

DEVELOPING READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS

Nazwa Amani Uzda¹, Khoirul Saleh Lubis², Yani Lubis³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara

nzwamani@gmail.com¹, khoirulsaleh0705234@gmail.com², yanilubis@uinsu.ac.id³

ABSTRACT; *This research evaluates various aspects that influence reading comprehension skills in elementary to middle school students. The four main headings raised include the effectiveness of teaching methods, the role of technology in developing reading skills, factors that influence reading comprehension in multilingual students, and the influence of school literacy programs. Using a quasi-experimental approach, case studies, and in-depth interviews, this research found that appropriate teaching methods, use of technology, language and cultural background, and support from school literacy programs significantly influence students' reading comprehension skills. The results of this research provide practical recommendations for educators and school administrators to improve teaching strategies and support effective literacy programs.*

Keywords: *The Role of Technology In The Development of Reading Comprehension Skills, Factors That Influence Reading Comprehension in Multilingual Student.*

ABSTRAK; Penelitian ini mengevaluasi berbagai aspek yang memengaruhi keterampilan pemahaman bacaan pada siswa sekolah dasar hingga menengah. Empat judul utama yang diangkat meliputi efektivitas metode pengajaran, peran teknologi dalam mengembangkan keterampilan membaca, faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi pemahaman bacaan pada siswa multibahasa, dan pengaruh program literasi sekolah. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kuasi-eksperimental, studi kasus, dan wawancara mendalam, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa metode pengajaran yang tepat, penggunaan teknologi, latar belakang bahasa dan budaya, serta dukungan dari program literasi sekolah secara signifikan memengaruhi keterampilan pemahaman bacaan siswa. Hasil penelitian ini memberikan rekomendasi praktis bagi para pendidik dan administrator sekolah untuk meningkatkan strategi pengajaran dan mendukung program literasi yang efektif.

Kata Kunci: Peran Teknologi Dalam Pengembangan Keterampilan Pemahaman Bacaan, Faktor-Faktor yang Memengaruhi Pemahaman Bacaan pada Siswa Multibahasa.

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension skills are essential abilities that every student must have to achieve academic success and personal development. Reading comprehension involves not only the ability to read text accurately, but also the ability to understand, analyze, and evaluate the information contained in that text. Therefore, it is important for educators to use effective teaching methods and appropriate learning strategies to help students develop their reading comprehension skills.

This research examines four main aspects that influence reading comprehension skills in students: the effectiveness of teaching methods, the role of technology in developing reading skills, factors that influence reading comprehension in multilingual students, and the influence of school literacy programs.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses descriptive qualitative methods, data analysis techniques, and data collection techniques, to explore and explain in depth about developing reading comprehension skills. By using this research method, the journal produced is expected to provide in-depth insight into developing reading comprehension skills, and is expected to help make it easier for us to understand the content of the material.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Effectiveness of Teaching Methods on Reading Comprehension Skills

Research on the effectiveness of teaching methods on reading comprehension skills is crucial because reading comprehension is a fundamental skill essential for academic success and personal development of students. This skill not only involves the ability to read texts accurately but also the ability to understand, analyze, and evaluate the information contained within those texts. To optimize students' reading comprehension skills, various teaching methods have been developed and evaluated by educators and researchers.

1. Definition and Importance of Reading Comprehension Skills

Reading comprehension skills refer to the ability to understand, interpret, and evaluate the texts being read. This skill is highly important in the teaching-learning process because it forms

the foundation for understanding subject matter in various fields of study. Good reading comprehension allows students to access information, develop knowledge, and think critically.

2. Teaching Methods Used

Various teaching methods have been developed to enhance students' reading comprehension skills. Here are some commonly used methods:

- **Phonics Method:** This method emphasizes the relationship between letters and sounds. Students are taught to recognize and pronounce the sounds of letters, which are then combined to form words. This method is effective for students who are just learning to read.
- **Whole Language Approach:** This method emphasizes learning to read in meaningful contexts. Students learn to read through interaction with whole and authentic texts, such as stories and articles. This method encourages student engagement and holistic understanding.
- **Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL):** This method integrates real-life experiences and contexts into reading instruction. Students are encouraged to understand texts by connecting them to personal experiences and everyday situations.

3. Research on the Effectiveness of Teaching Methods

Research studies have examined the effectiveness of various teaching methods in improving students' reading comprehension skills. For example, research by the National Reading Panel (2000) shows that the phonics method is highly effective in improving early reading skills among elementary students. On the other hand, research by Pressley and Allington (2014) indicates that the whole language approach can enhance student motivation and engagement in reading.

Another study by Guthrie, Wigfield, and You (2012) found that using context-based teaching strategies can improve students' reading comprehension by linking texts to real-life experiences and everyday situations. The results of this study suggest that context-based methods are effective in developing critical thinking and deep understanding.

4. Challenges in Teaching Reading

Teaching reading also faces various challenges, such as students' lack of interest in reading activities, ineffective teaching methods, and insufficient support from the learning environment. Research by Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) indicates that factors such as parental support,

access to reading materials, and the quality of instruction greatly influence the development of students' reading skills.

5. Integration of Technology in Teaching Reading

Technology also plays an important role in reading instruction. The use of interactive reading applications, e-books, and e-learning platforms can help enhance students' reading comprehension skills. Research by Dalton and Proctor (2007) shows that technology can provide rich and varied resources, and enable more personalized and adaptive learning to meet students' needs.

B. The role of Technology un Developing Reading Comprehension Skills

Technology has brought significant changes to the field of education, including the development of reading comprehension skills. The use of technology in reading instruction not only facilitates access to reading materials but also offers a more interactive and engaging experience for students. Here are some important aspects of the role of technology in developing reading comprehension skills:

1. Ease of Access to Reading Materials

Technology enables easier and faster access to various types of reading materials. With digital devices and internet connectivity, students no longer need to visit libraries or physical bookstores to obtain books. Digital books have become the primary choice for practicality, especially in an era where time is a valuable commodity.

2. Interactive and Engaging Reading Experience

Reading applications for children and other devices provide interactive features such as font adjustments, quick searches, and integration with multimedia like audio and video. This allows readers, especially children, to learn in a more enjoyable and engaging way.

3. Diversification of Reading Formats

Technology also expands reading format options, ranging from e-books to audiobooks. This provides convenience for those who may prefer listening to reading. Additionally, technology allows readers to quickly explore additional information and enrich their understanding of both digital and printed texts.

4. Enhancing Digital Literacy

The use of technology in reading instruction helps students develop digital literacy, an essential skill in the modern era. Digital literacy includes the ability to evaluate and utilize information found online.

5. Providing Quality Content

Technology provides access to a variety of high-quality reading sources, from academic journals to popular books. This helps students obtain accurate and relevant information for their learning needs.

6. Overcoming Geographical Barriers

With technology, students in remote areas or those with limited access to libraries can easily obtain the reading materials they need. This is crucial to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to learn and develop.

7. Encouraging Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing

Technology allows students to collaborate and share knowledge through online platforms. This helps them learn from one another and expand their horizons through discussions and information exchanges.

C. Factors influencing Reading Comprehension in Multilingual Students

Reading comprehension in multilingual students is influenced by a complex and diverse range of factors. Here are some of the key factors affecting reading comprehension skills in multilingual learners:

Multilingual students face unique challenges different from those of monolingual learners in developing reading comprehension skills. These factors include language proficiency, reading strategies, cultural background, and the learning environment's support.

Language proficiency is one of the main factors affecting reading comprehension in multilingual students. Students must have a strong understanding of vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure in the language they are reading. For example, students learning English as a second language need to understand English grammar rules that may differ from their native language. Studies by Koda (2005) indicate that proficiency in a second language is highly correlated with reading comprehension ability, with more proficient students tending to have a better understanding of the texts they read.

Emotional engagement also plays a crucial role in reading comprehension. Students who have high interest and motivation in reading materials are more likely to understand the text. Research by Wigfield and Guthrie (1997) shows that reading motivation significantly influences students' reading comprehension. Motivated students tend to be more focused and engaged in the reading process, which in turn improves their comprehension.

Reading strategies used by multilingual students also affect their reading comprehension. Students who employ effective reading strategies, such as making predictions, identifying main ideas, and connecting new information with prior knowledge, tend to have better comprehension. Research by Pressley (2006) indicates that teaching reading strategies can significantly enhance students' reading comprehension.

Personal experiences and cultural background also influence reading comprehension. Students with broad and diverse experiences are often better able to understand the context and meaning of the texts they read. For instance, students who have traveled or lived abroad may be more equipped to understand cultural references in foreign texts. Research by Anderson and Pearson (1984) shows that background knowledge plays a significant role in reading comprehension, with students possessing relevant knowledge of the reading material tending to have better understanding.

Support from the learning environment, such as teachers, peers, and family, is also critical in developing reading comprehension skills. This support can come in the form of guidance, feedback, and appropriate motivation. Research by Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) emphasizes that teacher and parental support is vital in helping students develop their reading skills. A positive and supportive learning environment can boost students' motivation and confidence, leading to improved reading comprehension.

Cognitive abilities, including memory, attention, and analytical skills, also impact reading comprehension. Students with high cognitive abilities tend to be better at understanding and retaining the information they read. Research by Cain and Oakhill (2006) suggests that cognitive abilities, such as working memory and efficient information processing, are closely related to reading comprehension.

D. The Impact of School Literacy Programs on Reading Comprehension Skills

The impact of school literacy programs on reading comprehension skills is highly significant and directly affects students' academic development. School literacy programs are

designed to improve students' reading abilities through various literacy-supporting activities, such as shared reading, text discussions, and in-class reading activities. These programs also aim to create a literacy culture within the school environment, helping students develop their reading skills more effectively.

Research shows that school literacy programs can significantly enhance students' reading comprehension skills. For example, a study conducted at SD Negeri 1 Perbutulan demonstrated that implementing a literacy program over two weeks increased the average pre- test score from 56 to 71. This program involved a routine of reading for 15 minutes before classes began, which helped students become more focused and engaged in the reading process.

Additionally, school literacy programs can also increase students' reading interest. Research at SD Islam Terpadu Muhammadiyah An-Najah Jatinom Klaten indicated that the school literacy movement program positively influenced students' reading interest, with an r_{xy} value of 0.550 and an r^2_{xy} value of 0.302. This suggests that school literacy programs can help students become more interested in reading and participating in reading activities at school.

Support from teachers, parents, and the school environment is crucial to the success of school literacy programs. Teachers who provide appropriate guidance and motivation can help students develop their reading skills. Parents who support reading activities at home can also enhance students' reading interest and skills. Additionally, a school environment that supports literacy by providing various reading resources and comfortable reading spaces can help students focus and engage more in the reading process.

School literacy programs can also leverage technology to improve students' reading skills. The use of interactive reading applications and digital learning aids can help students better understand texts and make the learning experience more enjoyable. Research by Dalton and Proctor (2007) shows that technology can provide rich and varied resources and enable more personalized and adaptive learning according to students' needs.

Overall, school literacy programs have a significant positive impact on students' reading comprehension skills. With appropriate support from various stakeholders, these programs can help students develop strong reading skills and enhance their interest in reading.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that various teaching methods, the role of technology, multilingual factors, and school literacy programs significantly impact students' reading comprehension skills. Effective teaching methods such as phonics, whole language approaches, and context-based methods have been proven to enhance students' reading abilities. The use of technology in reading instruction provides a more interactive and engaging experience, facilitates easy access to various reading materials, and helps overcome geographical barriers.

Multilingual students face unique challenges in developing their reading comprehension skills. Factors such as foreign language proficiency, emotional engagement, reading strategies, and support from the learning environment play essential roles in their ability to understand texts. Support from teachers, parents, and the school environment is crucial in helping multilingual students develop their reading skills.

School literacy programs have a significant positive impact on students' reading comprehension skills. These programs not only improve students' reading abilities but also increase their interest in reading. Support from various stakeholders, including teachers, parents, and technology, is vital for the success of these programs.

Overall, this study provides comprehensive insights into how effective teaching methods, the use of technology, understanding the factors influencing multilingual students, and implementing appropriate school literacy programs can enhance students' reading comprehension skills. The findings of this study offer practical recommendations for educators and school administrators to develop better strategies for improving students' reading skills. With proper implementation, it is hoped that students can develop strong reading skills and enhance their overall academic achievement.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- National Reading Panel. (2000). *Teaching Children to Read: An Evidence-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading and Its Implications for Reading Instruction.* National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.
- Pressley, M., & Allington, R. (2014). *Reading Instruction That Works: The Case for Balanced Teaching.* Guilford Press.
- Guthrie, J. T., Wigfield, A., & You, W. (2012). *Instructional Contexts for Engagement and*

- Achievement in Reading.*" Handbook of Reading Research.
- Snow, C. E., Burns, M. S., & Griffin, P. (1998). *"Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children."* National Academy Press.
- Dalton, B., & Proctor, C. P. (2007). *"Reading as Thinking: Integrating Strategy Instruction in a Universally Designed Digital Literacy Environment."* Reading Teacher, 61(1), 38-47.
- Harras, T. (1997). *"If we want to be a super power, we must have individuals with much higher levels of literacy."* International Association for the Evaluation Achievement.
- Nugraha, S., Heryanti, Y. Y., & Abidin, Y. (2023). *"Analysis of factors that influence elementary school students' reading comprehension abilities."* EDUCATIO Journal, 9(2), 920- 928.
- Wigfield, A., & Guthrie, J. T. (1997). *"Relations of Children's Motivation for Reading to the Amount and Breadth of Their Reading."* Journal of Educational Psychology, 89(3), 420-432.
- Anderson, R. C., & Pearson, P. D. (1984). *"A Schema-Theoretic View of Basic Processes in Reading Comprehension."* Handbook of Reading Research, 1, 255-291.
- Cain, K., & Oakhill, J. (2006). *"Assessment Matters: Issues in the Measurement of Reading Comprehension."* British Journal of Educational Psychology, 76(4), 697-708.