

STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES IN USING GOOGLE SITES E-PORTOFOLIO FOR LEARNING ACCOUNTING VOCABULARY

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ABSTRACT

Digital learning innovations have increasingly transformed English for Specific Purposes (ESP), particularly in promoting learner autonomy, engagement, and reflection. Among these innovations, e-portfolios have been recognised as powerful tools for integrating language learning with professional skills. However, previous research has primarily focused on e-portfolios in writing and general English context, while limited attention has been given to their use in teaching accounting vocabulary, where learners often struggle to understand and retain specific terminology. This gap between theoretical expectations and classroom realities highlights the need to explore how e-portfolios can facilitate vocabulary learning in ESP courses. This study aims to investigate student's experience with Google Sites e-portfolios for learning accounting vocabulary in an English for Accounting course at Bahasa Inggris Program Sarjana Terapan Study Program, Universitas Negeri Makassar. Employing a qualitative descriptive design, the data were gathered from eight students through semi-structured interviews and analysed thematically. The findings revealed that students' first impressions were characterised by enthusiasm, curiosity, and a motivation to use Google Sites as an innovative learning platform. The process of creating and managing e-portfolios fostered creativity, organisation, and digital literacy, as students designed pages and linked vocabulary items to authentic accounting materials. Students perceived several benefits, including improved understanding and retention of accounting terms, enhanced confidence, and a stronger connection between academic learning and professional application. Despite minor challenges such as technical issues and time constraints, participants regarded e-portfolios as engaging and valuable learning tools. The study concludes that Google Sites e-portfolios effectively promote learner autonomy, reflection, and engagement in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) context. It is recommended that future ESP instruction provide technical orientation and continuous support to maximise the benefits of e-portfolios in language learning.

Keywords: *E-Portfolio, Google Sites, Accounting Vocabulary, English for Specific Purposes*

INTRODUCTION

In the age of digital transformation, technology has become a fundamental element of higher education, reshaping how teachers design learning activities and how students construct knowledge. One of the emerging digital innovations in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classrooms is the integration of e-portfolio as a platform for reflective learning and performance-based assessment (Wardani et al., 2025; Narpaduita & Pratolo, 2024; Gedera & Fester, 2023). E-portfolios enable students to collect, organise, and showcase their learning progress while encouraging self-assessment and metacognitive awareness (Rani & Nissa, 2025; V. Hidayati et al., 2024; Gencel, 2016). Among the numerous e-portfolio platforms, Google Sites provides an accessible, intuitive, and collaborative environment that fosters independent and innovative learning.

In the context of English for Accounting, vocabulary mastery plays a pivotal role in understanding accounting concepts and communicating effectively in business-related settings. However, many students in applied English programs, such as those enrolled in the Bahasa Inggris Program Sarjana Study Program at the Faculty of Languages and Literature, Universitas Negeri Makassar, still encounter difficulties in acquiring and retaining accounting vocabulary. This issue frequently arises from inadequate exposure to genuine accounting resources, a deficiency of relevant context, and insufficient opportunity to utilise terminology in practical applications (Beribe, 2025; Zachrich et al., 2024). Consequently, the use of innovative technologies, such as Google Sites e-portfolios, may create an engaging and contextualised learning environment that connects language acquisition with professional applications.

Recent research suggests that digital portfolios enhance learner involvement, reflection, and accountability in language acquisition (G. Zhang, 2024; Narpaduita & Pratolo, 2024; Guo & Li, 2024). They also support the integration of four key pedagogical principles: collaboration, reflection, feedback, and autonomy, which are essential in developing professional communication skills (Gedera & Fester, 2023). Utilising Google Sites as a medium for e-portfolios

enables students to showcase their accounting vocabulary projects, articulate reflections, and obtain feedback from peers and instructors (Kurniati et al., 2025). This process not only enhances vocabulary retention but also promotes digital literacy and lifelong learning skills aligned with 21st-century education goals (Qurrata'ain et al., 2025; Wariyati et al., 2025).

The adoption of e-portfolios in Indonesian higher education has increased progressively, particularly in the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) context (Rahmawati, 2023). Nonetheless, research focusing on the use of e-portfolios in teaching accounting vocabulary is limited. Most previous studies have explored e-portfolios in writing or general English courses (Barrot, 2021; Wahyuni & Setiawan, 2020), leaving a gap in understanding how this digital tool can be applied effectively in English for Accounting courses. This study aims to fill that gap by exploring students' experiences in using Google Sites e-portfolios as a medium for learning accounting vocabulary.

Emphasising students' experiences is essential, particularly in the Bahasa Inggris Program Sarjana Terapan, where learning outcomes prioritise practical and communication skills. Furthermore, this study aligns with the growing demand for technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) approaches that promote active, personalised, and student-centred learning. Google Sites e-portfolio serves as a bridge between theory and practice- allowing students to contextualise vocabulary learning within real-world accounting tasks such as preparing financial reports, interpreting accounting terms, and communicating financial information in English. By documenting their progress and reflections digitally, students can build professional portfolios that not only demonstrate linguistic competence but also showcase their readiness for the workplace.

The utilisation of Google Sites e-portfolios offers a promising approach to teaching accounting vocabulary in English for Accounting courses. Understanding students' experiences and perspectives is crucial for evaluating the effectiveness and sustainability of their instruction. This study aims to investigate students' experiences with Google Sites e-portfolios for acquiring accounting

language through qualitative interviews. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for ESP instructors, curriculum designers, and policymakers seeking to integrate digital learning tools effectively in higher education contexts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

English for Accounting and Vocabulary Learning

In the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), accounting students encounter unique lexical challenges as they are required to acquire both general English and discipline-specific vocabulary that pertains to professional tasks, standards, and communication within an accounting framework (Siradjuddin & Yahrif, 2024). A recent study at an Indonesian institution revealed that numerous accounting-major students retained an A1 vocabulary level, which inadequately supports ESP curriculum.

Furthermore, alumni surveys reveal that vocabulary and pertinent learning themes are essential for the development of ESP curriculum; a study indicated that 78.57% of alumni recognized suitable vocabulary as a fundamental necessity in accounting-ESP programs (Nawir et al., 2023).

In ESP education for accounting, vocabulary learning must be contextualized—associated with authentic accounting tasks, financial statements, language in audits, taxation, cost accounting, and similar domains. Conventional vocabulary instruction (such as rote memorization and list learning) may inadequately engage learners or facilitate retention and contextual application. Therefore, advances that facilitate recurrent exposure, contemplation, and active utilization of vocabulary are necessary. This study addresses the existing gap by examining how an e-portfolio approach facilitates vocabulary acquisition in an accounting English for Specific Purposes (ESP) context.

Portfolio in Language Learning

E-portfolios, characterized as digital repositories for learners to compile artifacts, reflect on their development, and exhibit their work, have gained prominence in language education (Aprianti & Winarto, 2021). A recent

systematic review by Cakrawati and Yosintha (2025) indicates that e-portfolios have been the subject of growing research in EFL/ESL contexts, particularly concerning writing and vocabulary competencies.

Additional studies have examined students' perceptions of electronic portfolios. For example, a qualitative study conducted in Indonesia revealed that students regarded the use of e-portfolios as easily accessible and beneficial for organizing learning materials (Aprianti & Winarto, 2021).

A study indicated that e-portfolio assessment, as opposed to traditional assessments, favorably influenced vocabulary retention among Iranian EFL learners (Nourdad & Banagozar, 2022).

Consequently, e-portfolios demonstrate potential as instruments to facilitate vocabulary acquisition via reflection, artifact creation, and self-assessment. Nevertheless, the research is deficient in targeted studies that use e-portfolios within an English for Specific Purposes vocabulary framework, particularly in accounting.

Google Sites as a Learning Tool

Although e-portfolios can be utilized across several platforms, a widely accessible and favored option is Google Sites. Google Sites provides complimentary, web-based capabilities, seamless integration of multimedia, connections to Google Drive/Docs, and uncomplicated sharing options. These attributes render it appropriate for student-created portfolios in higher education.

Research conducted at Indonesian universities indicates that students have favorable experiences utilizing Google Sites for e-portfolios. Hidayati (2024) examined students' impressions of Google Sites e-portfolios in a Language Material Development course, identifying important advantages such as accessibility, material management, and digital storage.

A separate study underscored challenges: whereas students appreciated the versatility of e-portfolio tools, they also encountered technical difficulties (unstable internet connection), motivational declines, and adaptation obstacles

(Ali et al, 2024).

Due to its characteristics and prevalence inside Google Workspace, Google Sites serves as a suitable platform for the adoption of e-portfolios in ESP courses. Nevertheless, few research has utilized Google Sites explicitly for the acquisition of accounting terminology, a deficiency that the current study seeks to rectify.

Implementing e-portfolios presents obstacles, including ensuring technological access, engaging students in reflective practices, scaffolding portfolio development, and connecting portfolio duties with course objectives. Research indicates that in the absence of suitable scaffolding, certain students may participate superficially or experience a sense of overwhelm during the process (Ali et al., 2024).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research approach to investigate students' experiences with Google Sites e-portfolios for learning accounting vocabulary. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because it enables a deep understanding of participants' perspectives, feelings, and reflections on their learning experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The descriptive qualitative design provides a detailed view of students' experience without manipulating variables or testing hypotheses. The primary objective was to describe how students utilised Google Sites e-portfolios to enhance their learning of accounting vocabulary and how they perceived their effectiveness in supporting language development.

The research was conducted at the Bahasa Inggris Program Sarjana Terapan Study Program, Faculty of Languages and Literatures, Universitas Negeri Makassar. The participants were selected using purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique that allows the researcher to intentionally choose individuals who possess specific characteristics or experiences relevant to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 201).

In this study, eight students were selected who had relevant experiences and could provide rich, meaningful information. These students had actively used

Google Sites e-portfolios throughout the semester and demonstrated a willingness to share their insights in interviews (Sugiyono, 2010). The sample consisted of six female and two male students, aged between 17 and 19 years.

The primary data collection instrument was a semi-structured interview, which was designed to elicit details of students' experiences with Google Sites e-portfolios. The semi-structured interview allowed the researcher to follow a set of guiding questions while maintaining flexibility to explore emerging themes during the conversation (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). The interview guide included questions related to; 1) students' first impressions and motivation in using Google Sites; 2) The process of creating and managing e-portfolios for accounting vocabulary tasks; 3) The perceived benefits of e-portfolios in learning and retaining accounting term; 4) the challenges encountered while using the platform; 5) Reflection on how e-portfolios influenced their engagement and autonomy in learning. The interview took approximately 30-45 minutes and was conducted in Bahasa Indonesia.

The interview data were analysed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2019) which has six phases framework; 1) Familiarisation with data by reading and re-reading the transcripts; 2) Generating initial codes to identify meaningful data segments related to the research focus; 3) Searching for themes by grouping codes into broader patterns reflecting students' experiences; 4) Reviewing themes to ensure they accurately represented the dataset; 5) Defining and naming themes to provide clear explanations and supporting quotations; 6) producing the report by integrating themes into the findings section with illustrative quotes.

To establish trustworthiness, the researcher employed Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was established through member checking, in which participants reviewed summaries of their interview data for accuracy and verification. The transferability was facilitated by offering a comprehensive view of the students' settings. Dependability and confirmability were ensured through meticulous and reflective notes during the investigation.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Students' First Impression and Motivation in Using Google Sites

Most participants reported positive first impressions of using Google Sites as a new digital learning tool. For many, this was their first experience building a website to display learning content. Several students expressed excitement and curiosity at being introduced to a professional-looking platform that made them feel like "real accountants preparing reports." Participant B commented, *"I was excited because I could design my own page and upload my vocabulary tasks like a personal accounting website."*

The motivation stemmed from two primary sources: the novelty and visibility of progress. Students were motivated by the ability to personalise their portfolios with colours, sections, and images, which gave them a sense of ownership over their learning materials. They also valued how their progress became visually traceable through the platform. Participant A stated, "Seeing my work arranged neatly made me feel proud and more serious about learning."

The finding supports Ali et al. (2024), who argue that digital portfolios enhance learner motivation by giving students control over their learning process. In the context of applied English learning, the aesthetic and organisational features of Google Sites appeared to encourage sustained engagement. Moreover, the participant noted that Google Sites was "modern" and "professional," aligning with their vocational identity as future business professionals.

However, some students initially felt hesitant due to unfamiliarity with website-building tools. Two respondents admitted they were "nervous at first" and worried that it would be too technical. Nonetheless, after brief guidance and peer sharing, their confidence increased. This aligns with Bergamin et al. (2015) and C. Zhong and Lyu (2022), who emphasised that scaffolding and peer collaboration are crucial in overcoming initial challenges when adopting new technologies.

The Process of Creating and Managing E-Portfolio

To enhance the verbal presentation of the findings, the research outcomes may be illustrated using tables, graphs, or images, depending on the requirement.

Titles for tables and graphs, as well as captions for images, should be concise phrases rather than complete sentences. Captions for images or graphs are positioned beneath them, while table titles are situated above the respective tables. Titles always commence with capital letters.

The process of developing the e-portfolios involved several steps: creating a Google Site, adding vocabulary pages, embedding definitions and examples, and uploading images or videos related to accounting terms. Students generally described the process as structured yet flexible, allowing them to learn both linguistic and digital literacy skills simultaneously.

Many participants mentioned using features such as "text boxes," "image embedding," and "link insertion" to connect definitions with real-world accounting context. Participant D explained, *"I divided my site into sections, like 'Assets', 'Liabilities', and 'Financial Reports', and put vocabulary in each section with pictures from real documents."*

This creative process encouraged them to categorise and relate accounting terms in a meaningful way, which is consistent with Cakrawati and Yosintha (2025), who found that e-portfolio activities promote cognitive engagement and knowledge organisation. Another participant reflected that managing vocabulary through Google Sites *"helped me connect one concept with another because I saw them all together on one page"*

Nevertheless, students also highlighted that the process required careful time management. Four of them mentioned that uploading content and designing pages was *"time-consuming but satisfying"*. Despite this, they agreed that the time invested was worthwhile because it helped them internalise vocabulary more deeply. Participant C stated, *"it took more time than just writing on paper, but I remembered the words better."*

The process also enhanced students' digital competence. Several participants noted that they learned to handle website navigation, media uploading, and hyperlink integration skills they had not previously mastered. This development aligns with the findings of N. Y. D. C. Rani and Nissa (2024), who demonstrated that e-portfolios enhance students' digital literacy and reflective

learning.

Perceived Benefits of E-Portfolio in Learning and Retaining Accounting Vocabulary

All eight students reported that using Google Sites e-portfolios had a positive impact on their vocabulary learning and retention. The benefits emerged in three interconnected dimensions: cognitive, affective, and practical.

From a cognitive perspective, students reported that repeatedly viewing and updating their e-portfolios helped them retain vocabulary for a more extended period. The participants E explained, *"When I checked my portfolio before exams, I could remember the terms more easily because I had written and organised them by myself."* In addition, the participants H stated that the process of combining definitions, images, and examples *"made the meaning more concrete and memorable."*

Practically, the e-portfolio helped students connect academic learning with a real-world accounting context. Several respondents reported that linking vocabulary to images of invoices, balance sheets, or financial statements enhanced their understanding of how those terms are used in a professional context. The participants E reflected, *"Before, I just memorised the words, but now I know where they appear in real accounting documents."*

These findings are consistent with those of Lam (2022) and Nourdad and Banagozar (2022), who noted that e-portfolios promote deep processing and self-regulated learning, leading to improved vocabulary retention. Similarly, Cheng (2022) emphasised that e-portfolios support multimodal learning, integrating text and visuals to enhance comprehension. In the context of English for Accounting, Google Sites e-portfolios functioned as both a learning tool and a professional simulation platform.

Challenge Encountered while Using the Platform

Despite the generally positive experiences, all participants reported encountering some challenges, particularly of a technical and design nature. The most frequently mentioned issues were difficulties in adjusting page layouts, inserting multimedia elements, and managing site organisation. The F remarked,

"Sometimes the pictures would not upload or the layout changed suddenly, and I had to redo it."

Another challenge was limited digital proficiency at the beginning of the semester. A few students mentioned needing extra guidance to understand how to create new pages or hyperlinks. They suggested that short training sessions or tutorial videos could be helpful. As participant G stated, *"It would be better if we had a tutorial video step by step on how to use Google Sites before starting the project."*

Time management also emerged as a mirror obstacle. Several participants admitted that creating and maintaining the site was more time-consuming than completing traditional assignments. Nevertheless, they acknowledged that the process enhanced their engagement in the learning process.

A smaller number of students noted compatibility and accessibility issues, particularly when using mobile devices. Participant B commented, *"It is easier to edit using a laptop; sometimes the display on the phone is confusing."* These challenges echo findings from N. Y. D. C. Rani and Nissa (2024), who reported that students often struggle with the technical aspects of e-portfolio construction without proper scaffolding.

Interestingly, despite these difficulties, all students maintained a positive overall evaluation of their experience. They perceived the challenges as learning opportunities that helped them develop patience, creativity, and problem-solving skills-qualities essential for professional success.

Reflection on How E-Portfolio Influenced Engagement and Autonomy in Learning

One of the most significant findings of this study is the way Google Sites e-portfolios fostered student engagement and autonomy. Students reported becoming more active in organising, evaluating, and reflecting on their learning process. Participant C explained, *"Because the site was mine, I wanted to make it good and complete, so I checked my vocabulary every week."*

The sense of ownership encouraged self-directed learning. Participants described monitoring their progress and updating their sites voluntarily without

external pressure. Participant D reflected, *"I felt responsible for my site, so I did not wait for the lecturer's instructions. I added new words after every class."*

Such behaviours indicate the emergence of learner autonomy, as defined by Segaran and Hasim (2021), which involves learners taking responsibility for their own learning. In this case, the e-portfolio became a medium for self-assessment and independent exploration.

Moreover, the reflective component of the e-portfolio, which included brief notes about each vocabulary item, helped students evaluate their misunderstandings. Several participants mentioned that reflection encouraged them to connect new vocabulary with prior knowledge and real accounting practices. The participant F said, *"Writing reflection helped me see what I still did not understand and what I already mastered."*

These findings are supported by BaniYounes et al. (2024), who demonstrated that e-portfolios promote self-regulated learning behaviours such as planning, monitoring, and evaluation. In addition, students emphasised that sharing their sites with peers or instructors provided a sense of accountability and motivation to improve their work.

Engagement was also evident in students' enthusiasm for personalising their portfolios. They experimented with design features, fonts, and themes to express creativity. This multimodal engagement, combining linguistic, visual, and digital elements, strengthened their connection to the learning task. As participant F summarised, : It's not just learning vocabulary; it is learning how to present information clearly, like in honest business communication.

The use of Google Sites e-portfolios thus successfully merged language learning with digital professionalism, making the activity relevant to students' future careers. The integration of authentic materials, peer feedback, and reflective writing all contributed to a holistic learning experience that enhanced both engagement and autonomy.

CONCLUSION

This study explored students' experiences in using Google Sites e-portfolios for learning accounting vocabulary in an English for Accounting course at Universitas Negeri Makassar. The findings revealed that students demonstrated high motivation, active engagement, and growing autonomy throughout the e-portfolio implementation process. Thematic analysis identified five key aspects of their experiences: initial impressions, creation and management processes, perceived benefits, challenges, and reflective engagement.

Students' first impressions were characterised by enthusiasm and curiosity toward learning through a modern digital tool. They perceived the e-portfolio as not only a language learning medium but also a professional showcase reflecting real accounting practices. The process of creating and managing e-portfolios fostered creativity, organisation, and technological skills. Most importantly, the use of Google Sites enhanced students' understanding and retention of accounting vocabulary through contextualisation and multimodal learning activities.

Despite technical challenges such as layout design and time management, students valued the learning process as a meaningful and reflective experience. They reported feeling more responsible for their learning process and were motivated to improve their portfolios independently, indicating the emergence of learner autonomy.

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