# GOOGLE SITE AS AN E-PORTFOLIO FOR PRAGMATICS: STRATEGIES, BENEFITS, AND CHALLENGES

Muhammad Yahya<sup>1</sup> Elvina Arapah<sup>2</sup> Elsa Rosalina<sup>3</sup> Fahmi Hidayat<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Lambung Mangkurat University, Banjarmasin, Indonesia

\*Corresponding author. Email: <u>2110117110017@mhs.ulm.ac.id</u>

Abstract: The integration of digital tools in English Language Teaching (ELT) has created new opportunities for student-centered learning, particularly through the use of E-Portfolios. Google Site, as a free and accessible platform, offers a flexible space for students to collect, present, and reflect on their academic work. This study explored how Google Site was implemented as an E-Portfolio in the Pragmatics Course at the English Language Education Study Program of Lambung Mangkurat University, focusing on the strategies used by the lecturer, the perceived benefits for students, and the challenges encountered during implementation. This qualitative descriptive research involved one lecturer and the students taking the Pragmatics course. Data were collected through semistructured interviews and documentation from the Google Site and the class Telegram group. The findings revealed that the lecturer employed certain instructional strategies, encouraged creative personalization, and provided feedback through online channels. Students benefited from improved task organization, increased motivation and engagement from visual and multimedia elements, more meaningful learning experience and developed digital and reflective skills. Some challenges are related to technical problems, adaptation difficulties, and self-discipline of the students and workload for giving reflections. Future research may work on how students regulate themselves dealing with *E-Portfolio*.

Keywords: Digital learning, E-Portfolio, Google Site, Pragmatics course, Telegram group

#### Introduction

In recent years, the integration of digital technology into higher education has become increasingly significant in response to the demands of 21st-century learning. The shift from traditional paper-based assessments to digital tools has been particularly transformative in English Language Teaching (ELT), where technology now plays a vital role in facilitating communication, collaboration, and reflection. Among these tools, electronic portfolios (E-Portfolios) have emerged as one of the most effective platforms for supporting autonomous and reflective learning (Stefani et al., 2007; Yastibas, 2015). An E-Portfolio provides learners with a structured digital space to collect, organize, and reflect on their work, thereby fostering a sense of ownership and personal growth in the learning process.

The concept of E-Portfolio originates from constructivist and reflective learning theories, which emphasize that learning is most meaningful when learners actively construct knowledge through



reflection and interaction. As San Jose (2017) explains, technology integration in education is most effective when it aligns with pedagogical design, ensuring that digital tools enhance rather than replace meaningful learning. E-Portfolios serve this purpose by enabling learners to document progress, engage in self-assessment, and demonstrate competence across cognitive, affective, and digital domains. They also promote metacognition, allowing students to track their development over time and make connections between theory and practice.

Over the past decade, numerous studies have explored the benefits of E-Portfolios in various educational contexts, particularly in English language learning. Research has shown that E-Portfolios improve students' motivation, autonomy, and self-regulated learning (Yastibas & Yastibas, 2015; Lukitasari et al., 2020), facilitate feedback and formative assessment (Muin., 2021), and support digital literacy development (Cheng, 2022). Hanifa et al., (2024) found that Google Site-based E-Portfolios helped students manage assignments effectively while promoting responsibility and independent learning. Similarly, Cabrera-Solano (2020) and Anh & Truong (2023) reported that mobile or online E-Portfolios could enhance engagement and improve language learning outcomes by providing an interactive environment for continuous reflection.

However, despite these positive findings, most existing research has concentrated on the use of E-Portfolios in skills-based language courses such as speaking, writing, or pronunciation where performance is directly observable and easily documented in digital formats (Cabrera-Solano, 2020; Anh & Truong, 2023). Limited attention has been given to their use in content-based courses, such as Pragmatics, where the learning objectives focus on understanding how meaning is constructed and interpreted in context rather than producing linguistic output. The study of Pragmatics requires learners to analyze real-life communication through the lens of theories such as implicature, speech acts, and deixis (Wang et al., 2024). Applying E-Portfolios in this context therefore presents a unique opportunity: it challenges both lecturers and students to use digital tools not merely for product display, but for deep conceptual exploration and reflection.

This gap is critical because content-based courses often rely on analytical reasoning, interpretation, and contextual understanding skills that can benefit from the reflective affordances of an E-Portfolio. Yet, few studies have investigated how digital portfolio platforms like Google Site can support such higher-order cognitive learning processes. In the Indonesian higher education context, especially within English Language Education programs, this research gap becomes even more relevant. While several local studies have focused on E-Portfolios for improving writing or speaking skills (Merlitiani et al., 2020; Hanifa et al., 2024), research on their pedagogical use in content-oriented courses remains scarce. As a result, lecturers' strategies for implementing E-Portfolios in theoretical or conceptual learning settings are still underexplored.

Google Site, as one of the freely accessible and user-friendly platforms, offers diverse features that make it suitable for academic portfolio development. It allows users to integrate text, visuals, hyperlinks, and multimedia, providing flexibility for students to present their learning process creatively and interactively. The platform's structure supports both formative and summative assessment, as lecturers can monitor students' progress continuously and provide feedback. Previous research has highlighted its strengths in improving learner motivation and autonomy (Lukitasari et al., 2020), supporting reflective learning (Muin et al., 2021), and promoting digital literacy (Cheng, 2022). However, little is known about how lecturers implement Google Site in a content course that emphasizes conceptual understanding rather than linguistic performance.

At the English Language Education Study Program of Lambung Mangkurat University, the Pragmatics course serves as a core subject that introduces students to the analysis of meaning in communication. The course requires learners to apply abstract theories to authentic examples, making it a suitable context for digital-based reflective learning. The lecturer in this course adopted Google Site as an E-Portfolio tool to encourage students to document, analyze, and reflect on their learning experiences throughout the semester. Through this approach, Google Site became not only a medium

for task submission but also a reflective space that allowed students to visualize and track their understanding of Pragmatics over time.

This study was therefore conducted to explore how Google Site was implemented as an E-Portfolio in the Pragmatics course, focusing on the lecturer's strategies, the benefits experienced by both lecturer and students, and the challenges encountered during the process. By addressing these three aspects, the study aims to fill the research gap in understanding how digital portfolios function in content-based ELT contexts. Furthermore, the study contributes to the growing body of literature on educational technology integration in language education by demonstrating that E-Portfolios can be effectively used not only in skill development but also in the conceptual and analytical domains of language learning. The findings are expected to provide insights for lecturers seeking to integrate reflective digital practices into content courses and to strengthen the theoretical foundation for future research on E-Portfolio-based instruction in higher education.

### Method

The research was carried out at the English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Lambung Mangkurat University, Banjarmasin, South Kalimantan. One lecturer and six students who attended the Pragmatics course participated in this study. The lecturer was selected because she had already integrated Google Site as an E-Portfolio tool in her teaching. Six students were selected using score-based purposive sampling three high-achieving and three low-achieving based on their final scores in the Pragmatics course. This selection was made to represent different performance levels and to compare their experiences in using the platform.

Data were collected through interviews and document analysis. The interviews were conducted individually with the lecturer and students to explore their experiences, strategies, and challenges in using Google Site. The researcher prepared a list of guiding questions and recorded the sessions to ensure accuracy. Meanwhile, the document analysis included not only the portfolios of the six interviewed students but all students' Google Sites in the Pragmatics course. Each portfolio was examined to identify how students organized their pages, uploaded tasks, and reflected on their learning. This broader document analysis strengthened the validity of the findings by capturing the overall pattern of implementation in the class.

The data from both sources were analyzed thematically. The researcher read and coded all interview transcripts and documents, identified key patterns, and grouped them into categories. From these categories, main themes were developed to represent the strategies, benefits, and challenges of using Google Site as an E-Portfolio in the Pragmatics course. To ensure accuracy and credibility, the researcher cross-checked the findings from interviews with document analysis.

#### **Result and Discussion**

#### Implementation Strategies of Google Site as an E-Portfolio in the Pragmatics Course

The implementation of Google Site in the Pragmatics course followed a structured pedagogical process that combined digital modelling, reflective assessment, collaborative scaffolding, and creative learner autonomy. The lecturer deliberately integrated the platform not only as a repository for assignments but also as a medium of metacognitive reflection a space where students could document, visualize, and evaluate their own understanding of Pragmatics concepts.

At the beginning of the semester, the lecturer introduced Google Site as the primary tool for managing tasks and reflections, clearly explaining its pedagogical rationale to the students. As she stated:

"It served as a medium for students to submit their assignments... They could also be creative, and each Google Site had its own unique characteristics."

This orientation positioned Google Site not merely as a submission platform but as a reflective environment that fostered both independence and innovation. This introduction corresponds with Stefani, Mason, and Pegler (2007), who emphasize that clear framing and purpose are vital when integrating E-Portfolios into classroom practice, as it helps learners perceive them as tools for reflection rather than assessment alone. The lecturer's early explanation also reflects San Jose's (2017) principle of aligning digital technology with pedagogical design to ensure meaningful engagement.

In the initial sessions, the lecturer modeled the platform's use by showing examples of previous students' portfolios and video tutorials to help the class understand both the structure and purpose of the platform. As one student recalled

"At first, we were shown examples from our seniors and also given a clear video tutorial on how to use Google Site from YouTube."

This explicit modeling process represents an essential form of pedagogical scaffolding. It provided a step-by-step reference for students who were not yet digitally confident and ensured that all learners could start from a common baseline. Modeling the process also gave students visual and cognitive cues on how to design their portfolios around Pragmatics topics such as implicature, deixis, and speech acts. According to Cheng (2022), such structured exposure helps reduce cognitive load and anxiety during technology-enhanced learning, while Abedi (2023) found that proper modeling mitigates first-order barriers such as limited digital literacy.

Through this approach, the lecturer not only transferred technical knowledge but also built students' confidence and agency. Modeling served as a bridge between technology and content making abstract Pragmatics theories more tangible and contextual through visual representation.

After the introduction phase, students began using Google Site to upload a diagnostic pre-test reflecting their initial understanding of Pragmatics concepts. This task required them to explain, in both written and visual form, topics such as implicature, deixis, speech acts, and presupposition.

As shown in *Figure 1*, many students created pages describing these concepts in their own words, often accompanied by short examples or diagrams. This design transformed the pre-test from a simple written exercise into an act of reflection allowing students to visualize their knowledge. *Figure 2* illustrates one student's creative effort to add humorous elements and contextualized examples, which made the theoretical material more relatable and memorable.



Figure 1: Students' Pre-Test Page Showing Initial Understanding of Pragmatic Concepts Source: Researcher's Documentation from Students' Google Sites



Figure 2: Students' Pre-Test Page Containing Visual and Creative Elements Related to Pragmatic Meaning

Source: Researcher's Documentation from Students' Google Sites

Such activity aligns with Yastibas and Yastibas (2015), who argue that E-Portfolios cultivate autonomy and self-regulated learning by prompting students to evaluate their understanding over time. The pre-test stage therefore acted as a baseline for growth, illustrating how reflection can reveal the distance between prior and developed competence a process Stefani et al. (2007) identify as fundamental to personal development planning

As the course advanced, the lecturer assigned a series of contextual analytical projects that encouraged students to apply Pragmatics theories to authentic sources, including film dialogues, song lyrics, and other real-life discourse materials. Each Google Site contained dedicated subpages where students presented their individual analyses of speech acts, deixis, and implicature, demonstrating how theoretical discussions from class were transformed into concrete and multimodal interpretations.

For example, one student group analyzed deixis in the *Little Women* movie, combining screenshots, narration, and oral commentary to explain how spatial and temporal references shaped meaning in the dialogue (see Figure 3). Another project examined deixis in Ariana Grande's song *Thank U, Next*, visually presenting deictic expressions through colorful slides and embedded videos to highlight the emotional and relational context of the lyrics (see Figure 4).



Figure 3: Students' multimodal presentation analyzing deixis in *Little Women* movie Source: Researcher's Documentation from Students' Google Sites



Figure 4: Students' multimodal presentation analyzing deixis in *Thank U*, *Next* song Source: Researcher's Documentation from Students' Google Sites

These analytical tasks show that Google Site served as a bridge between linguistic theory and lived communication practice, providing students with an opportunity to explore how Pragmatics operates in authentic contexts. This practice aligns with Cabrera-Solano (2020), who emphasizes that digital portfolios encourage *authentic learning* by combining cognitive, affective, and creative dimensions of language use. Similarly, Cheng (2022) argues that E-Portfolios deepen learning when students are given autonomy to select and analyze real-world materials that connect theory with experience. Furthermore, Hanifa et al., (2024) found that integrating authentic multimedia artifacts within E-Portfolios strengthens reflection and fosters autonomous learning habits.

Taken together, these findings reinforce that the lecturer's use of contextual tasks not only supported conceptual mastery but also promoted *multimodal literacy* the ability to analyze meaning across text, image, and sound. This comprehensive engagement is what Stefani et al., (2007) describe as the *reflective cycle of E-Portfolio learning*, where learners interpret, represent, and evaluate knowledge through self-curated evidence

To sustain engagement and ensure consistent progress, the lecturer adopted a feedback loop via the Telegram group and direct comments on each Google Site submission. She frequently reminded students to update their pages, provided suggestions for revision, and recognized creative efforts publicly in class discussions. As Student 5 mentioned:

"The lecturer often reminded us in the Telegram group to check our site, and sometimes she commented on the layout or content. That kept me disciplined."

This routine feedback served not only as assessment but also as motivational scaffolding. It confirmed Hanifa et al., (2024) finding that structured digital feedback increases accountability and supports learner autonomy in E-Portfolio environments. Likewise, Muin et al., (2021) emphasize that reflection becomes meaningful only when feedback cycles are continuous and dialogic allowing learners to refine both content and self-perception

Beyond structured tasks and monitoring, the lecturer encouraged students to express creativity in organizing and designing their portfolios. She explained:

"There was always uniqueness from each student because I allowed them to modify their Google Site as long as it stayed relevant to the course content."

Similarly, one student shared:

"We were free to adjust and decorate our Google Site as we liked make it neat, creative, and attractive."

This freedom to personalize design empowered students to showcase individuality, turning their portfolios into personal digital identities rather than uniform templates. *Figures 5 and 6* demonstrate this diversity each site combining textual analysis, images, color schemes, and embedded videos to communicate understanding in unique ways.

Such creative autonomy echoes Yastibas & Yastibas (2015) and Lukitasari er al., (2020), who found that giving learners aesthetic control fosters ownership and engagement. In this context, creativity was not superficial decoration but a *cognitive extension*: students actively curated how knowledge should be displayed and interpreted. This aligns with Stefani et al. (2007), who describe E-Portfolios as instruments of both reflection and self-representation



Figure 5: Students' E-Portfolio Design Displaying Task Organization and Layout Personalization

Source: Researcher's Documentation from Students' Google Sites



Figure 6: Students' E-Portfolio Design Displaying Task Organization and Layout Personalization

Source: Researcher's Documentation from Students' Google Sites

## Benefits of Using Google Site as an E-Portfolio in the Pragmatics Course

The use of Google Site as an E-Portfolio in the Pragmatics course yielded multiple pedagogical and reflective benefits for both lecturer and students. One key benefit was the improvement of task organization and accessibility. The lecturer explained that every task had to be uploaded to Google Site so that all classroom activities were documented and easily reviewed, ensuring nothing was lost. This digital arrangement allowed both teacher and students to track progress transparently and continuously, echoing Hanifa et al. (2024), who found that E-Portfolios enhance structured learning through systematic submission and tracking.

Another major benefit was the development of reflective learning habits. Students stated that the platform enabled them to revisit their past work, observe their progress, and recognize changes in their understanding of Pragmatics. One student mentioned that reviewing earlier posts helped them:

"see improvement and fix earlier misunderstandings."

Such practices demonstrate Stefani et al. (2007) notion of E-Portfolios as tools for reflection and personal growth. Similarly, Muin et al. (2021) emphasize that E-Portfolios cultivate responsibility and reflection by prompting learners to review their achievements. This reflective process was crucial in connecting theoretical Pragmatics concepts such as deixis and implicature to students' evolving comprehension.

Creativity and learner engagement also increased significantly. Students expressed enthusiasm for designing and decorating their Google Sites according to personal preferences. One student remarked:

"We were free to adjust and decorate our Google Site as we liked make it neat, creative, and attractive."

The lecturer intentionally encouraged this autonomy, confirming that she:

"allowed students to modify their Google Site as long as the content remained relevant to the course."

This freedom aligns with Yastibas & Yastibas (2015), who argue that E-Portfolios support learner autonomy and self-expression, and with Lukitasari et al. (2020), who reported that personalization of E-Portfolios enhances motivation and positive learning attitudes.

Moreover, Google Site promoted digital literacy and professional readiness. Managing their own sites required students to learn technical skills embedding multimedia, organizing hyperlinks, and editing layouts which strengthened their digital competence. The lecturer emphasized that her goal was to prepare students to integrate similar tools in future teaching practice, reinforcing Lorenzo & Ittelson's (2005) claim that E-Portfolios develop technological fluency and demonstrate academic readiness. Cheng (2022) further supports this by noting that digital portfolios enhance learners' ownership, reflection, and lifelong learning skills, all of which are essential for pre-service teachers.

From a pedagogical standpoint, the platform also enhanced contextual understanding of Pragmatics. Students connected theory with real-world examples by uploading analyses of speech acts, deixis, and implicature from movies, songs, and advertisements. They reported that this approach made learning more concrete and meaningful. As one student explained:

"Analyzing conversations from movies helped me understand how context changes meaning."

This aligns with San Jose (2017), who stresses that technology integration must align with pedagogical goals to achieve authentic learning, and with Cabrera-Solano (2020), who found that digital portfolios improve engagement by linking language theory with practical performance.

Finally, the E-Portfolio strengthened collaboration and feedback loops. The lecturer used the platform to monitor submissions, provide direct comments, and remind students to revise incomplete tasks. This continuous interaction reflects Ali et al. (2024), who highlighted that ongoing feedback through E-Portfolios promotes learner persistence, and Anh & Truong (2023), who showed that Google Site fosters engagement through interactive communication and multimedia integration.

#### Challenges and Obstacles in Using Google Site as an E-Portfolio in the Pragmatics Course

Despite its many pedagogical advantages, the implementation of Google Site in the Pragmatics courses also presented several challenges. The first challenge involved technical and infrastructural

barriers. Some students experienced unstable internet connections that interrupted uploading and editing processes. One student shared:

"Sometimes I couldn't open the site properly because my internet was slow, so I had to wait or use another device."

In some cases, students' portfolios became temporarily inaccessible to the lecturer due to connectivity or sharing-permission issues. As shown in *Figure 7*, one student's Google Site link could not be accessed during assessment, while *Figure 8*, shows an embedded Google Drive file that failed to open. These technical obstacles highlight the dependence of Google Site on stable connections and correct link sharing, consistent with Ali et al. (2024) and Hidayati et al. (2024), who identified similar infrastructure-related problems in E-Portfolio learning contexts.

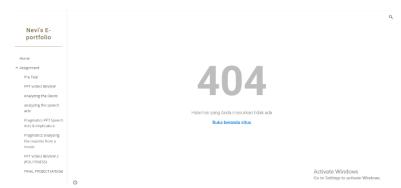


Figure 7: An Inaccessible Google Site Link During Lecturer Review Process Source: Researcher's Documentation from Students' Google Sites



Figure 8: An Inaccessible Google Drive File Embedded Within A Student's E-Portfolio Source: Researcher's Documentation from Students' Google Sites

Another difficulty related to limited technological familiarity. Several students initially struggled to navigate Google Site, particularly when linking pages or inserting files. One student said:

"At first, I didn't really understand how to edit or connect pages in Google Site, so it took time to learn."

The lecturer confirmed that she needed to offer additional explanations so students could manage the platform effectively. These findings correspond with Abedi (2023), who emphasized that first-order barriers such as lack of confidence and training continue to hinder technology integration. Cheng (2022) similarly observed that limited digital competence reduces students' ability to make optimal use of E-Portfolio tools.

The adaptation process also required additional time and effort. Students had to balance mastering Pragmatics content with learning new technical procedures. One student noted that completing assignments often took longer because they had to adjust layouts and verify embedded links before submitting them. This aligns with Anh & Truong (2023), who reported that learners need sufficient time and repeated practice to become efficient users of digital portfolios.

Another challenge related to design and usability limitations. Some students found that Google Site offered limited flexibility for uploading multimedia materials. The lecturer mentioned that:

"some students' portfolios could not display large files such as videos or images due to storage limits or incompatibility."

These experiences support Firmansyah et al. (2019), who documented similar technical issues in Moodle-based E-Portfolios, and Hidayati et al. (2024), who observed frequent display errors and file restrictions in online learning environments.

Maintaining consistent engagement also posed a difficulty. The lecturer explained:

"Sometimes I had to remind them several times before they uploaded their work completely."

Some students admitted that working independently on digital platforms made it difficult to stay on schedule without direct supervision. This observation reflects Ali et al. (2024), who identified self-regulation as a persistent problem in online settings, and Lukitasari et al. (2020), who noted that autonomy in E-Portfolios may decline when learners lack continuous support.

Finally, both lecturer and students agreed on the importance of institutional and technical support. The lecturer suggested that improving internet stability and organizing digital-skills workshops would help prevent similar problems in future semesters. This recommendation supports San Jose (2017) and Cheng (2022) arguments that long-term success in technology integration depends on institutional readiness and sustained technical assistance

#### Conclusion

This study examined the implementation of Google Site as an E-Portfolio in the Pragmatics course at the English Language Education Study Program of Lambung Mangkurat University. The findings revealed that the integration of Google Site was not limited to digital submission but served as a pedagogical innovation that encouraged reflection, creativity, and contextual learning. The lecturer applied a combination of modeling, guided monitoring, and creative autonomy, enabling students to engage actively with Pragmatics concepts such as implicature, speech acts, and deixis. Through these strategies, the platform became a medium that connected theoretical knowledge with real communication practices, transforming the learning process into a more reflective and student-centered experience.

The use of Google Site brought significant benefits for both lecturer and students. It improved task organization, supported continuous reflection, and fostered student motivation and autonomy. The flexibility of the platform also encouraged creativity and enhanced students' digital literacy, preparing them to integrate technology effectively in future teaching contexts. Moreover, the contextual analysis tasks helped students apply Pragmatics theories in authentic communication examples, making learning more meaningful and applicable beyond the classroom.

Despite these advantages, several challenges emerged during implementation. Technical barriers such as unstable internet connections, inaccessible portfolio links, and limited digital familiarity occasionally disrupted the learning process. Some students also required more time to adapt to the platform and maintain consistent participation. However, continuous supervision, feedback, and institutional support helped mitigate most of these issues, demonstrating that effective E-Portfolio integration requires both pedagogical planning and adequate technological readiness.

Overall, the study concludes that Google Site can be effectively implemented as an E-Portfolio tool in content-based courses such as Pragmatics. Its use not only promotes reflection and digital competence but also supports deeper understanding of language use in context. The uniqueness of this research lies in demonstrating how E-Portfolios, typically applied in skill-based learning, can successfully enhance analytical and reflective learning in theoretical courses. Future research is encouraged to explore broader applications of E-Portfolios across different content areas and to examine their long-term impact on students' digital and pedagogical development.

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