

Digital Portfolio-Based Assessment in EFL Contexts: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

This review summarizes research on digital portfolio-based assessment in EFL to address gaps in knowledge about teaching benefits, technology tools, student involvement, cross-cultural use, and assessment methods. Following PRISMA 2020 guidelines, fifty highly relevant studies published between 2016 and 2025 were systematically identified, screened, and analyzed using thematic and chronological synthesis frameworks. Findings indicate that digital portfolios significantly enhance language skills, self-regulated learning, and reflective practices while supporting formative assessment through multimodal feedback. However, technological barriers, increased workload, and inconsistent instructional design limit their effectiveness. Diverse platforms including Facebook, Google Sites, Edmodo, Moodle, and AI-integrated tools such as Notion AI facilitate accessibility and collaboration but face infrastructural and digital literacy challenges. Cross-cultural variations underscore the need for context-specific training and policy support. The review concludes by calling for standardized assessment frameworks, longitudinal research designs, and targeted teacher professional development to optimize the implementation of digital portfolios in global EFL education.

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INTRODUCTION

Research on digital portfolio-based assessment in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context has emerged as a critical area of inquiry due to its potential to enhance learner engagement, autonomy, and language skill development (Guo & Li, 2024; Pourdana, 2021). Since the early adoption of portfolios in the 1990s, the field has evolved from traditional paper-based collections to sophisticated electronic portfolios (e-portfolios) that integrate digital tools and platforms, reflecting both technological advances and pedagogical shifts (Harun et al., 2021; Wang & He, 2020; Yuza et al., 2024). The increasing use of e-portfolios is theoretically grounded in constructivism and sociocultural theory, which underpin the broader educational trends toward learner-centered approaches, formative assessment (Lekatompessy & Lekatompessy, 2025), and digital literacy, which are essential for effective language acquisition and lifelong learning (Deshmukh, 2022; Modise, 2025; Ngo & Luu, 2023).

Empirical evidence indicates that e-portfolios improve writing skills, motivation, and self-regulated learning among EFL students, with growing adoption across diverse educational settings worldwide (Aygün & Aydin, 2016; Dayag & Abdalla, 2023; Guo & Li, 2024). Despite these advances, challenges persist in implementing digital portfolio assessments effectively in EFL contexts. The complexity of designing, managing, and assessing e-portfolios, coupled with learners' varying digital competencies and infrastructural limitations, creates practical gaps related to teacher workload, equitable access, and institutional support, as well as empirical gaps concerning how these implementation barriers vary across different EFL contexts and what specific strategies effectively mitigate them (Ali et al., 2025; Aridah & Iswari, 2025; Tham & Trinh, 2022). Moreover, while numerous studies document positive outcomes, there remains no consensus on best practices. For instance, one strand of the literature advocates for highly structured portfolio templates with explicit rubrics to ensure consistency and reduce workload (Gün-Tosik et al., 2023), while another stream argues that open-ended, minimally structured portfolios better foster learner autonomy and reflective depth (Harun et al., 2021; Ngo & Luu, 2023). Similarly, some researchers recommend integrating e-portfolios primarily for summative assessment purposes to enhance accountability (Richardson et al., 2023), whereas others contend that portfolios should remain purely formative to preserve their developmental potential (Pourdana & Tavassoli, 2022). These competing positions illustrate a genuine lack of consensus, extending also to the integration of e-portfolios across language skills beyond writing, such as speaking and listening (Hanifa et al., 2024; Sar et al., 2025).

Concerns have also been raised about the alignment between portfolio-based assessment and established assessment methodologies, particularly regarding consistency and comparability across different EFL contexts (Richardson et al., 2023; Todorova-Ruskova, 2023; Wang & He, 2020). These challenges directly inform the first aim of this review, which is to evaluate pedagogical affordances and challenges of digital portfolio-based assessment. Furthermore, these gaps hinder the full realization of e-portfolios' pedagogical potential and limit their scalability in EFL education (Avila et al., 2025; Tham & Trinh, 2022). Conceptually, digital portfolio-based assessment encompasses the purposeful collection and reflection on student work, serving as both a learning and assessment tool grounded in constructivist and learner-centered theories (Nguí et al., 2022; Wang & He, 2020). E-portfolios facilitate formative assessment by enabling continuous feedback, self-assessment, and metacognitive engagement, thereby fostering learner autonomy and motivation (Gün-Tosik et al., 2023; Modise, 2025).

The integration of digital technologies enhances accessibility, interactivity, and collaboration, linking assessment with instructional design and language development processes (Nguí et al., 2022; Osawa, 2023). The purpose of this systematic review is to synthesize current empirical and theoretical literature on digital portfolio-based assessment in EFL settings, identify trends and gaps, and articulate implications for practice and research. Specifically, this review aims to: (1) evaluate the pedagogical affordances and challenges of digital portfolio-based assessment in EFL contexts; (2) benchmark existing digital platforms and technological tools used for portfolio assessment; (3) identify and synthesize learner engagement, self-regulated learning, and reflective practices facilitated by digital portfolios; (4) compare cross-cultural implementations and perceptions among EFL learners and educators; and (5) deconstruct assessment methodologies and feedback mechanisms integrated within digital portfolio practices. These five aims take a slightly different perspective on digital portfolio assessment. Therefore,

the authors considered it necessary to conduct this study to fill the gaps mentioned in the previous paragraph, thereby contributing to the existing body of similar SLR studies on this topic.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines (Page et al., 2021). The PRISMA framework was selected because it offers a transparent, replicable, and methodologically rigorous protocol for identifying, screening, and synthesizing scholarly literature. The review process consisted of four sequential phases: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion.

Search Strategy and Information Sources

A comprehensive search was conducted on Scopus, one of the primary academic databases for this review. To supplement the Scopus results, we conducted backward and forward citation chaining on the included studies. The original research question, "Systematic Literature Review of Digital Portfolio-Based Assessment in EFL Contexts," was systematically expanded into several targeted search terms to ensure comprehensive coverage. The transformed queries combined controlled vocabulary and free-text terms, including: (TITLE-ABS-KEY ("digital portfolio" OR "e-portfolio" OR "electronic portfolio") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("EFL" OR "English as a Foreign Language" OR "second language") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("assessment" OR "formative assessment" OR "alternative assessment") AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ("self-regulated learning" OR "reflective practice" OR "learner autonomy"))." Boolean operators (AND, OR) were used to combine these terms across multiple facets.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Studies were included if they: (1) were peer-reviewed empirical studies; (2) were published between 2016 and 2025 to align with the proliferation of cloud-based and mobile-compatible portfolio platforms, which fundamentally altered the feasibility and design of digital portfolio assessment in EFL contexts; (3) focused explicitly on digital or electronic portfolio assessment within EFL or ESL contexts; (4) reported findings related to pedagogical affordances, technological platforms, learner engagement, cross-cultural implementation, or assessment methodologies; and (5) were written in English. Studies were excluded if they: (1) addressed paper-based portfolios exclusively; (2) focused on contexts unrelated to EFL/ESL language learning; (3) lacked methodological clarity; or (4) were duplicates or non-peer-reviewed sources.

PRISMA Flow of Study Selection

The PRISMA 2020 flow diagram was used to document the study selection process. The initial database search yielded 270 records. Backward and forward citation chaining of core papers identified an additional 52 records, bringing the combined pool to 322 candidate papers. After removing duplicates and applying title and abstract screening against the inclusion criteria, 318 records were assessed for relevance. Following full-text eligibility assessment, 50 highly relevant studies were retained for the final synthesis. The PRISMA flow is illustrated in Figure 1.

Data Extraction and Synthesis

A standardized data extraction matrix was developed to code each systematically included study across five analytical dimensions: (1) pedagogical affordances, (2) technological platforms, (3) learner engagement and autonomy, (4) cross-cultural implementation, and (5) assessment methodologies and feedback. Thematic synthesis was employed to identify recurring patterns, agreements, and divergences across the literature (Thomas & Harden, 2008), while chronological analysis traced the evolution of research from 2016 to 2025. Findings were further organized using both qualitative and quantitative narrative synthesis frameworks to ensure analytical rigor and conceptual coherence.

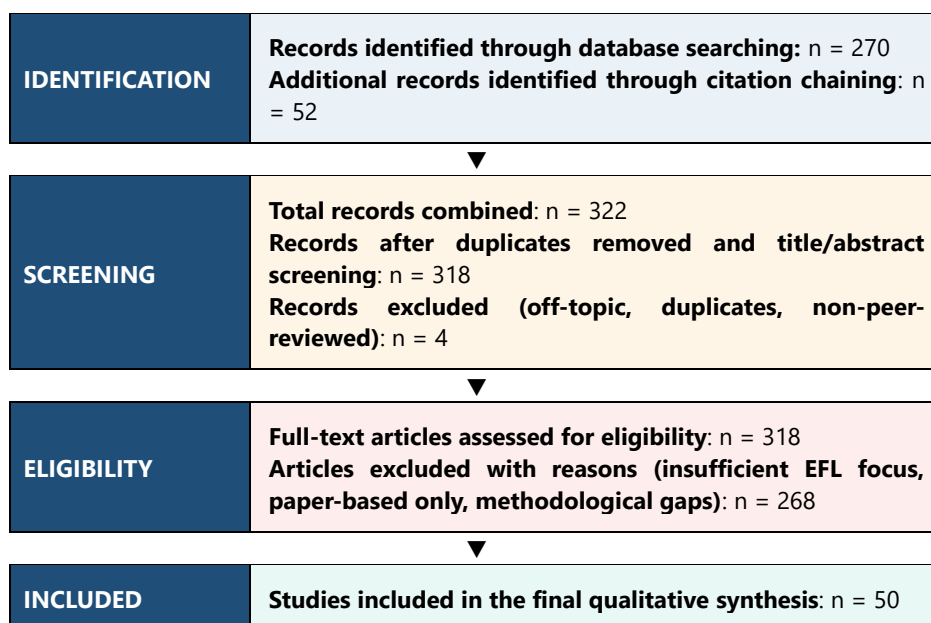


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram of the Study Selection Process

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the synthesized findings from 50 highly relevant studies, organized around the five analytical dimensions identified in the methodology. Quantitative distributions, illustrative tables, and visual diagrams support each thematic finding. The discussion that follows each theme offers an argumentative and analytical interpretation, situating the empirical patterns within broader theoretical and pedagogical debates.

Theme One: Pedagogical Affordances and Learner Autonomy

Of the 50 studies analyzed, 34 (68%) explicitly addressed the pedagogical affordances of digital portfolios in fostering learner autonomy, self-regulated learning, and reflective practice. Across these studies, digital portfolios consistently emerged as instruments that reposition learners from passive recipients of feedback to active agents of their own language development (Harun et al., 2021; Li & Singh, 2022; Tham & Trinh, 2022). Twenty-eight studies (56%) further documented measurable improvements in language skills, particularly writing and speaking proficiency, attributable to portfolio-based instruction (Fathi & Rahimi, 2022; Guo & Li, 2024). Table 1 presents the distribution of pedagogical outcomes reported across the corpus.

Table 1. Distribution of Pedagogical Outcomes Reported Across 50 Reviewed Studies

Pedagogical Outcome	Studies (n)	Frequency (%)	Representative Studies
Enhanced learner autonomy and self-regulation	34	68%	Harun et al. (2021); Ngo (2022); Tham & Trinh (2022)
Improved writing and speaking performance	28	56%	Fathi & Rahimi (2022); Guo & Li (2024)
Increased motivation and engagement	26	52%	Cakrawati et al. (2025); Sar et al. (2024); Shami (2024)
Development of higher-order thinking skills	18	36%	Afrilyasanti et al. (2024); Li & Singh (2023)
Strengthened reflective and metacognitive practices	22	44%	Aygün & Aydin (2016); Dayag & Abdalla (2023); Todorova-Ruskova (2023)
Reported challenges (anxiety, workload, superficial use)	12	24%	Purnomo et al. (2025); Shami (2024)









Nevertheless, the overwhelmingly positive framing of these findings calls for a more cautious interpretation. Although 68% of the reviewed studies report gains in learner autonomy, only a minority provide clear operational definitions or explicit measurement criteria for what constitutes 'autonomy' in the context of digital portfolio assessment. This lack of conceptual transparency makes it difficult to compare findings across studies or to determine whether similar underlying constructs are being captured. As [Shami \(2024\)](#) notes, learners may engage with portfolios in superficial ways, for instance, using them primarily for self-promotion rather than as tools for genuine reflection. Such observations underscore a broader analytical point: the pedagogical benefits of digital portfolios are not inherent to the technology itself, but are shaped by instructional design, scaffolding strategies, and learners' readiness to engage meaningfully. Similarly, [Yan & Singh \(2022\)](#) argue that without deliberate pedagogical structuring, e-portfolios risk becoming performative artifacts that are disconnected from substantive learning processes. These considerations suggest that future research should prioritize not only documenting positive outcomes but also specifying the conditions under which such outcomes emerge.

From a theoretical standpoint, these findings align with constructivist and sociocultural frameworks, particularly Vygotsky's emphasis on mediated activity and Zimmerman's self-regulated learning model, which posit that meaningful learning emerges through guided, intentional engagement ([Ali et al., 2025](#)). The implication is that digital portfolios alone do not produce autonomy; rather, autonomy is co-constructed through the interplay of learner disposition, teacher facilitation, and well-designed reflective tasks. This nuance challenges the techno-deterministic narrative that often pervades educational technology discourse and instead foregrounds the centrality of pedagogy.

Theme Two: Technological Platforms and Digital Tools

A total of 35 studies (70%) examined the technological platforms used to deliver digital portfolio assessment. The platforms employed varied considerably across contexts, reflecting both pragmatic accessibility and pedagogical preferences. Table 2 visualizes the relative distribution of platform usage across the reviewed corpus.

Table 2. Distribution of Digital Platforms Employed in Reviewed Studies (n = 35)

Platform	Relative Frequency	n (%)
Facebook		8 (23%)
Google Sites		7 (20%)
Edmodo		5 (14%)
Moodle		4 (11%)
Notion / AI tools		4 (11%)
Wix / WordPress		3 (9%)
Google Drive		2 (6%)
Other / Mixed		2 (6%)

As Table 2 demonstrates, social media and freely available cloud-based tools dominate the technological landscape of EFL portfolio assessment. Facebook (n = 8) and Google Sites (n = 7) collectively account for 43% of platform deployments, reflecting their accessibility, low entry barriers, and familiar interfaces ([Aridah & Iswari, 2025](#); [Barrot, 2016](#); [Syairofi & Waluyo, 2024](#)). Notably, the emergence of AI-integrated platforms such as Notion AI represents a methodological shift toward automated and personalized feedback ([Ni & Lam, 2025](#); [Osawa, 2023](#)).

Nevertheless, this technological diversity raises a critical analytical question: does platform choice meaningfully shape pedagogical outcomes, or is it largely incidental? The reviewed evidence clearly indicates the former. Platforms with robust collaborative features (e.g., Edmodo, Moodle) tend to support more structured peer feedback cycles, whereas social media platforms (e.g., Facebook) facilitate informal engagement but introduce concerns about privacy, distraction, and academic register ([Barrot, 2016](#); [Shami, 2024](#)). Furthermore, the integration of AI feedback tools, such as Notion AI, signals a paradigm shift that promises scalability and personalization. However, it simultaneously raises

unresolved questions about the authenticity of feedback, learner overreliance on automation, and the erosion of teacher–student dialogic relationships (Osawa, 2023).

A persistent counterpoint across 18 studies is the issue of technological inequity (Ali et al., 2025; Aridah & Iswari, 2025; Purnomo et al., 2025), which documents substantive infrastructural barriers in Indonesian and other Southeast Asian contexts, including unstable internet connectivity, limited device access, and uneven digital literacy among both learners and teachers. These findings complicate the celebratory narrative around digital portfolios and underscore that platform affordances cannot be evaluated in isolation from sociotechnical context. The implication is that future implementation models must adopt a context-sensitive approach, pairing platform selection with infrastructural feasibility assessments and digital literacy interventions.

Theme Three: Learner Engagement, Self-Regulation, and Reflective Practice

Thirty-eight studies (76%) addressed dimensions of learner engagement and self-regulation, making this the most extensively studied theme in the corpus. Engagement was conceptualized in multiple, sometimes overlapping ways: behavioral (task completion, participation), emotional (motivation, anxiety), and cognitive (metacognitive monitoring, deep processing). Pourdana & Tavassoli (2022) explicitly mapped portfolio assessment effects across all three dimensions in Iranian EFL learners, finding significant gains in cognitive engagement but more modest effects on emotional engagement. Table 2 synthesizes the key engagement mechanisms and their reported outcomes.

Table 3. Mechanisms of Learner Engagement and Reported Outcomes

Engagement Dimension		Reported Outcome	Studies (n)
Behavioral	Regular submission, task persistence, peer interaction	Increased on-task time and completion rates	18
Emotional	Self-efficacy, motivation, ownership of learning	Mixed: gains alongside motivational fluctuations	22
Cognitive	Reflection, goal-setting, metacognitive monitoring	Significant gains in self-assessment accuracy	24
Social	Peer feedback, collaborative revision, dialogic exchange	Enhanced sense of community and accountability	16

The empirical pattern in Table 2 reveals a striking asymmetry: cognitive and behavioral engagement are more consistently positive than emotional engagement. This asymmetry is theoretically significant. It suggests that while digital portfolios effectively scaffold the procedural and intellectual dimensions of learning, sustaining motivational investment over time remains a challenge. Several studies (Ali et al., 2025; Barrot, 2016; Shami, 2024) report that learners experience initial enthusiasm followed by gradual disengagement as portfolio workload accumulates, leading to more routine, surface-level participation over time.

This finding invites critical engagement with the assumption that digital portfolios inherently sustain motivation. The evidence rather indicates that motivation is fragile and contingent on factors such as task design, perceived authenticity, and timely feedback. Tham & Trinh (2022) demonstrate that when portfolio tasks are aligned with learners' communicative goals and supplemented with structured self-assessment training, sustained engagement is achievable. Conversely, Pourdana & Tavassoli (2022) identify mismatches between teacher feedback and learner self-assessment as a key driver of disengagement, suggesting that the dialogic quality of feedback, not merely its volume, is decisive. These findings collectively reposition the conversation: the question is no longer whether digital portfolios promote engagement, but under what pedagogical conditions engagement becomes durable and meaningful.

Theme Four: Cross-Cultural Implementation and Contextual Variation

Thirty studies (60%) examined the implementation of digital portfolios across diverse cultural and institutional contexts. Geographically, the corpus reflects considerable diversity and notable concentrations. Indonesia emerges as the most extensively studied context (12 studies), followed by Vietnam (5), Iran (4), China (4), Saudi Arabia (3), and other contexts including the Philippines, Malaysia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Latin America. Table 3 presents the geographic distribution and key contextual findings.

Table 4. Cross-Cultural Distribution of Reviewed Studies and Key Contextual Findings

Country / Region	Studies (n)	Dominant Context	Distinctive Finding
Indonesia	12	Higher education and senior high schools	Strong adoption but persistent infrastructural barriers
Vietnam	5	University-level writing and speaking courses	Positive teacher attitudes balanced with reliability concerns
Iran	4	EFL institutes and university classrooms	Strong evidence of writing performance gains via Moodle
China	4	Higher education, polytechnic, and ESP	Edmodo and DingDing yield strong self-efficacy effects
Saudi Arabia	3	Female intermediate and university students	Google Sites and Facebook portfolios enhance motivation
Philippines	2	ESL classroom and teacher perspectives	Calls for stronger teacher professional development
Other (Europe, Latin America, MENA)	12	Mixed higher education and ESP contexts	Policy support and digital tools shape implementation

The cross-cultural distribution is analytically revealing in two respects. First, the dominance of Asian contexts (particularly Southeast Asia) reflects both the regional growth of digital education research and the pressing relevance of EFL assessment innovation in these settings. Second, the relative paucity of comparative cross-cultural studies and the fact that most research is single-country limit the field's capacity to identify culturally generalizable principles versus context-specific adaptations. [Velásquez et al. \(2024\)](#) and [Modise \(2025\)](#) are notable exceptions in attempting cross-regional synthesis, but their work also highlights the methodological difficulty of comparing portfolios across heterogeneous educational systems.

More substantively, the findings challenge the assumption that digital portfolio assessment is culturally neutral. Cultural attitudes toward authority, error, and self-disclosure shape how learners engage with reflection and peer feedback ([Sar et al., 2024](#); [Tham & Trinh, 2022](#)). For instance, Confucian-heritage contexts may exhibit greater initial reluctance toward self-critique, while collectivist orientations may amplify the value of peer collaboration. These cultural dimensions intersect with infrastructural realities: well-resourced settings (e.g., parts of China and Saudi Arabia) ([Guo & Li, 2024](#); [Shami, 2024](#)) report fewer technological barriers, while resource-constrained contexts (e.g., rural Indonesia) confront the digital divide as a primary impediment ([Aridah & Iswari, 2025](#); [Purnomo et al., 2025](#)). The implication is that unequivocal context-sensitive implementation models, supported by localized teacher training and policy frameworks, are essential. A one-size-fits-all approach to digital portfolio assessment is both empirically unsupported and pedagogically untenable ([Marinho et al., 2021](#); [Walland & Shaw, 2022](#)).

Theme Five: Assessment Methodologies and Feedback Mechanisms

Forty-two studies (84%) addressed assessment methodologies and feedback mechanisms, the highest frequency among themes. This concentration reflects the centrality of assessment design to portfolio efficacy. Across the corpus, four feedback modalities recurred: teacher feedback, peer feedback, learner self-assessment, and, more recently, AI-generated feedback. Figure 3 illustrates the relative prevalence of feedback sources and their reported pedagogical contributions.

Table 5. Feedback Modalities in Digital Portfolio Assessment and Their Pedagogical Functions

Feedback Modality	Studies (n)	Prevalence	Primary Pedagogical Function
Teacher Feedback	38	76%	Authoritative correction, content evaluation, summative judgment
Peer Feedback	28	56%	Collaborative revision, dialogic learning, social mediation
Self-Assessment	32	64%	Metacognitive monitoring, goal-setting, autonomy development
AI-Generated Feedback	5	10%	Automated correction, scalable personalization, instant response

Several analytical observations emerge from this distribution. First, teacher feedback remains dominant (76%), reflecting the persistence of traditional assessment hierarchies even within ostensibly learner-centered portfolio frameworks. Second, peer feedback (56%) and self-assessment (64%) appear with comparable frequency, suggesting that digital portfolios genuinely enable distributed feedback ecosystems, though, as noted, the quality and dialogic nature of these exchanges vary considerably. Third, the relatively low prevalence of AI-generated feedback (10%) marks an emerging frontier; while only five studies in this corpus engage with AI integration, the trajectory suggests rapid growth in subsequent years (Ni & Lam, 2025; Osawa, 2023).

Nevertheless, the methodological challenges of portfolio assessment remain substantial. Reliability and validity concerns persist (Richardson et al., 2023), particularly when subjective judgment is used to evaluate multimodal artifacts. Pourdana & Tavassoli (2022) report systematic mismatches between teacher and learner assessments, and Shami (2024) documents the substantial workload burden on both parties. These challenges are not incidental but reflect a deeper tension at the heart of portfolio assessment: portfolios are simultaneously expected to serve formative (developmental) and summative (evaluative) functions, and these functions exert different, sometimes contradictory demands on assessment design (Gün-Tosik et al., 2023).

Resolving this tension requires moving beyond rubric refinement toward a reconceptualization of assessment as a sustained, relational process rather than a discrete judgment event. The integration of AI feedback offers one promising pathway, potentially relieving the workload burden while preserving teacher capacity for high-value dialogic interaction (Osawa, 2023). However, the evidence base on AI feedback in EFL portfolios remains thin, and questions about the authenticity of feedback, learner overreliance, and equity of access remain unresolved. The pedagogical promise of AI integration must therefore be tempered by empirical caution and ethical scrutiny.

Cross-Theme Synthesis: Tensions and Convergences

Reading across the five themes reveals a coherent yet contested terrain. The convergent finding is unambiguous: digital portfolios, when well-implemented, can meaningfully advance EFL learners' language skills, autonomy, and reflective capacities. The divergent findings, however, are equally important. Technological promise is repeatedly undermined by infrastructural inequity; engagement gains are tempered by motivational fragility; reliability concerns challenge the authenticity of assessments. These tensions are not failures of the field but rather indicators of its maturation. The literature has moved beyond initial optimism toward more nuanced, context-aware inquiry.

Three meta-level patterns warrant explicit articulation. First, the field exhibits a productive shift from technology-centric to pedagogy-centric framings. Earlier studies (2016–2019) tended to celebrate technological novelty (Aygün & Aydin, 2016); more recent work (2023–2025) increasingly foregrounds instructional design, scaffolding, and theoretical grounding (Afrilyasanti et al., 2024; Cakrawati & Yosintha, 2025; Dayag & Abdalla, 2023; Todorova-Ruskova, 2023). Second, the integration of AI represents an inflection point that will likely reshape research over the next decade. Third, the persistent cross-cultural variation suggests that universal models of "best practice" are conceptually misguided; what is needed instead is a typology of context-sensitive implementation principles. These observations frame the conclusions and future directions presented below.

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review synthesized 50 highly relevant studies on digital portfolio-based assessment in EFL contexts, applying the PRISMA 2020 framework to ensure methodological transparency. The collective evidence affirms that digital portfolios serve as powerful pedagogical tools for enhancing language skills, learner autonomy, reflective practice, and formative assessment in EFL settings. Their effectiveness, however, is neither automatic nor universal; it is contingent on the alignment of pedagogy, technology, and context.

Five interconnected insights emerge from this synthesis. First, digital portfolios advance learner autonomy and self-regulation, but only when supported by deliberate instructional scaffolding. Second, platform diversity enables flexibility, yet infrastructural and digital literacy disparities constrain equitable implementation. Third, learner engagement is multidimensional, with cognitive gains outpacing emotional sustenance, indicating the need for motivationally sensitive task design. Fourth, cross-cultural variation is substantial and demands context-responsive implementation models. Fifth, assessment methodologies are diversifying through peer, self, and AI-generated feedback, yet reliability, workload, and authenticity concerns persist.

This review acknowledges several limitations. The corpus, while geographically diverse, is dominated by Asian contexts, and most studies employ short-term designs that limit insights into sustained impact. Methodological heterogeneity also constrains direct comparison. Future research should prioritize: (1) longitudinal studies tracking portfolio impacts across multiple semesters; (2) standardized assessment rubrics tailored to multimodal artifacts; (3) empirical evaluation of AI-integrated feedback systems; (4) comparative cross-cultural research illuminating context-sensitive implementation principles; and (5) systematic teacher professional development frameworks. Ultimately, the trajectory of digital portfolio assessment in EFL hinges not on the platforms themselves but on the pedagogical wisdom with which they are deployed. The challenge and opportunity for the field is to translate the empirical insights synthesized here into globally informed yet locally responsive practice.

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