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A Review of ePortfolio Research and its Implications for Translator Education

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Abstract: With the advancement of China's National Education Digitalization Strategy, ePortfolios have become useful teaching tools, increasingly attracting attention from teachers and researchers in China. This paper reviews and analyzes relevant studies published between 2016 and 2025 in Chinese core journals and journals indexed in the Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index (CSSCI). Through literature review, it can be found that research on ePortfolios in China has made certain progress in their design, implementation, and assessment. However, there remain some limitations, including a lack of empirical research and longitudinal studies. Drawing on existing research findings, this paper proposes that ePortfolios focusing on the development of translation competence should be constructed in translator education. This can be achieved by establishing connections among translation competence, learning evidence, and assessment rubrics, thereby promoting students' autonomous learning and competence development and further improving the quality of translator education.

Keywords: ePortfolio; Translator Education; Translation Competence; Learning Assessment; Autonomous Learning.

1. Introduction

The rapid development of digital and information technologies and their applications in education have brought about continuous changes in learning models. The *Master Plan on Building China into a Leading Country in Education (2024–2035)* proposes the implementation of the National Education Digitalization Strategy and calls for "seeking effective approaches to leveraging digital technologies to support large-scale personalized instruction and innovative teaching, and proactively adapting to changes in learning methods" [1]. In this regard, higher education institutions should change their education philosophy and teaching models to meet the new demands posed by technology-enabled education and digital transformation. Universities should concentrate on students' needs for autonomous and personalized learning and change the direction of their attention from knowledge transfer to students' competence development and continuous growth. Through the use of digital learning platforms and intelligent technologies, universities will be able to document the process of learning exhibited by learners, display their learning outcomes, promote reflection and improvement, and employ varied forms of assessment. Through digital technologies, personalized learning is achievable, and this will assist instructors in tailoring learning to individual learners. The ePortfolio, which incorporates learning, presenting, and assessing functions, can help to achieve these objectives.

2. Methodology

A literature review was carried out in the CNKI Journal Database regarding research papers published within the past decade (2016-2025) in order to study the design, implementation, and evaluation of ePortfolio in China. This search was conducted with the following terms: "电子档案袋" (electronic portfolio), "电子学档" (electronic learning portfolio), "数字档案袋" (digital portfolio), "电子学习档案袋" (electronic learning portfolio), "电子学习档案" (electronic learning records), "数字化档案袋" (digitalized portfolio), "电子成长档案袋" (electronic developmental portfolio), "ePortfolio," and "e-Portfolio." The search was restricted to core Chinese journals and those listed in the CSSCI (Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index). The number of papers retrieved was 53, of which 42 articles remained after removing duplicates. The main focus of this research was to examine the ways in which ePortfolios can employ digital technologies for personalized learning and talent development, as well as their applications in translator education. Thus, the following criteria for inclusion and exclusion were set:

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
1.Studies primarily focusing on learners' ePortfolios; 2.Studies mainly focusing on the design, implementation, learning supports, assessment, or technological framework associated with ePortfolios; 3.Studies published between 2016 and 2025 in Chinese core journals or journals indexed in the Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index (CSSCI), in accordance with the established search scope.	1.Studies not related to learner ePortfolios, such as those dealing with teachers' development or record management by administration; 2. Studies that have not investigated but only refer to ePortfolios; 3.Studies that fail to satisfy the existing criteria concerning publication years, scope of journals, or document types.

Based on the above-mentioned criteria, an initial screening of the 42 articles was carried out through the analysis of their titles, abstracts, and keywords to rule out papers that are not relevant. The next step involved thoroughly examining the content of the papers in order to determine their research subjects and the content. Lastly, there were 11 articles selected for the analysis. These 11 articles were analyzed, and the following information was obtained: research type, research subjects, research objectives, research methods, ePortfolio design and functions, and the findings and

limitations of these studies. In addition, implications for translator training were initially determined from them.

3. Findings

(1) ePortfolio Design

To examine the design of ePortfolios in China, this study analyzes the relevant literature in terms of design concepts and principles, as well as content structure and functions.

ePortfolio design involves the incorporation of the following principles and concepts. Firstly, it places learners at the center and emphasizes their autonomous development. According to Lin Lilan and Hong Ye (2020), ePortfolio assessment takes into consideration the new perspectives towards learning and assessment whereby learners are participants not objects[2]. According to Lin Lilan (2021), ePortfolios are utilized in an autonomous learning course for college English to encourage the growth of students' autonomous learning abilities[3]. Luan Huimin et al. (2023) suggest that students should be proactive in the assessment of ePortfolios to enhance self-monitoring and self-management abilities through active self-reflection and self-assessment[4]. Secondly, it highlights formative assessment along with different modes of assessment. Liu Jianda et al. (2024) argue that the feedback function of formative assessment should be fully employed in the use of ePortfolios. Through increasing classroom participation and motivation for autonomous learning activities conducted out of the classroom, formative assessment may be utilized to improve the learning process as well as to facilitate learning through assessment[5]. Li Min and Qiu Bingchang (2023) recommend developing formative assessment and continuous assessment of students' learning results via online learning platforms[6]. Luan Huimin et al. (2023) believe that active participation of students and the guiding role of teachers should be stressed, and that a diversified assessment system that includes student self-assessment, peer assessment, and teacher assessment should be built[4]. Finally, clear design objectives and sound assessment criteria need to be set. Tan Honghui et al. (2021) point out that no matter which platform is chosen to develop ePortfolios, clear objectives and criteria for assessment should be set according to actual circumstances and learners' requirements[7]. Wang Huijun and Ma Yanyan (2019) argue that it is necessary to develop consistent assessment rubrics in order to make the assessment objective and fair[8]. To conclude, the design concepts and principles of ePortfolios in China stress the importance of learner-centeredness and autonomous development, formative and diverse assessment, as well as clear design objectives and criteria for assessment.

The structure of ePortfolios in China mainly involves the following components. The structure of an ePortfolio, that is, its content, typically includes learner information, evidence from the learning process, learning outcomes, and assessment and reflection materials. Yu Ping and Zhu Zhiting (2016) point out that electronic learning portfolios generally contain three types of information, including information about the portfolio holder[9]. Luan Huimin et al. (2023) suggest that Finland's practice of using ePortfolios to continuously document the learning process is worth learning from, emphasizing the collection and documentation of process-related evidence[4]. Liu Jianda and Li Xuelian (2020) propose that portfolios require students to purposefully collect, select, and organize artifacts that reflect their learning processes and outcomes. Such artifacts may take the form of audio, video, images, texts, and hyperlinks[10]. In addition, Liu Jianda et al. (2024) include a separate "experience and reflection portfolio" in their research design to collect and store students' learning plans, targeted reflections, and materials related to corrections and reflections on periodic tests[5]. The ePortfolios mainly have four functions: learning documentation and presentation of outcomes, learning assessment and feedback, autonomous learning and competence development, and interaction and instructional support. Yu Ping and Zhu Zhiting (2016) point out that ePortfolio systems use digital technologies to manage learning portfolios, which involve the collection, storage, presentation, and interactive use of learning data. Their main functions include documenting the learning process, showcasing artifacts, promoting learning reflection, assessing learning, and supporting career development[9]. Wu Jinhang and Huang Yuanjia (2025) suggest that ePortfolios for labor education can collect diverse data, continuously document learning activities, track student development, and provide evidence for teaching and learning reflection[11]. Liu Jianda and Li Xuelian (2020) argue that ePortfolios can comprehensively document students' learning processes and improve their reflection, assessment, and learning abilities[10]. In terms of learning assessment and feedback, Lin Lilan and Hong Ye's (2020) study involves student self-assessment and reflection[2], while Liu Jianda et al. (2024) point out that ePortfolios can serve a feedback function in formative assessment by providing targeted feedback to students[5]. Regarding the promotion of autonomous learning and competence development, Lin Lilan and Hong Ye (2020) point out that, in a digital learning environment, ePortfolio assessment provides space for storing evidence of learning outcomes, and can support personalized learning and promote the development of students' autonomous learning abilities[2]. In terms of interaction and instructional support, Lin Lilan and Hong Ye's (2020) study shows that ePortfolio assessment plays a positive role in student self-reflection, self-assessment, interaction, and English language use[2]. Liu Jianda and Li Xuelian (2020) suggest that "teachers, schools, and educational administration departments can refer to ePortfolio data to make macro-level adjustments to teaching strategies," reflecting the role of ePortfolios in supporting instructional management and decision-making[10].

(2) ePortfolio Implementation

In terms of application levels and participants, the application of ePortfolios in China covers different levels of education, including higher education, vocational education, and basic education. The participants include undergraduate students, higher vocational college students, and primary and secondary school students. Among these, higher education and undergraduate students are the most frequently studied. In terms of application fields and contexts, ePortfolios are used in college English, film and animation programs in higher vocational education, labor education in primary and secondary schools, professional master's programs, and lifelong learning, demonstrating a relatively broad range of applications. The implementation process of ePortfolios generally covers preparation, implementation, and summary and feedback. Li Min and Qiu Bingchang (2023) state that "in teaching practice, the process of ePortfolio assessment consists of three stages: preparation, implementation, and summary"[6]. The preparation stage mainly involves clarifying implementation objectives, formulating assessment criteria, determining portfolio content, and providing operational guidance. Liu Jianda et al. (2024) point out that

ePortfolios should have clear usage objectives, appropriate assessment criteria, diverse module designs, and targeted operational guidance[5]. Li Min and Qiu Bingchang (2023) emphasize that before implementation, teachers and students should be instructed to grasp the principles of portfolio assessment, clarify the assessment mechanism, and understand its significance, content, and methods[6]. During the implementation stage, the main activities include carrying out learning tasks, collecting learning evidence, documenting the learning process, and conducting diversified assessment. Li Min and Qiu Bingchang (2023) suggest that the implementation of ePortfolio assessment mainly involves clarifying assessment criteria, collecting learning evidence, conducting diversified assessment, and providing feedback and conducting reflection. They also emphasize the importance of incorporating professional characteristics and using online teaching platforms to document and assess the learning process[6]. Zhang Fang (2021), in a college English oral course, used a cloud-based teaching platform to assign learning tasks, through which students uploaded audio and video assignments to create electronic learning portfolios and conducted self-assessment, peer assessment, and teacher assessment[12]. According to Liu Jianda et al. (2024), "Learning and Growth Portfolio" and "Experience and Reflection Portfolio" were set up for students to record their learning outcomes and their learning process, and to conduct periodic reflection[5]. The summary and feedback stage focuses primarily on giving feedback on the overall assessment results, aiding students to summarize and reflect on what they have learned, demonstrating and sharing learning outcomes, and enhancing the implementation plan. Li Min and Qiu Bingchang (2023) state that comprehensive assessment feedback, the presentation of learning outcomes, and summary and reflection contribute to improvement of learning. In addition, it is crucial to evaluate and refine the process of the assessment so that its effectiveness can be improved[6].

(3) ePortfolio Evaluation

It is necessary to assess the usage of the ePortfolio to determine its effectiveness. The assessment will help to define its practical significance and existing drawbacks.

Existing research has focused on the effectiveness of ePortfolios in relation to their impact on learning outcomes, autonomous learning ability, learning engagement, and reflection abilities. Zhang (2021) analyzed the effectiveness of cloud-based ePortfolios for college English speaking instruction using pre-tests, post-tests, questionnaires, and interviews. From the findings, it can be seen that there were improvements in students' English speaking ability, learning engagement, confidence, and interest in learning[12]. Liu Jianda et al. (2024) found that game elements and formative feedback through the use of gamified ePortfolios helped increase the learning engagement and motivation of students to engage in autonomous learning[5]. Lin Lilan and Hong Ye(2020) investigated the experience of students and found that students in general understood the importance of ePortfolios in facilitating autonomous learning[2]. From these studies, we may conclude that the use of ePortfolios is beneficial as it helps to increase students' involvement, autonomy, and reflection.

ePortfolios are important tools for assessment, and the reliability of their assessment is also an important aspect of evaluating their effectiveness. Lin Lilan (2021) analyzed the inter-rater reliability of ePortfolio assessment in terms of scoring consistency, correlation, and differences. The findings showed a certain degree of consistency and correlation among raters, but task types, task presentation, rater roles, and differences in understanding assessment rubrics may lead to scoring bias[3]. Li Min and Qiu Bingchang (2023) point out that ePortfolio assessment can be rather subjective and make it hard to apply assessment criteria, which may affect the objectivity and fairness of assessment results[6]. Existing studies have shown that ePortfolio assessment has certain reliability. However, there are many factors that affect the quality of ePortfolio assessment, and its validity and consistency need to be studied further.

4. Discussion

A review of the 11 studies shows that ePortfolio research in China has made certain progress in design principles, structure, functions, implementation, and evaluation. First, the design principles underlying ePortfolios have become diversified. Current literature highlights the importance of a learner-oriented perspective, where the focus is on developing the competence of the learner, and autonomous learning and reflection through documentation of learning processes are encouraged. In the design phase, the focus is on setting up design goals clearly, using proper assessment criteria, and incorporating formative evaluation and multiple evaluation methods in the design of ePortfolios. Relevant studies have also examined the content structure and functions of ePortfolios, offering a basis for further optimization of their development and application. Second, there have been further developments in the study of ePortfolios, examining practices such as pre-implementation training, collection of evidence of learning, documentation of learning process, assessment, and feedback and reflection. These studies serve as references for the use of ePortfolios in various educational situations. Relevant studies cover different educational levels, from higher to vocational to basic levels, and in various areas such as language teaching, professional education, labor education, and lifelong education. In general, existing research has revealed a fairly well-defined implementation process for ePortfolios and considered their use in a variety of areas. Lastly, there have been some advancements made in researching the evaluation of ePortfolios. The existing literature has considered the usefulness of ePortfolio utilization concerning learning engagement, autonomous learning, learning experiences, and learning outcomes. Certain empirical studies have shown that there are positive impacts of ePortfolios on learning engagement and autonomous learning. Meanwhile, some related research has already started to pay attention to the inter-rater reliability of ePortfolio evaluation and its influential factors, which will be helpful to improve the evaluation criteria of ePortfolios.

5. Implications for Translator Education

(1) ePortfolio Design for Translator Education

The design of ePortfolios should have clear objectives and follow a translation competence-oriented approach. In the design process, ePortfolios should be closely aligned with translator training objectives, with learning evidence collected in relation to corresponding competencies. Their content structure, functions, and assessment criteria should meet the requirements for translation competence development. Clear correspondences should be established

between translation competence and learning evidence, and explicit assessment rubrics should be developed. By establishing connections among competencies, evidence, and rubrics, ePortfolios can support the development of students' autonomous learning ability.

The design of the ePortfolio structure and its function should be appropriate according to the defined objective and principles. The design can draw on the approaches of the "Learning and Growth Portfolio" and the "Experience and Reflection Portfolio" by incorporating translation tasks, revision records, material for researching terminology, feedback on assessments, and learning reflections into respective portfolios. This approach takes into account learning processes, learning outcomes, and reflective development. Functions such as learning documentation, demonstration of learning achievements, learning assessment, feedback and reflection, and competence development can be facilitated by the dual-portfolio approach.

(2) ePortfolio Implementation for Translator Education

Existing studies have looked into the three phases of ePortfolio implementation—preparation, implementation, and summary and feedback. Based on past research, the application of ePortfolios to translator education can follow a similar process. During the preparation stage, the translation competencies to be developed and the learning evidence to be included in the portfolios should be identified, and necessary training on portfolio use should be provided. During the implementation stage, translation activities should be carried out according to the translation competencies set. The first translations, revision drafts, glossaries, and other proof of the process need to be gathered. At the stage of summary and feedback, students need to be helped to structure their learning outcomes, hand in their translations, and write reflection on translation.

The student's proactive role during the implementation stage should be stressed in order to use reflection as a means of developing autonomous and metacognitive learning skills among the students. Translation ePortfolios are important not only as mediums for storage of translation products but also as valuable learning tools. The process of setting learning goals, revision of work, learning reflection, and giving and receiving feedback helps identify weaknesses in translation competencies and make relevant adjustments in the learning processes. In addition to that, it is necessary to utilize the assessment role of ePortfolios by creating appropriate rubrics for assessments. This can be achieved through providing continuous feedback using various types of assessment such as teacher assessment, peer assessment, and self-assessment, which will lead to a continuous learning cycle.

(3) ePortfolio Evaluation for Translator Education

In light of the results obtained from the above-reviewed studies, the effectiveness and reliability of ePortfolios should be assessed and recommendations for improving and optimizing them should be put forward. First, it would be necessary to analyze whether the ePortfolios fulfill their intended goals, including fostering translation competence, reflection, and autonomy in the learners. Students' experiences while using ePortfolios must not be ignored. The success of ePortfolios will need to be measured based on the quality of translated works, performances during the learning process, and competence building. Second, as an assessment instrument, ePortfolios should have assessment rubrics designed for various dimensions of translation competence. Specific and operational rubrics can improve the reliability of assessment results. Existing research findings can also be drawn upon, with indicators such as inter-rater reliability used for evaluation, so as to continuously improve the quality and stability of ePortfolio assessment. Finally, empirical validation of the effectiveness of ePortfolios should be strengthened. As the review indicates, empirical investigations into the effectiveness of ePortfolios in China remain insufficient. Future research should employ methods such as teaching experiments, pre- and post-tests, comparisons between parallel classes, questionnaires, and longitudinal tracking. Through the collection and analysis of teaching data, further empirical research can be conducted to examine the actual effectiveness of ePortfolios.

6. Conclusion

This study reviews and analyzes literature on ePortfolios published in China between 2016 and 2025. It summarizes the main findings of domestic ePortfolio research in terms of design, implementation, and evaluation, and discusses their implications for translator education. Domestic ePortfolios have clear design principles, well-structured content, and relatively comprehensive functions. Overall, research on ePortfolios in China is characterized by diverse research types, varied research methods, multiple levels of research participants, and an expanding range of application fields. However, systematic empirical research remains insufficient, with relatively limited sample sizes and research contexts. Application-oriented studies also lack systematic evaluation of effectiveness, and long-term investigations into the effects of ePortfolio application remain inadequate. These studies provide a reference for the application of ePortfolios in translator education. Future research could focus on the development of translation competence, the optimization of ePortfolio design and implementation, the promotion of effective connections among learning evidence, assessment, and feedback, and the examination of their effectiveness through empirical research, thereby supporting the development and assessment reform of translation education.

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