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Reading Comprehension in the Digital Age: Strategies for STAI Nurul Falah Students

Novri Susanti Suparman*
Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam Nurul Falah Airmolek
novrisusantisuparman@gmail.com

Destri Wahyuningsih
Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan Insan Madani Airmolek

Abstract

Purpose - *This research seeks to explore the reading comprehension strategies employed by students at STAI Nurul Falah in the context of the digital era. It emphasizes identifying the obstacles they encounter and discovering effective approaches to improve their comprehension abilities.*

Design/methodology/approach - *This research utilized a mixed-methods approach by combining quantitative data from surveys and comprehension assessments with qualitative insights obtained through semi-structured interviews. This comprehensive method enabled a detailed understanding of students' reading habits and the challenges they face with digital texts.*

Findings/results - *The results indicated that while students generally preferred digital reading materials, they often struggled with distractions and found it difficult to grasp complex information. Active reading strategies, such as summarizing and using graphic organizers, proved effective in improving their comprehension. However, many students expressed a need for more structured support to strengthen these skills.*

Originality/value - *This research adds to the limited body of research on reading comprehension strategies within Islamic higher education institutions, providing practical insights into effectively incorporating digital reading into the curriculum to enhance students' academic achievement.*

Paper type – *Research paper*

Keywords: *Digital reading, Reading comprehension, Active reading strategies, Educational technology.*

***Correspondence**

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Introduction

In the digital age, reading comprehension has evolved significantly, particularly among Generation Z, who have grown up in an environment saturated with technology. With the proliferation of digital texts, students are increasingly required to navigate and comprehend diverse formats, from e-books to online articles and multimedia content. This shift presents unique challenges and opportunities for educational institutions, particularly for those like STAI Nurul Falah, which aims to equip its students with essential literacy skills for the modern world. Research indicates that the ability to understand and critically evaluate information from various digital sources is paramount for academic success and lifelong learning (Suparman, 2021).

The objective of this article is to explore effective strategies for enhancing reading comprehension among students at STAI Nurul Falah in the context of digital learning environments. By identifying and analyzing various pedagogical approaches, this study seeks to provide educators with practical tools to foster better comprehension skills among their students. Previous studies have shown that incorporating technology into reading instruction can improve engagement and understanding (Harris, 2019). However, there remains a gap in the literature regarding specific strategies that cater to the unique needs of students at Islamic higher education institutions like STAI Nurul Falah.

The literature review will draw on a range of sources, including journal articles and books, to establish a theoretical framework for this research. Key studies will include investigations into digital literacy, reading strategies, and comprehension assessments. Notable works such as those by (Suparman, Novri Susanti, 2024) and (Nayeen et al., 2020) will provide insights into effective teaching methodologies that can be adapted for a digital learning context. This article will also incorporate findings from empirical studies that have examined reading comprehension in diverse educational settings.

As we delve deeper into the subject, the discussion will focus on several key items: the impact of digital reading on comprehension skills, the role of technology in facilitating reading instruction, and the specific challenges faced by students at STAI Nurul Falah in adapting to these new modalities. Ultimately, this article aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on literacy in the digital age, offering actionable strategies that can enhance reading comprehension and empower students to thrive in their academic pursuits.

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Strategies for Enhancing Readig Comprehension Skills

Enhancing reading comprehension skills is crucial for students, especially in an era where information is increasingly accessed digitally. Several strategies can be employed to improve these skills, including active reading techniques, the use of graphic organizers, and fostering metacognitive awareness.

Active reading techniques, such as annotating texts, summarizing key points, and asking questions, encourage students to engage deeply with the material. According to Duke and (Juni Erpida Nasution et al., 2024), these practices not only help in understanding the text but also promote retention of information. Similarly, graphic organizers, such as concept maps and storyboards, provide visual representations of information, aiding students in organizing their thoughts and clarifying complex ideas (Ponnudurai & Rycker, 2012).

Moreover, metacognitive strategies, which involve self-regulation and reflection on one's own reading processes, have been shown to enhance comprehension significantly. According to (Juni Erpida Nasution et al., 2024) teaching students to monitor their understanding and employ fix-up strategies when they encounter difficulties can lead to more effective reading practices.

By incorporating these strategies into the curriculum at STAI Nurul Falah, educators can empower students to become more proficient readers, better equipped to navigate the complexities of digital texts.

Future Directions for Reading Instruction at STAI Nurul Falah

As STAI Nurul Falah continues to adapt to the changing educational landscape, future directions for reading instruction must emphasize the integration of technology, differentiated instruction, and collaborative learning environments.

The integration of technology in reading instruction can take many forms, such as utilizing digital platforms for collaborative reading and discussion or employing adaptive learning technologies that cater to individual students' needs. According to(Böhlich & Oleti, 2017), technology can significantly enhance learning outcomes when used effectively, providing opportunities for personalized learning experiences that engage students and promote higher-order thinking skills.

Differentiated instruction is also essential for addressing the diverse needs of students. By employing a variety of instructional strategies and materials, educators can ensure that all students, regardless of their reading levels, can engage with texts meaningfully.

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(suparman, 2024.) highlights the importance of tailoring learning experiences to students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles, which can lead to improved comprehension and engagement.

Lastly, fostering a collaborative learning environment where students can engage in peer discussions and cooperative learning activities is vital. ((Johnson & Broadley, 2011) emphasize that cooperative learning not only enhances understanding but also builds essential social skills among students.

By focusing on these future directions, STAI Nurul Falah can create a dynamic and inclusive reading instruction framework that prepares students for success in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Method

This study utilizes a mixed-methods approach to investigate reading comprehension strategies among students at STAI Nurul Falah. The primary sources of data include surveys, interviews, and assessments conducted with a sample of 100 students from various academic programs. The context for this research is set within the academic year 2024, where the institution is focusing on enhancing students' literacy skills in light of the increasing reliance on digital resources for learning.

Participants

The participants in this study were 100 students from STAI Nurul Falah, selected using random sampling techniques from various academic programs. The participants represented a diverse range of academic levels and disciplines, including Islamic studies, education, and other related fields. The inclusion of students from different academic backgrounds provided a comprehensive understanding of reading comprehension challenges across the institution.

The demographic profile of the participants included both male and female students, with ages ranging from 18 to 25 years. All participants had access to digital learning resources and were familiar with using digital platforms for academic purposes. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from each student prior to data collection.

This diverse sample allowed for the analysis of how different factors, such as academic discipline and prior exposure to digital texts, influenced students' reading comprehension skills and their adaptation to digital reading environments.

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Data Sources

The quantitative data was collected through a structured survey designed to assess students' reading habits, comprehension skills, and their experiences with digital reading platforms. The survey included both closed-ended and open-ended questions, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of students' perceptions and practices. Additionally, reading comprehension assessments were administered to evaluate the effectiveness of current instructional strategies.

Qualitative data was gathered through semi-structured interviews with a subset of 20 students, selected through random sampling from the survey participants. These interviews aimed to provide deeper insights into students' challenges and strategies related to reading comprehension in digital formats.

Data Analysis Process

The quantitative data from the surveys and assessments were analyzed using statistical software (e.g., SPSS). Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize the participants' responses, while inferential statistics (e.g., t-tests and ANOVA) were utilized to identify significant differences in reading comprehension skills across different groups based on variables such as age, gender, and academic program.

For the qualitative data obtained from interviews, thematic analysis was used to identify patterns and themes related to reading comprehension strategies. The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim, and coding was applied to categorize the responses into meaningful themes. This approach facilitated a comprehensive understanding of the students' experiences and informed the development of effective instructional strategies tailored to the unique needs of STAI Nurul Falah students.

Overall, this method combines quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a holistic view of reading comprehension practices at STAI Nurul Falah, ultimately guiding the development of targeted interventions to enhance students' literacy skills in the digital age.

Result and Discussion

The results of this study reveal significant insights into the reading comprehension strategies employed by students at STAI Nurul Falah and their experiences with digital reading formats. The analysis of the survey data, coupled with qualitative insights from

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interviews, highlights both strengths and areas for improvement in students' reading practices.

Results

Digital Reading Preferences: A majority of students (78%) indicated a preference for digital texts over traditional print materials. This shift aligns with the broader trend among Generation Z learners, who are more comfortable navigating online resources. However, despite their preference, students reported challenges in maintaining focus and comprehending longer texts in digital formats.

Reading Comprehension Skills: The assessment results showed that students demonstrated varying levels of reading comprehension skills. Approximately 65% of students achieved satisfactory scores, while 35% struggled with understanding complex texts. The data suggest a correlation between students' use of active reading strategies and their performance, with those employing techniques such as summarizing and questioning scoring higher.

Barriers to Effective Comprehension: Qualitative data revealed that students face multiple barriers to effective reading comprehension. The most frequently cited challenges included information overload, distractions from notifications, and difficulties in managing time while engaging with digital texts. Many students expressed a desire for structured guidance in developing their reading strategies.

Impact of Instructional Strategies: The study found that students who participated in courses that integrated explicit reading comprehension instruction, including the use of graphic organizers and collaborative reading activities, reported improved understanding and retention of information. This finding supports the notion that targeted instructional strategies can enhance students' reading experiences.

Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the need for STAI Nurul Falah to adapt its reading instruction to better meet the needs of its students in a digital age. While students demonstrate a preference for digital texts, the challenges they face indicate a need for enhanced instructional support. Educators should focus on teaching effective reading strategies that can help students navigate digital resources more efficiently.

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Moreover, the results suggest that incorporating active reading techniques into the curriculum can significantly impact students' comprehension skills. Providing students with tools to summarize information, ask critical questions, and engage with texts actively can enhance their learning experiences and outcomes.

Finally, addressing the barriers to effective comprehension, such as digital distractions and information overload, is crucial. Educators should consider integrating mindfulness practices and time management techniques into their teaching to help students cultivate better focus and engagement with their reading tasks.

In conclusion, the findings of this study contribute valuable insights into the reading comprehension practices of students at STAI Nurul Falah. By implementing targeted strategies and addressing identified challenges, the institution can significantly enhance students' reading skills and better prepare them for success in an increasingly digital educational landscape.

Conclusion

This study has explored the reading comprehension strategies and experiences of students at STAI Nurul Falah within the context of digital learning environments. The findings indicate a clear preference for digital texts among students, coupled with varying levels of comprehension skills. While many students are adapting to the digital landscape, significant challenges remain, including distractions and difficulties in processing complex information.

The results emphasize the importance of integrating effective reading strategies into the curriculum. Active reading techniques, explicit instruction, and the use of graphic organizers have proven beneficial in enhancing students' comprehension skills. Additionally, addressing barriers such as information overload and digital distractions is vital for fostering a more conducive reading environment.

Moving forward, it is crucial for educators at STAI Nurul Falah to embrace innovative instructional approaches that cater to the diverse needs of their students. By providing structured support and resources, the institution can empower students to navigate digital texts effectively, leading to improved comprehension and academic success.

In summary, this research highlights the necessity of evolving reading instruction to align with the digital age, ensuring that students are equipped with the skills required to thrive in a rapidly changing educational landscape. Future research should continue to explore the

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impact of technology on reading practices and investigate additional strategies to support students in developing their literacy skills.

The Implication of Finding

The findings of this study have important implications for reading instruction at STAI Nurul Falah. **Firstly**, the preference for digital texts among students suggests that educators need to adapt their teaching methods to accommodate the shift toward digital learning environments. Integrating digital literacy and comprehension strategies into the curriculum is crucial to help students navigate and effectively understand complex digital materials.

Secondly, the effectiveness of active reading strategies, such as summarizing and using graphic organizers, highlights the need for explicit instruction in these techniques. Educators should prioritize teaching these strategies to enhance students' ability to engage with texts actively and improve comprehension. Furthermore, the identified challenges, such as distractions and information overload, imply that students require additional support in managing their digital reading experiences.

Lastly, the study suggests that STAI Nurul Falah can improve academic outcomes by providing structured guidance and tailored resources for digital reading. This could include offering workshops on digital reading skills, incorporating collaborative reading activities, and utilizing technology that supports personalized learning. These steps would better equip students to handle the demands of digital texts, ultimately contributing to their academic success

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