Enhancing formative assessment with digital technology: Student perceptions
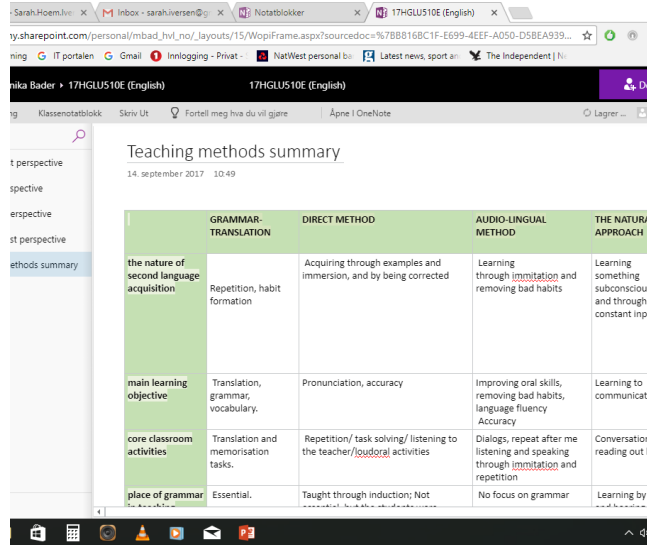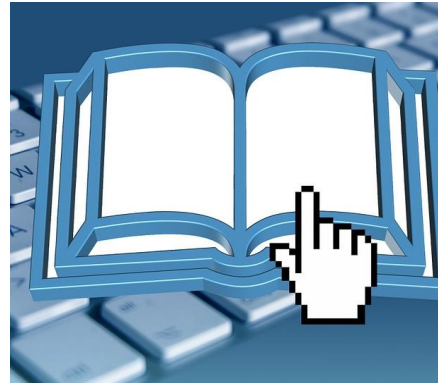
Sarah Hoem Iversen

Monika Bader

Tony Burner

Project aim

Improve the quality of our courses by enhancing formative assessment practices and explore how new digital tools can support these practices.

New digital tool → OneNote Class Notebook (and Teams)
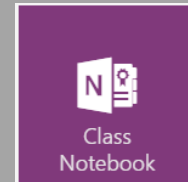
Research question: How do students perceive and use new digital tools in a higher education course?

The context of the project

English 1, Grunnskolelærerutdanning 5-10

- 2 courses at HVL (15 sp. each); 1st year students
- 1 course at USN (30 sp.); 4th year students

OneNote – Class Notebook

Individual Student Notebooks

- Submit low-stakes tasks
- Produce and share work-in-progress
- Receive (informal) feedback
- Track the progress of individual students

Collaboration Area

- Collaborative learning
- Opportunities for peer feedback
- Opportunities for sharing work-in-progress

short teacher feedback

Student assignment

Peer feedback

Teacher feedback

Course model

Assessment criteria

Assignment preparation

Obligatory assignment 1 → Teacher feedback → Revision → Assessment portfolio

Obligatory assignment 2 → Peer feedback → Revision → Assessment portfolio

Obligatory assignment 3 → Mixed feedback → Revision → Assessment portfolio

Student reflection journals
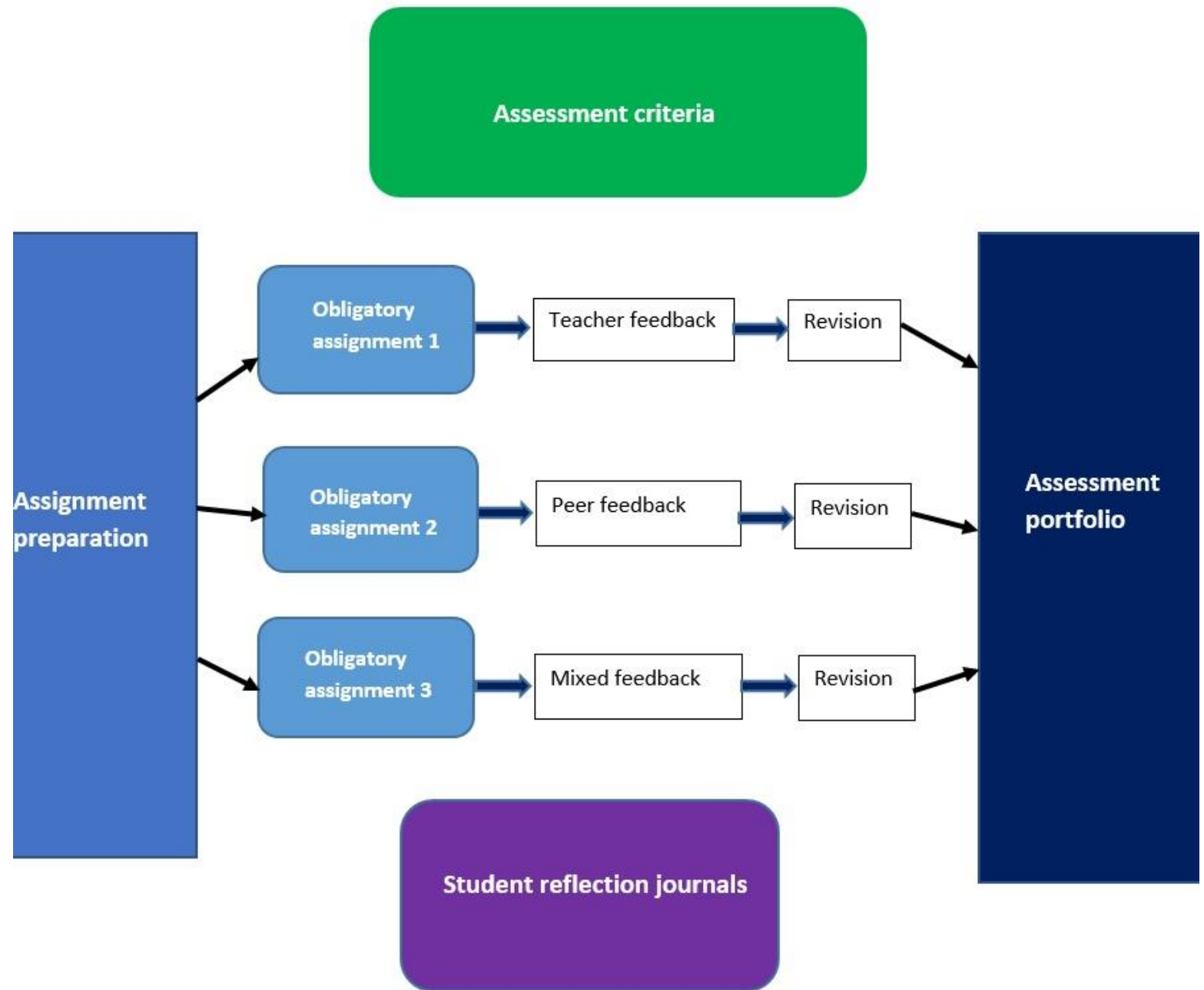
Methods

Qualitative analysis of:

128 student reflection journals (HVL and USN)

An interview (3 students, group discussion, USN)

Student attitudes to digital tools

S17: *Throughout my education we have almost always used digital tools in many situations, so it is quite difficult for me to compare it to not having any digital tools.*

S13: *I only used the digital tools to look up the task, nothing more. I don't like using digital tools for schoolwork, and mostly avoid doing so.*

- We cannot assume that all students uncritically welcome new digital tools

- Challenging the widely criticized (e.g. Selwyn 2009), yet pervasive common-sense discourse describing students as "digital natives"

Students' use of digital tools

➢ **Most frequently reported use: Organizing and managing the logistics of studying**

S12: *One note and it`s Learning are great places to find information, but I haven't really used them for anything other than getting information.*

S15: *I only used OneNote for retrieving information and handing in assignments because I want my data stored locally.*

Uses of digital tools related to learning

S1: *I like the way OneNote was used, especially the collaboration space. It is a nice way to see what questions peers have and to look back at these questions for instance.*

S2: *We got ideas from different examples on how a lesson plan should look like.*

➢ Students' use of digital tools is generally passive, pragmatic and non-explorative (c.f. Henderson et al 2017, Sørensen 2018)

Main conclusion

➢ Fundamental changes in the use of digital tools hinge on more fundamental changes in students' study habits

Thank you!

More information about our project:

Project blog: https://blogg.hvl.no/formative-assessment/

A Practical Guide to Digital Formative Assessment with OneNote in Higher Education

https://prosjekt.hvl.no/formative-assessment/

Bader, M. Burner, T. Hoem Iversen, S. & Varga, Z. (2019) Student perspectives on formative feedback as part of writing portfolios, *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 44:7.

References

Henderson, M., Selwyn, N. & Aston, R. (2017). What works and why? Student perceptions of 'useful' digital technology in university teaching and learning. *Studies in Higher Education*. Volume 42 (8), pp. 1567-1579.

Selwyn, N. (2009). The digital native – myth and reality. *ASLIB Proceedings*, 61 (4) pp. 364-379.

Sørensen, M. T. (2017). The Students' Choice of Technology A pragmatic and outcome-focused Approach. In David Kergel et al (eds.) *The Digital Turn in Higher Education*. Springer, pp. 61-174.