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University-Level Students' Perceptions of Using the Portfolio Assessment Method for Japanese Learning

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ABSTRACT

Portfolio assessment method (PAM) is essential to language learning as an assessment method, but very easy to overlook where paper-based tests are the main assessment tool, and the PAM can be more complex to assess learning than paper-based test. The present study explored the application and effect of the portfolio assessment method (PAM) on Japanese-learning students (JLS) by means of an extensive literature review and survey among JLS. Past studies have shown that portfolio assessments (PAs) can dynamically evaluate the learning progress of students and promote self-regulated learning and self-reflection. The qualitative research methodology as survey was used. Data was collected from 132 JLS from university A in China. Meanwhile, SPSS 24.0 was used to analysis the data. The results revealed that most of the students supported the combination of the PAM with traditional written tests as a form of assessment, thus indicating their high acceptance of this new mode of assessment. In addition, gender differences had no significant effect on the applicability of the PAM, indicating that it was widely applicable among students of different genders. In short, the PAM plays a significant role in promoting students' knowledge development, identifying learning strengths and weaknesses, improving learning methods, and recording personal learning feelings, and has an important educational practice value.

Keywords: Portfolio Assessment; Japanese Language Courses; Higher Education Research; Non-Native Japanese Learners

1. Study Background

The portfolio assessment method (PAM) originated in the 1980s and was first used in the field of art education to promote the autonomous learning and self-reflection of students by collecting and displaying their learning processes and results[1]. Against the backdrop of education reform, this method has been gradually introduced into language teaching, especially in Japanese teaching, to show its unique value and advantages. With the deepening reform of Japanese major education curriculum in Chinese universities, the new curriculum standard attaches great importance to teaching evaluation, which brings new thinking and inspiration to the subject of improving the independent learning ability of Japanese-learning students (JLS). The Japanese teaching process places more emphasis on the cultivation of application-oriented talents. On the other hand, in traditional evaluation methods, the emphasis is on the passive acceptance by students of the knowledge transmitted by teachers. In addition, the entire student learning process lacks monitoring, and the learning results of students cannot be fully and objectively demonstrated. These are not conducive to the cultivation and improvement of the independent learning ability of students and the development of an inquiring spirit[2]. The PAM makes up for the shortcomings of traditional evaluation methods, improves on them, and is conducive to encouraging students to learn Japanese more efficiently. Therefore, the PAM has been introduced as an effective solution as this method emphasises a dynamic evaluation of processes and encourages students to self-monitor and reflect in learning, so as to improve their autonomous learning ability. The PAM is a novel evaluation and analysis method for students that conforms to the concept of an evaluation of student development put forward against the backdrop of a new curriculum reform. This evaluation method makes an overall evaluation of the progress, effort level, analytical ability, and final development level of students, which play an important role and value in promoting the all-round development of students. The PAM is an instrument for carrying out this type of evaluation. It is mainly used to collect and record the relevant materials of students and the teachers' evaluation of students, which are then collated to evaluate the students' learning progress[3]. The PAM is different from previous student evaluation methods. It changes the evaluation of the learning status and learning ability of students by quantitative scores such as a monthly summary and grade examination, and only focuses on the results, ignoring the evaluation criteria of the students' learning and growth process. By changing the former teacher-oriented final evaluation method, students have the opportunity to participate in the learning process and evaluation activities, stimulate their interest in learning Japanese, and enhance the cultivation of their independent learning ability[4]. According to Zhang[5], the PAM is conducive to students' mastery of mathematical knowledge and skills, improvement of their problem-solving ability, and good cultivation of their emotional attitude and other non-intellectual factors. It is helpful for the continuous improvement of students' self-knowledge, self-evaluation, self-motivation, and other self-education abilities.

As Goldsmith[6] puts it, "*For students, compiling a portfolio provides the opportunity to connect their work in individual courses to the institutional outcomes.*" Students have described their ability to understand these connections as well as the connections between their own lives and their academic work. Rouhani et al.[7] found that portfolio assessments (PAs) can increase learning benefits and reduce the possibility or need for cheating and contributes to increased learning outcomes. However, this form of assessment requires a significant effort from teachers and consumes both time and resources.

Yu[8] pointed out that the PAM can emphasise the processes rather than the results through the dynamic evaluation of students' learning to meet the needs of education reform and effectively improve the self-regulated learning ability of students. Yu[9] also mentioned that this method enables students to clarify their learning goals, change their learning attitudes, and shift from passive learning to active learning, thereby enhancing their self-confidence and interest in learning. In addition, the GLAP provides a multi-faceted assessment framework that can incorporate different learning outcomes and experiences to promote the holistic development of students in language learning. Yang[10] emphasised that the implementation of the PAM consists of four links, namely, design, content collection, evaluation methods, and continuous improvement, and that this systematic process provides clear guidance for teachers and students to ensure the validity and reliability of the evaluation. In summary, the application of the PAM Japanese language teaching not only provides a platform for students to showcase themselves

and reflect, but also effectively promotes the improvement of their independent learning ability, which is in line with the current trend and needs of education development. An in-depth study of this method will help to further promote the reform and innovation of Japanese language teaching.

Yu[8] analysed the results obtained from questionnaires distributed to 153 JLS, namely, 2023 freshmen and 2022 sophomores, and found that many problems were prevalent in the evaluation of the teaching of Japanese courses in colleges and universities. Firstly, 85.6% of the students pointed out that the evaluation mainly relied on traditional paper-and-pencil tests, and there was no evaluation of the process, resulting in a failure to truly reflect their language application ability. Secondly, 88.2% of the students reported that the evaluation subject was single, mainly led by teachers, and there was a lack of self-evaluation and peer evaluation, which limited the participation of students. Thirdly, 91.5% of the students felt that the assessment content was too focused on the written tests, neglected oral and practical application skills, and lacked a personalised analysis. Finally, 77.8% of the students said that there was insufficient feedback, unclear evaluation criteria, and lack of interaction, which affected the learning effect. On the whole, these problems seriously restricted the students' learning enthusiasm and autonomy.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Framework

The PAM is a process-based assessment method whose core concept is to promote the self-regulated learning ability of learners by recording and reflecting on the learning process and outcomes of students. According to Zheng[11], PAs can continuously record the learning process of students, help them to demonstrate learning results, and improve learning methods. In this way, they not only emphasise the active participation of students, but also provide an important basis for students' reflection.

On the basis of the theory of self-regulated learning, the growth bag evaluation method is closely related to the constructivist learning theory. Constructivism emphasises the active construction of knowledge by learners in the learning process, and students are better able to understand and grasp what they have learned through reflection and self-assessment[12]. Dong[13] pointed out that the reflection part of the PAM can promote the improvement of students' language ability, enhance their self-regulated learning ability, and develop their critical thinking ability, in line with the core concept of constructivism. Through the growth bag assessment method, students are not only able to grasp knowledge but also develop critical thinking and self-regulation skills to achieve higher learning results in the process of self-regulated learning. In addition, Xu[14] emphasised the implementation process of the PAM, including the formulation of learning objectives, the determination of evaluation criteria, and the collection of content. This series of steps constructs the theoretical framework of the growth bag evaluation method, which can effectively support students' self-regulated learning. Under this framework, students are not only recipients of knowledge, but also participants and reflectors of the learning process to promote the improvement of their self-regulated learning ability. In conclusion, the theoretical framework of the growth bag evaluation method not only includes its basic concepts and implementation steps, but also closely integrates with the relevant theories of self-regulated learning, providing new perspectives and methods for Japanese language teaching. Through an effective assessment of the growth portfolio, students can continuously reflect and improve on the learning process, thereby enhancing their learning ability and self-confidence.

2.2. Applying the Portfolio Assessment Method (PAM) in Teaching

The implementation of the PAM in teaching can be divided into several key steps: goal setting, content collection, and evaluation criteria setting.

2.2.1. Goal Setting

In Japanese language teaching, the first step in implementing the growth bag evaluation method is to clarify the teaching objectives. Goals should be set in conjunction with the development of the students' language skills, usually including developing their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills, and enhancing their self-regulated learning and reflection skills. Yang[10] pointed out that PAs can promote students' self-monitoring and adjustment of the learning process through the setting of dynamic teaching goals.

2.2.2. Content Collection

Content collection is the core part of the implementation of the growth bag evaluation method. Students need to actively collect various materials related to language learning during the learning process. These materials include class notes, assignments, test scores, learning reflections, language practice notes, and more. Wang[15] mentioned that through Moodle™, students can easily organise and store their learning materials, thus forming a complete learning portfolio. This approach not only enhances their sense of engagement but also promotes positive reflection on their learning process.

2.2.3. Assessment Criteria

Finally, the development of evaluation criteria is the key to ensuring the effectiveness of PAs. The evaluation criteria should be clear and operational, and usually include evaluations of both the learning process and outcomes. Zhang[16] emphasised that the evaluation criteria should not only focus on the final outcomes of students but also pay attention to their efforts and progress in the learning process. By taking into account various aspects of the students' performance, teachers can have a more comprehensive understanding of their students' learning status so as to provide a basis for subsequent teaching adjustments. In summary, the implementation of the growth bag evaluation method in Japanese language teaching includes goal setting, content collection, and an evaluation of standard formulations, and through the effective combination of these links, it can provide good support and guidance for students' independent learning.

2.3. Effects of the Portfolio Assessment Method (PAM) on Self-Regulated Learning

In the implementation of the PAM, the students' reflection plays an important role, and this process has a significant impact on the improvement of self-regulated learning. Ang et al.[17] conducted a study with JLS using a questionnaire and interviews. The study found that learning awareness comes about through a combination of: documentation/evidence, self-monitoring/reflection, and collaboration/mentoring in developing the learning portfolio.

Dong[13] found that students can clearly understand their own learning status through reflection, thereby promoting the improvement of their language ability and enhance-

ment of their self-regulated learning ability. This process of reflection is not a one-way street, but a cyclical process, and the depth and quality of reflection directly affect the students' learning outcomes. Xu et al.[18] also pointed out that the JF Education Standards provide a self-evaluation framework that allows students to conduct a more systematic self-reflection when assessing their portfolios. This reflection not only helps them to clarify their own learning goals but also to enhance their self-regulated learning, enabling them to proactively adapt their learning strategies to different learning needs. Zhang[16] further confirmed the importance of reflection, and found that students' attitudes towards growth bags have undergone a process from rejection to acceptance and then, to recognition, which is closely related to their ability to reflect. Through the reflection process, students are able to identify difficulties and challenges in learning, thus stimulating their motivation and self-regulated learning.

In the same vein, Li[19] conducted a study to investigate the perceptions of Chinese learners of English as a foreign language (EFL) concerning their experience with a portfolio-based writing assessment. The findings indicated that PAs can be used to promote self-regulation in the learning of EFL writing.

In this regard, Liu et al.[20] discussed the use of a PAM design based on the Can-do concept in Japanese language teaching that emphasises the importance of reflection in self-regulated learning. They believe that reflection enables students to better understand the learning content and conduct effective self-evaluation on this basis, thereby improving their comprehensive use of language and self-regulated learning ability.

2.4. Effect of the Portfolio Assessment Method (PAM) on Foreign Language Learning Performance

In the literature review, it was found that the PAM was frequently studied in the use of EFL in a variety of foreign language achievement assessments. For instance, Yang[21] investigated the perceptions of university students on the use of PAs in the process of learning to write in English and the way it affected their writing performance. The merits of the PAM in terms of learning processes and outcomes far outweighed its demerits.

Farahian et al.[22] investigated the impact of PAs on the

metacognition and writing performance of EFL learners. The results indicated that PAs significantly contribute to empowering both the metacognition and writing proficiency of EFL learners. As to the learners' attitudes towards EFL writing assessments, it was generally revealed that PA students have a positive view of formative assessments and teacher/peer feedback.

Omarakly et al. [23] conducted an investigation to determine whether the integration of the PAM as part of the assessment practices in the Moroccan EFL context had a significant impact on the writing skills of students. The results of the study showed that the PA group outperformed the control group in overall writing achievement as well as in the level of various writing sub-skills.

2.5. Perceptions on Implementing the Portfolio Assessment Method (PAM)

Namaziandosti et al. [24] conducted a longitudinal study by collecting data from students enrolled in the Iranian Language Institute (ILI) from 2013 to 2017. Their findings showed that e-portfolios were used to record a wide range of learning activities, including travel journaling, storytelling, writing exercises, film criticism and personal journals. Moreover, Yang [21] surveyed Korean university students on their views on the e-portfolios, which offer a comprehensive view of their learning experience in a flexible environment and allow them to reflect on personal progress through exchange of ideas and feedback. The interviews showed that students felt more responsible for their learning, learned valuable strategies and improved their essay writing skills through the PA experience. In this regard, Farahian et al. [22] investigated the impact of PA on the metacognition and writing performance of EFL learners. In general, students had positive attitude about the formative assessment and teacher and peer feedback in the context of the PA, as shown by Omarakly et al. [23] examined whether the inclusion of PAs in the Moroccan EFL assessment had a significant impact on the students' writing skills. Despite some reservations, the majority of students had a very positive perception of PAs, Yang [21] also examined the perception of the use of PAs by students in English writing. The advantages outweighed the disadvantages, as the payment assistance programme improved learning processes and outcomes. Students found that they took more

responsibility for their learning, that they discovered valuable strategies, and that they improved the organization of their essays. However, some students found the process of building up portfolios to be too time-consuming. Li [19] examined the perception of the Chinese EFL learners of their experience with the assessment of their writing based on a portfolio. The findings showed that the students in the showcase group were less enthusiastic about the effectiveness of the PA and questioned whether it could support autonomy in writing, while the working group was more open to the experience and thought that the feedback-rich environment of the working portfolio system could make it easier to improve writing. On the contrary, those in the Working Portfolio Group were more open-minded and considered that a rich feedback environment made it easier to improve writing. Zhang [25] reported that while the majority of students viewed the PAs positively, some lacked confidence in their effectiveness and believed that teachers had negative perceptions of them and doubted their democratic nature. Li [26] observed a similar trend in the mathematics PA; although the majority of students thought that the mathematics PA should be introduced, 17.7 percent remained neutral and 25.5 percent considered it not to be necessary. Zhang [27] noted that there is a gender gap in academic achievement, with boys excelling in STEM subjects and girls in languages and literature. This difference may affect the choice of content and the evaluation of performance of the PA. Girls tend to prefer collaborative and interactive learning methods, which gives them an advantage in reflective assessments. For example, Yang [28] found that girls were more likely to score higher than boys on reflective assessment skills in the PAs for language literacy. Studies also show that girls are more receptive to and use PAs to demonstrate learning outcomes. Yao [29] also noted that girls show greater motivation and commitment to participate in the PAs. Conversely, some pupils may have a negative attitude towards PAs, finding them burdensome or burdensome, which may affect their participation and effectiveness. A review of the literature shows that PAs have a significant impact on language learning, especially in the context of EFL. The aim of this study is to examine the perception of Japanese language learners (JLS) when using PAs in their Japanese studies. The framework of the study, as shown in **Figure 1**.
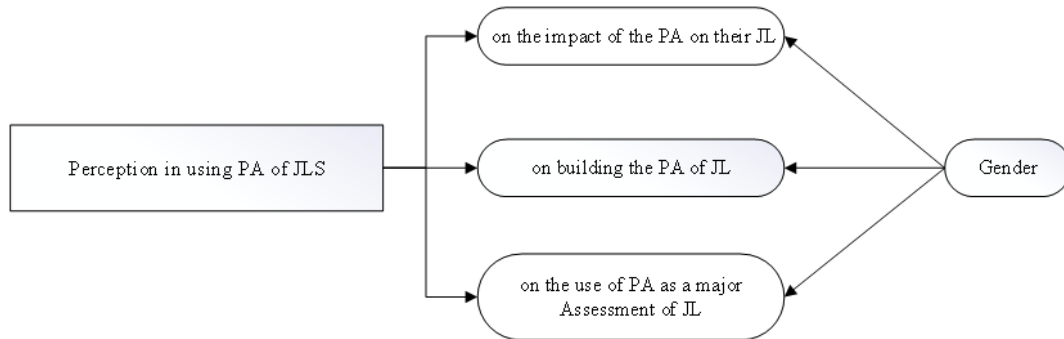
Figure 1. The framework of the present study.

3. Research

3.1. Research Questions

RQ1. What are JLS' perceptions of the impacts of PAs on their Japanese learning?

RQ2. What are JLS' perceptions of the impacts of portfolio-building on their Japanese learning?

RQ3. What are JLS' perceptions of the impacts of using PAs as a tool to assess their Japanese learning?

RQ4. What are JLS' perceptions of the usability of PAs?

RQ5. Is there a significant difference between JLS' perceptions of PAs in terms of gender?

3.2. Research Methodology

A questionnaire designed by Ashcroft et al. [30] was used to assess JLS' perceptions of PAs. The questionnaire was divided into two parts: (1) participant information, including gender and grade; (2) students' perceptions towards the use of PAs, which was comprised of 14 items divided into three parts: (1) five items, (2) five items, and (3) four items. IBM® SPSS® 22 was used to analyse the data, while descriptive statistics were used to analyse the JLS' perceptions on the use of PAs. The participants were 132 university-level JLS from a university in China.

Before the questionnaire was administered, all potential participants were provided with a detailed information sheet outlining the purpose of the study, the procedures, the potential benefits and risks, as well as their rights. The list emphasized voluntary participation and guaranteed the confidentiality of the replies for the purpose of research only. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before their participation and documented in the signed consent form. Only those who gave their consent were sampled. Participants were recruited through a random sample of students with the help of Japanese language teachers at universities. Researchers explained the study in classrooms, distributed information sheets and consent forms, and encouraged students to take part.

3.3. Reliability

The Cronbach's alpha of the questionnaire ranged from 0.715–0.935, which corresponded to an acceptance range of 0.60–0.7 [31]. The results showed that the questionnaire had good internal consistency and reliability. Therefore, this verified that the questionnaire can be further used in future research on this topic.

3.4. Results

Regarding the impact of PAs on learning as displayed in **Table 1**, 74.2% of the participants agreed that completing a portfolio was an effective method for developing their knowledge, while 5.3% disagreed, and 20.5% were uncertain. In terms of identifying strengths and weaknesses, 79.6% agreed that the PAM allowed them to do so, 5.3% disagreed, and 15.2% were uncertain. When it came to modifying their approach to learning, 79.6% agreed that the PAM provided opportunities for this, 3.8% disagreed, and 16.7% were neutral. As for documenting personal feelings about learning, 78.8% agreed that the PAM was a useful means of doing so, 3.8% disagreed, and 17.4% were neutral. Concerning the form of learning being undirected and too woolly, 31.1% agreed, 27.7% disagreed, and 49.2% were neutral.

Table 1. The JLS' perceptions on the impact of PA on their learning.

Variables	Strongly Disagree(%)	Disagree(%)	Uncertain(%)	Agree(%)	Strongly Agree(%)
Q4	2(1.5)	5(3.8)	27(20.5)	87(65.9)	11(8.3)
Q5	3(2.3)	4(3.0)	20(15.2)	90(68.2)	15(11.4)
Q6	2(1.5)	3(2.3)	22(16.7)	93(70.5)	12(9.1)
Q7	2(1.5)	3(2.3)	23(17.4)	87(65.9)	17(12.9)
Q8	1(0.8)	25(18.9)	65(49.2)	33(25)	8(6.1)

Table 2 indicates that 83.3% of the participants agreed that portfolio-building was a useful learning experience, while 3% disagreed, and 13.6% were neutral. Regarding the sense of achievement, 69.7% agreed that portfolio-building provided them with a sense of achievement, whereas 6% disagreed, and 24.2% were neutral. In terms of interest in further information, 78.1% expressed that they would like to know more about portfolio-building, while 3.8% disagreed, and 18.2% were neutral. When it came to the development of organisational skills, 70.5% agreed that portfolio-building helped them, with 6.8% disagreeing, and 22.7% being neutral. Lastly, 47% agreed that portfolio-building involved too much paperwork, 7.6% disagreed, and 45.5% were neutral.

Table 2. The JLS' perceptions on portfolio-building.

Variables	Strongly Disagree(%)	Disagree(%)	Uncertain(%)	Agree(%)	Strongly Agree(%)
Q9	2(1.5)	2(1.5)	18(13.6)	98(74.2)	12(9.1)
Q10	2(1.5)	6(4.5)	32(24.2)	75(56.8)	17(12.9)
Q11	2(1.5)	3(2.3)	24(18.2)	88(66.7)	15(11.4)
Q12	2(1.5)	7(5.3)	30(22.7)	83(62.9)	10(7.6)
Q13	1(0.8)	9(6.8)	60(45.5)	53(40.2)	9(6.8)

Overall, the majority of the students found portfolio-building to be a valuable and engaging learning experience that contributed to their sense of achievement and organisational skills, and many expressed an interest in learning more about it. However, there was a significant portion of students who felt it involved excessive paperwork.

Table 3 indicates that a significant portion of the students (31.8%) agreed that using a conventional written examination was preferable to completing a portfolio, while 28.8% disagreed. A notable 39.4% were neutral on this matter. The majority of the students (72%) agreed that combining a written examination with the completion of a portfolio was an effective method for assessing learning and knowledge about prescribing. Only 6.8% disagreed and 21.2% were neutral. Regarding a portfolio for professional development, a large majority (78.8%) of the students agreed that using a portfolio was a good means of documenting their continuous professional development. A small percentage (7.6%) did not agree and 13.6% were neutral. Moreover, a substantial majority (75%) of the students agreed that the use of a portfolio was a good tool for judging graduate clinical competences. Only 6.1% disagreed and 18.9% were neutral.

Table 3. The JLS' perceptions on PAs as an assessment tool.

Variables	Strongly Disagree(%)	Disagree(%)	Uncertain(%)	Agree(%)	Strongly Agree(%)
Q14	8(6.1)	30(22.7)	52(39.4)	35(26.5)	7(5.3)
Q15	4(3.0)	5(3.8)	28(21.2)	86(65.2)	9(6.8)
Q16	3(2.3)	7(5.3)	18(13.6)	93(70.5)	11(8.3)
Q17	3(2.3)	5(3.8)	25(18.9)	89(67.4)	10(7.6)

The primary finding from the student responses was that there was a clear preference for the combination of a written examination and PA as an effective assessment method. Additionally, a significant majority of the students agreed to the use of a portfolio for documenting professional development and for judging graduate competences. This

indicated a general acceptance and perceived value of PA in the educational process, despite a notable portion of the students being neutral or disagreeing with certain aspects, such as the preference for a conventional written examination over PAs.

As seen in **Table 4**, the results of the data analysis showed that there were no significant differences between the male and female JLS regarding PAs ($p > 0.05$).

Table 4. The independent sample T-test results in terms of gender.

	t	*df*	**Sig.**	**Mean Difference**
Impact of PA	−1.461	130	0.146	−0.73010
Impact of portfolio-building	−1.279	130	0.203	−0.68882
PA as an assessment tool	−0.526	130	0.600	−0.22353
Total	−1.208	130	0.229	−1.64246

4. Discussion

4.1. Positive Effects of the Portfolio Assessment Method (PA) on Learning

The survey results showed that PAs play a significant role in promoting students' knowledge development, identifying strengths and weaknesses in learning, improving learning methods, and recording personal learning feelings. This finding was highly consistent with the basic theoretical framework of the PAM, that is, to promote students' self-regulated learning and self-reflection by recording and reflecting on their learning process and outcomes. The positive impact of PAs on learning is also supported by the statements of the following researchers: Goldsmith[6] pointed out that for students, the development of a PA provides an opportunity to link individual course work to institutional outcomes. The students described their ability to understand these connections, as well as the connections between their personal lives and their academic work. This shows that PAs not only promote students' mastery of the learning content, but also enhance their deep understanding of the meaning of learning. Dong[13] found that students can clearly understand their own learning status in reflection, so as to promote the improvement of their language and self-regulated learning abilities. This process of reflection is a cyclical process, and the depth and quality of the reflection directly affect the learning effectiveness of students. Li[19] found that portfolio-based writing assessments can promote self-regulation in Chinese EFL learners. This shows that the PAM not only helps to accumulate knowledge, but also improves students' self-management skills. Zhang[16] found that students' perceptions towards the PAM have gone through a

process from rejection to acceptance and then, to recognition when studying the role of PAs in the extracurricular self-regulated learning of foreign language majors. This shift is closely related to their ability to reflect, whereby students are able to identify difficulties and challenges in learning, which in turn stimulates their motivation and self-regulated learning ability. Together, the statements and findings of these researchers support the positive role of PAs in promoting students' knowledge development, identifying strengths and weaknesses, improving learning methods, and documenting individual feelings towards learning.

4.2. Students' Perceptions of Portfolio Assessments (PAs) as an Assessment Method

The results of the survey showed that the majority of the students agreed to combine PAs with written examinations as an assessment method, indicating that the students had a certain acceptance of the new assessment method. However, there was still a group of students who preferred traditional written exams. This finding reflects differences in the students' acceptance of the new assessment. When implementing new assessments, it is necessary to take into account the needs and acceptance of students. For students who prefer traditional written exams, their recognition of the way the PAM is assessed can be enhanced by gradually guiding and cultivating new habits in them. At the same time, the students' feedback and opinions can be incorporated to continuously improve and optimise the design and implementation of PAs as an assessment method. The past studies researchers such as Rouhani et al.[7] found that although PAs can increase learning benefits and reduce the possibility of cheating, this assessment method requires teachers to invest a lot of time

and effort, so it may face challenges in practice, indicating that although the growth bag assessment has its advantages, the cost and difficulty of its implementation may affect the degree to which it is widely accepted. Zhang[25] found that most students have a receptive and positive perception towards the PAM, but some students have poor coping abilities and lack confidence concerning the effects of its application. This suggests that although most students are open to the assessment of the PA, further education and guidance are needed to improve its acceptance and use.

4.3. Predicting Students' Perceptions of Portfolio Assessments (PAs) as an Assessment Method

The results of the survey showed that there was no significant gender difference, thus indicating that the applicability of PAs was consistent among the students of different genders. This finding provides strong support for the promotion and use of PAs evaluation method on a wider scale. The irrelevance of the gender factor shows that PAs evaluation method, as an objective and impartial evaluation tool, is not affected by gender differences. Therefore, the PAM can be universally promoted and used among students of different genders to comprehensively and objectively evaluate their learning process and outcomes.

Although there is no direct study on the relationship between gender factors and the PAs method, some researchers have mentioned the universal applicability and fairness of PAs evaluation method. The basic theoretical framework of the PAs method emphasises that it is a process-based evaluation method that promotes self-regulated learning and self-reflection by recording and reflecting on students' learning processes and outcomes. This approach does not depend on the student's gender, age, or other personal characteristics but is based on the student's actual academic performance and progress[11, 14].

4.4. Implications of the Study

Through the above analysis, it can be seen that the PAM has significant advantages and potential in Japanese language teaching to effectively promote students' learning and development. However, there are also some challenges in the implementation process, such as the excessive workload of paper materials. Therefore, it is suggested that the design and processes of the PAM should be further optimised in future teaching to reduce the burden on students. At the same time, the guidance and training of students can be strengthened to improve their acceptance and effective use of the PAM. In addition, it can also be combined with other assessment methods, such as written examinations, to form a diversified evaluation system to reflect students' learning outcomes and development more comprehensively. The PAM has many advantages in Japanese language teaching, but it also faces certain limitations. Xu[14] pointed out that the PAM emphasises process evaluation to effectively record students' learning process and results, which can help teachers make targeted teaching adjustments to improve the effectiveness of their teaching. At the same time, the use of the PAM can enhance the sense of participation and responsibility of students, and promote the improvement of their self-regulated learning ability.

However, there are some challenges to implementing the PAM. Zhang[32] mentioned that because the PAM is still in the exploratory stage at home and abroad, some teachers lack sufficient understanding and support for its implementation, resulting in inconsistent evaluation standards and implementation processes. In addition, the selection of the content of PAs and the evaluation criteria may also impact their effectiveness, and the urgent problem of how to ensure that the content is scientific and appropriate remains unsolved. Tong[33] further pointed out that although alternative evaluation methods such as the PAM emphasise student-centred learning, in practical applications, the subjectivity and arbitrariness of the evaluation process may lead to bias in the evaluation results. Therefore, a major difficulty in the promotion of the current PAM is finding a balance between ensuring the flexibility and objectivity of the evaluation. In summary, as an emerging educational evaluation method, the PAM has the potential to promote students' self-regulated learning ability, but it still needs to be continuously improved and optimised in practical applications to meet its challenges and limitations.

5. Conclusion

In recent years, the application of the PAs method in Japanese language teaching has gradually attracted the atten-

tion of researchers and educators, and the relevant literature shows that this method has a positive effect on improving students' self-regulated learning ability. According to the existing research, the following trends are gradually emerging. First of all, with the development of information-based education, the implementation of the PAM has gradually shifted to digital transformation. For example, Wang[15] discussed the use of the Moodle™ platform to evaluate the multimodal PA, emphasising that this method not only improves students' learning enthusiasm, but also promotes the improvement of their self-monitoring and self-learning ability. This transformation shows that future research can further explore how to optimise the implementation of the growth bag evaluation method with the help of modern technology and improve its application effect in Japanese language teaching. Secondly, the role of student reflection in the PAM is also evident in the literature. Zheng[11] pointed out that the PAM helps students record the learning process and demonstrate the learning results, thereby promoting reflection. Future research can explore in greater depth the specific mechanism of reflection and how to effectively guide students to conduct deep self-reflection through the PAM so as to further improve their self-regulated learning ability.

Finally, there are growing discussions about the advantages and limitations of the PAM. Current study we applied survey questionnaire as the research methodology, in this regards, we have to discuss are there potential biases in student responses? such as social desirability bias, besides, Liu et al.[34] found in their case study in Hong Kong that when students were not familiar with portfolio evaluation, they showed confusion and resistance to taking part in the process. Moreover, the long dominance of standardized tests in educational assessment has built up a built-in perception of tests among students. When confronted with non-traditional assessment methods such as PA, they unconsciously measure up against the standards of traditional testing, which influences their attitudes and feedback on PA. Nichol and Berliner[35] has developed the impact of traditional high-stakes tests on student minds and the learning ecosystem, and has indirectly indicated the mechanism of stereotype formation and its influence on the adoption of new assessment methods. Therefore, in order to avoid bias, future studies may be combined with other research methods such as semi-structured interviews, case studies, experimental design.

On the other hand, Lin[36] mentioned in the study that although the PAM is helpful for the dynamic evaluation of students' learning, it still faces many challenges in the implementation process, such as the inconsistency of evaluation standards and the training needs of teachers. Future research can focus on how to overcome these limitations, and more systematic implementation plans and evaluation criteria can be proposed to ensure the effective application of the PAM. In summary, the future direction of research on a combination of the PAM and Japanese language teaching can focus on three aspects: digital implementation, in-depth discussions of the student reflection mechanism, and overcoming its challenges and limitations. Through these studies, the PAM can be better understood and applied, and the overall improvement of students' self-regulated learning ability can be promoted.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, Z.Y. and X.D.; methodology, X.D.; software, Z.Y.; validation, X.D. and Z.Y.; formal analysis, X.D.; investigation, F.C.; resources, F.C.; writing—original draft preparation, X.D. and F.C.; writing—review and editing, Z.Y.; supervision, Z.Y.; project administration, X.D.; funding acquisition Z.Y. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Institutional Review Board Statement

The study was conducted in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki, and approved by the Institutional Review Board of Anhui International Studies University (09/25/2024).

Informed Consent Statement

Ethics approval for this study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board of Anhui International Studies University under project number Awkward 202403. Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

Data Availability Statement

Some or all data, models, or code generated or used during the study are available from the corresponding author upon request.

Conflicts of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest involved in this research.

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