolio may seem relatively straightforward but participants from both workshops needed more guidance with the kinds of evidence that can lead to a more effective portfolio.

The list in the preliminary worksheet gave me a vague idea about what to bring, but I wished I'd known about it before the end of semester, I've thrown a lot of things away (P2). How can I best present the evidence and what is good evidence (2P8)? If you want to include something in the TP you have to have the evidence to show it (M1). I don't have much evidence because I've just started teaching here but doing the portfolio has given me an idea of what to collect from next semester (P1).

Completed portfolios. Have copies of completed TPs for participants to look at to get a better idea than the book (Seldin, Miller & Seldin, 2010) or looking on the Internet. (After the first workshop in English is held, this may be a moot point). Although there could be some disadvantages, as participants noted.

Seeing a completed one, an idea of how we set it out would be helpful (P1). It was (more) useful to look at someone who does exactly the same job, although that's not a good idea in some ways, it restricts your thinking,

it saves time, but maybe it reduces creativity (P3). After I saw TPs created by other English teachers, I knew what to do. So, that really helped me, but I just used them as a guide (2P1). Seeing an example of an AP was good (2P3). When I did my TP all the mentors bought their own TPs and put them at the back of the room, which was really great (M1).

Tailoring the workshop. The workshop may need tailoring to meet the needs of the participants. In WS1, all participants knew each other so some parts of the usual introductory session were excluded, like the self-introductions. However, other parts, relating to the aim of the workshop (translation of the Orientation session PowerPoint slides) would have provided a framework for participants. In addition, many participants of WS1 did not see the aim of the final presentation session whereas participants in WS2 enjoyed seeing everyone's PowerPoint slide.

I would like more of a goal for what we are aiming for overall. A little bit more verbal interaction in the first session, to have everyone on the same page (P2). I didn't feel I knew what was happening until it all came together at the end (P1). I was confused in the first session. I didn't know why we were doing it (Strategic Academic Portfolio (SAP) chart). Did it go into the portfolio? I didn't realize that the SAP chart was a brainstorm (P2). Initially I was skeptical, there were problems with the size of the charts, the size of the posts, but it was one of the first times they'd done it in English (P3). The whole process, the worksheet didn't give us an idea of what we were going to do and the SAP chart was really overwhelming because we were just filling in small sections as we went (P1). I refer to the SAP chart more than my TP because I want to do my AP. It helps me to visualize what I want to do next (M3). Even though I understood what was said during the orientation session (conducted in Japanese) to ease my nervousness, I think an English version would have helped (2P1). The final presentation didn't motivate me to get onto my next draft, it was a way to end the seminar (P2). We weren't told what the purpose of the presentation is, to show that we had gone through the process (P3)? It was good to see what other teachers in different fields do in their classroom (2P1).

Staging. There seemed to be a 'staging' of some parts of the process and this seemed to frustrate participants. If this is part of the learning process, the reasoning for this methodology should be explained to the participants.

Previous participants always say that they don't have an overview of what the TP is, so they are frustrated at the workshop. It's meant to be vague, too much definition or rigidity will make the TPs boring (M3). The background seemed to be a key component that led to my philosophy, I wish I had known about that. I would have spent time thinking about it (P2).

Appraisal criteria. The nature of portfolio appraisal criteria should be explicitly stated and transparent (Tillema & Smith, 2007). Most participants of WS1 stated that they were proud of the work they had done in creating their teaching portfolios and were 'hoping' they would be good enough (although one person did express a lack of confidence in the adequacy of the final product). The participants did not have a clear idea of how the portfolios would be evaluated by mentors or facilitators. After the portfolios were returned there was no information about if the portfolios were evaluated or how they were evaluated. This seemed to perpetuate the feeling that the main point of the process was to get the TP finished and that the finished product was the goal rather than the quality of the TP. This is a valid concern given that at the first mentor meeting, the facilitator and mentors discuss the possible completion rates and possible tactics that could be used for compliance rather than quality assurance targets. In recent staff appraisal meetings, the assistant professors have used them in the meeting to highlight specific initiatives, but perhaps because they are written in English, a cursory glance and a comment about the length of the portfolio have been the only feedback. Evidence should also be well integrated or related to the competencies specified in the curriculum as other studies evaluating the use of dossier type portfolios have suggested that the portfolios "would not stand up to a critical test" (Smith & Tillema, 2003, p.638).

After creating a TP do the creators do anything differently, does anything filter down to the students as a direct result of the TP? It's hard to measure (M1).

Value of the portfolio

The role of the teaching portfolio has an accepted value at Ehime University and other institutions in Japan that have implemented a structured teaching portfolio program. In addition to traditional job application information such as resumes and recent publications, some institutions are requesting a copy of a teacher's

portfolio, but the value of these portfolios is determined institutionally.

The first time I did the teaching portfolio, I did it because it was a job requirement at Ehime University. I got a book and I did it seriously, it was like a research paper. I think that's why I might have been successful in getting the job. The second time I did it, it was a more personal journey and I could do it more honestly (M1). The book (Seldin, Miller & Seldin, 2010) makes you think that a teaching portfolio will help you with career development and maybe if it (the teaching portfolio program) was more prevalent in Japan it would help. Even a Japanese teacher did it but their university doesn't value it, so it was a waste of time. I took it to a job interview I had recently and talked about it for a few minutes until the interviewing panel said they weren't interested in it, so I felt very sorry for wasting their time. For foreign staff at Ehime University there is no chance of promotion so completing the process for that reason is a waste of time (M2). I wonder how much it's valued outside Ehime University and also within the University, because it's in English (P4). The TP gives me a coherent sense of myself as a teacher and what I'm offering an employer and in that sense it will help me get a job. Telling a future employer that I have a TP and would you like to have a look at it, won't have the slightest effect (P2).

Limitations and Conclusion

Only a longitudinal study will be able to determine whether the purposes of the portfolios have been met; to help secure future employment, become tenured or assist with professional development. This was not a rigorous study or the comparison of two workshops, it was intended to be an initial exploration of how the teaching portfolio is carried out in one institution with a view to understanding the complex feelings it created in the process and how these and other aspects of the creation of a teaching portfolio could be managed to increase teaching competence through partnerships with mentors or colleagues and critical reflection. Future studies should involve collaboration with someone with native-like Japanese ability, in order to access all the documentation involved in the process as well as reviewing the documentation that has been collected at Ehime University since the beginning of the teaching portfolio program.

The future implementation of TP workshops may benefit from a consideration of other kinds of platforms that may be able to meet different learner styles, such as an online version of the TP to be completed with weekly feedback sessions to check progress. Other changes to the existing format to include more collaborative work, more professional development in the areas of reflection, long-term goal achievement, characteristics of inspiring/motivating teachers and exploration of teacher identity, in addition to the suggested changes outlined earlier could be beneficial. Together with the teaching portfolio workshop they may be able to help novice teachers and also mid-career teachers create a portfolio that meets institutional needs but also showcases who they are as a teacher now and outlines their goals for the future.

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Appendix 1: Levels of reflection and support

Levels of reflection	Techniques for supporting reflection
<p>R0 Description: Revisiting Description or statement about events without further elaboration or explanation. Not reflective.</p>	<p>Supporting R0: Revisiting Often the foundation on which later reflection is based. Writing or journaling for reflection, or using technology in the form of electronic journaling, records that can easily be searched. Online discussion forums, video taping of classes, recording of students' group discussions.</p>
<p>R1 Reflective Description: Revisiting with Explanation Description including justification or reasons for action or interpretation, but in a reportive or descriptive way. No alternate explanations explored, limited analysis and no change of perspective.</p>	<p>Supporting R1: Prompting Explanation Standard technique for encouraging more reflection is the asking of reflective questions, providing prompts to encourage reflection. Provide skeleton structures that encourage organization of knowledge into nodes of information to analyze. The presence of another person is also beneficial in encouraging the giving of justifications or explanations.</p>
<p>R2 Dialogic Reflection: Exploring Relationships A different level of thinking. Looking for relationships between pieces of experience or knowledge, evidence of cycles of interpreting and questioning, consideration of different explanations, hypothesis and other points of view.</p>	<p>Supporting R2: Seeing More Encouraged through the use of techniques that can enable the 'seeing of things from multiple perspectives'. Producing a record of events that can be looked at again or a recording that can provide time to focus attention on different aspects of the experience on each return. Gain a different perspective by keeping a teaching log, detailing other factors like mood, temperature, and cyclical occurrences. Alternative perspectives can be provided by another person, via peer-observation or sharing and comparing different experiences to generate alternative explanations or hypotheses or to the questioning of knowledge/events.</p>
<p>R3 Transformative Reflection: Fundamental Change Revisiting an event or knowledge with intent to re-organize and/or do something differently. Asking of fundamental questions and challenging personal assumptions leading to a change in practice or understanding. Teacher beliefs are self-generating, and often unchallenged (Larrivee, 2000) because teaching is an isolated and unique experience that occurs in the classroom.</p>	<p>Supporting R3 & 4: Transformation Seeing from multiple perspectives can also lead to a challenging of original assumptions or interpretations of data as reflectors question and consider alternative explanations and may allow for a greater range of possible choices and responses to classroom situations (Gunn, 2010).</p>
<p>R4 Critical Reflection: Wider Implications Where social and ethical issues are taken into consideration. Generally considering the (much wider) picture.</p>	

Note: Adapted from "Reflecting on reflection: Framing a design landscape" by R. Fleck & G. Fitzpatrick (2010). *OZCHI 2010 Proceedings*, November 22-26, 216-223.