

THE EFFECT OF DIGITAL LITERACY ON ENHANCING SELF-REGULATION IN TRAINING READING SKILLS AMONG EFL STUDENTS

Jie Yang

School of Foreign Languages and Cultures, Panzhihua University, Sichuan, 617000, China

<https://doi.org/10.54922/IJEHSS.2023.0615>

ABSTRACT

In the digital age, the importance of digital literacy is paramount, especially for EFL students who increasingly depend on digital resources to enhance their language skills. The study examines how digital literacy enables students to engage in self-paced learning, access a diverse range of online resources, and utilize digital tools and platforms for personalized reading practice. The paper argues that digital literacy significantly contributes to self-regulation by allowing students to track their progress, set reading goals, and actively engage in reading comprehension through interactive online activities. These digital competencies also enable students to critically evaluate and analyze digital texts, which is essential for developing effective reading strategies. Moreover, improved digital literacy skills are shown to aid EFL students in regulating their reading habits and managing their time more effectively. Overall, the findings highlight the essential role of digital literacy in enhancing self-regulation among EFL students, particularly in the development of reading skills. By providing access to various digital tools and platforms, digital literacy not only facilitates personalized and self-regulated learning but also empowers students to take control of their educational journey. The paper concludes that fostering digital literacy is crucial in the current educational landscape, where digital tools are integral to language learning and skill development.

Keywords: Digital Literacy, Self-regulation, Reading Skills, Efl Students, Interactive Learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's digital age, digital literacy has become an essential skill for individuals to navigate and thrive in the online world. This is particularly true for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, who rely heavily on digital resources to enhance their language skills (Abdullah, 2021). With the increasing availability of online platforms and tools, EFL students now have access to a wide range of resources specifically designed to improve their reading skills.

This paper aims to explore the effect of digital literacy on enhancing self-regulation in training reading skills among EFL students. By utilizing digital tools and platforms, students can engage in self-paced learning and personalized reading practice, enabling them to take control of their own learning journey. Furthermore, online platforms and tools allow students to track their progress and set reading goals, fostering a sense of ownership and motivation in their language development.

Moreover, interactive online activities and exercises promote active engagement and self-monitoring in reading comprehension. EFL students with digital literacy skills are also equipped with the ability to critically evaluate and analyze digital texts, enabling them to employ effective reading strategies. Lastly, improved digital literacy skills can help EFL students regulate their reading habits and effectively manage their time.

Overall, this paper highlights the significance of digital literacy in enhancing self-regulation in training reading skills among EFL students, providing valuable insights for educators and learners alike.

2. DIGITAL LITERACY PROVIDES ACCESS TO A WIDE RANGE OF ONLINE RESOURCES FOR IMPROVING READING SKILLS

Digital literacy plays a pivotal role in providing EFL students with access to a wide range of online resources for enhancing their reading skills. With the advent of technology and the internet, students now have the opportunity to explore an abundance of digital platforms, websites, and applications that are specifically designed to improve their reading abilities. These resources offer various interactive activities, exercises, and reading materials tailored to meet the diverse needs and interests of learners. By utilizing these resources, students can engage in self-directed learning, allowing them to develop their reading skills at their own pace and according to their individual preferences.

One of the primary advantages of digital literacy in relation to reading skill development is the ability to access a vast array of authentic reading materials (Neumann, et al., 2017). Online platforms provide EFL students with access to a wide range of texts, including articles, books, news reports, and academic journals. This exposure to authentic reading materials helps students to develop their comprehension skills and expand their vocabulary. Moreover, these resources often offer features such as audio recordings, translations, and annotations, which can further support students' understanding and engagement with the texts. Through consistent exposure to a variety of reading materials, students can enhance their reading fluency and gain a deeper understanding of different subjects.

Digital literacy also enables EFL students to actively participate in online communities and engage in collaborative reading practices. Online platforms and forums provide opportunities for students to interact with peers, teachers, and experts in the field. Through discussions, sharing ideas, and receiving feedback, students can develop critical thinking skills and enhance their reading comprehension. Collaborative reading practices allow students to engage in meaningful interactions, exchange perspectives, and gain new insights. This not only enhances their reading skills but also fosters a sense of community and motivation, as they can connect with like-minded individuals who share similar interests in reading and learning.

3. THE USE OF DIGITAL TOOLS AND PLATFORMS ENCOURAGES SELF-PACED LEARNING AND PERSONALIZED READING PRACTICE

The use of digital tools and platforms in language learning has revolutionized the way students acquire and practice reading skills. These technological advancements have opened up new possibilities for self-paced learning and personalized reading practice among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. With the availability of various digital resources, students can now engage with reading materials that cater to their individual interests and abilities, allowing them to develop their reading skills at their own pace (Castellani & Jeffs 2001).

Digital tools and platforms provide students with a wide range of reading materials in different formats, such as e-books, online articles, and interactive reading exercises. This variety of resources not only enhances their exposure to authentic texts but also allows them to choose materials that align with their personal preferences. Students can explore topics that interest them, whether it be science, history, or literature, and delve deeper into their chosen subjects. This

personalization of reading practice not only fosters intrinsic motivation but also increases engagement and comprehension, as students are more likely to invest their time and effort into reading materials that captivate their interest.

Furthermore, digital tools and platforms offer features that support self-regulated learning, a crucial aspect of developing reading skills (Holtzheuser & McNamara, 2014). Students can utilize features like highlighting, bookmarking, and note-taking to actively engage with the text and reflect on their understanding. These tools enable students to monitor their progress, set goals, and evaluate their own comprehension. By taking ownership of their learning process, students become more self-regulated and develop strategies for independent reading practice. They can adapt their reading pace, revisit challenging sections, and track their improvement over time. This self-directed approach not only enhances their reading skills but also fosters a sense of autonomy and responsibility in their language learning journey.

4. ONLINE PLATFORMS AND TOOLS ENHANCE STUDENTS' ABILITY TO TRACK THEIR PROGRESS AND SET READING GOALS

One of the major advantages of online platforms and tools in enhancing students' ability to track their progress and set reading goals is the availability of real-time feedback. Traditional methods of assessing reading skills often involve waiting for a teacher to grade assignments or exams, which can be time-consuming and hinder the immediate feedback necessary for self-regulation. However, with the use of online platforms, students can receive instant feedback on their reading performance, allowing them to identify areas of weakness and make adjustments in real-time (Kanth et al, 2019). This immediate feedback empowers students to take ownership of their learning and make necessary improvements.

Additionally, online platforms and tools provide students with a wealth of resources and materials to support their reading goals. These platforms often offer a wide range of texts, from beginner to advanced levels, allowing students to select materials that match their current reading abilities. By having access to a variety of texts, students can choose texts that align with their interests and goals, which can significantly enhance their motivation and engagement in reading. Furthermore, these platforms often provide interactive features, such as highlighting, note-taking, and vocabulary support, which further facilitate comprehension and retention of the material.

Another significant benefit of online platforms and tools is the ability to track progress and set personalized reading goals. These platforms often include features that allow students to monitor their reading speed, comprehension levels, and vocabulary growth. By regularly tracking their progress, students can identify their strengths and weaknesses, allowing them to set specific and achievable reading goals. This personalized approach to goal-setting not only enhances self-regulation but also fosters a sense of autonomy and ownership in the learning process. Students become active participants in their own learning journey, leading to increased motivation and improved reading skills.

5. INTERACTIVE ONLINE ACTIVITIES AND EXERCISES PROMOTE ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT AND SELF-MONITORING IN READING COMPREHENSION

Interactive online activities and exercises have emerged as valuable tools in enhancing self-regulation in training reading skills among EFL students. These activities provide a dynamic and engaging platform for students to actively participate in their own learning process. By

incorporating various multimedia elements such as videos, audio clips, and interactive games, these activities promote active engagement and self-monitoring in reading comprehension.

One of the key advantages of interactive online activities is that they allow students to practice reading skills in a fun and interactive way (Dwyer, 2016). Traditional reading exercises often involve static texts and questions, which can be monotonous and disengaging for students. However, interactive online activities offer a wide range of options to engage students, such as drag-and-drop exercises, multiple-choice questions, and matching activities. These interactive features create a sense of excitement and challenge, motivating students to actively participate and monitor their own progress.

Furthermore, interactive online activities provide immediate feedback to students, allowing them to self-monitor their reading comprehension skills. In traditional classroom settings, students may have to wait for the teacher to grade their assignments or provide feedback, which can lead to delays in understanding their strengths and weaknesses. However, with interactive online activities, students receive instant feedback on their performance (Paladino, 2008). This immediate feedback helps students identify areas where they excel and areas that require further improvement, enabling them to take proactive measures to enhance their reading skills. Moreover, the ability to track their progress over time allows students to set goals and monitor their own growth, fostering a sense of autonomy and self-regulation in their learning journey.

In conclusion, interactive online activities and exercises play a crucial role in promoting active engagement and self-monitoring in reading comprehension among EFL students. By offering a dynamic and interactive learning environment, these activities not only make the learning process enjoyable but also empower students to take charge of their own learning. The immediate feedback provided by these activities enhances students' self-regulation skills, allowing them to identify their strengths and weaknesses and take proactive measures to improve their reading skills.

6. DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS ENABLE EFL STUDENTS TO CRITICALLY EVALUATE AND ANALYZE DIGITAL TEXTS FOR EFFECTIVE READING STRATEGIES

Digital literacy skills play a vital role in enabling EFL students to critically evaluate and analyze digital texts for effective reading strategies (Meurant, 2009). In today's digital age, students are constantly exposed to a vast amount of information through various digital platforms. However, without the necessary digital literacy skills, students may struggle to navigate through this information overload and effectively comprehend the texts they encounter. Therefore, it is essential for EFL students to develop digital literacy skills that enable them to critically evaluate and analyze digital texts.

One key aspect of digital literacy skills is the ability to assess the credibility and reliability of digital texts. With the abundance of information available online, it is crucial for EFL students to develop the skills to determine the accuracy and trustworthiness of the sources they encounter. By critically evaluating digital texts, students can identify biased or misleading information, helping them make informed decisions and form well-supported arguments. Additionally, the ability to assess the credibility of digital texts enhances students' reading comprehension skills, as they can focus on reliable sources that provide accurate and relevant information.

Moreover, digital literacy skills enable EFL students to analyze and interpret digital texts in a way that enhances their reading strategies. By critically analyzing the structure, organization,

and language used in digital texts, students can extract key information and identify main ideas. They can also apply various reading strategies, such as skimming and scanning, to efficiently navigate through lengthy texts and locate specific information. Furthermore, digital literacy skills empower students to engage with digital texts interactively, utilizing features such as hyperlinks, multimedia elements, and interactive quizzes to deepen their understanding and engage in active reading practices.

In conclusion, the development of digital literacy skills is essential for EFL students to critically evaluate and analyze digital texts for effective reading strategies. These skills enable students to assess the credibility and reliability of digital texts, enhancing their reading comprehension abilities. Additionally, digital literacy skills allow students to analyze and interpret digital texts, applying various reading strategies to efficiently navigate and engage with the texts. By fostering digital literacy skills among EFL students, educators can empower them to become active, critical readers in the digital age.

7. IMPROVED DIGITAL LITERACY SKILLS CAN HELP EFL STUDENTS REGULATE THEIR READING HABITS AND TIME MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVELY

Improved digital literacy skills can greatly benefit EFL students in regulating their reading habits. In today's digital age, students have access to a vast amount of online resources and materials. However, without proper digital literacy skills, they may struggle to navigate through this abundance of information effectively. By developing their digital literacy skills, EFL students can learn how to critically evaluate online sources, identify credible information, and filter out irrelevant content (Li, 2013). This ability to discern the quality of online materials will help them regulate their reading habits by focusing on reputable sources and avoiding time-wasting distractions.

Furthermore, digital literacy skills can also assist EFL students in managing their time effectively. With the widespread use of smartphones, tablets, and computers, students often find themselves easily distracted by social media, online games, or other non-educational activities. By enhancing their digital literacy skills, EFL students can learn how to prioritize their tasks, set goals, and make efficient use of online tools and resources. They can utilize time management applications, create digital calendars, and set reminders to ensure they allocate enough time for reading practice. By employing these strategies, EFL students can develop a disciplined approach to their reading habits and allocate adequate time for focused practice.

Moreover, improved digital literacy skills can enable EFL students to engage in self-reflection and self-assessment of their reading progress. Through various online platforms and applications, students can track their reading speed, comprehension levels, and vocabulary growth. By regularly monitoring their progress, EFL students can identify areas of improvement and adjust their reading strategies accordingly. This self-regulation allows students to take ownership of their learning process and make informed decisions about their reading habits. Additionally, online platforms often provide personalized feedback and recommendations based on students' performance, further enhancing their reading skills.

8. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, digital literacy plays a crucial role in enhancing self-regulation in training reading skills among EFL students. By providing access to a wide range of online resources, digital tools and platforms enable students to engage in self-paced learning and personalized reading practice. These tools also empower students to track their progress, set reading goals, and engage in active self-monitoring. Furthermore, digital literacy skills enable students to critically evaluate and analyze digital texts, which in turn enhances their reading strategies. Finally, improved digital literacy skills can help EFL students regulate their reading habits and effectively manage their time. Overall, the findings of this paper highlight the importance of digital literacy in promoting self-regulation and improving reading skills among EFL students.

REFERENCES

- [1] Abdullah Alsmari, N. (2021). The Relationship between Language Proficiency Level and L2 Digital Literacy Self-efficacy: A Study of EFL University Students. *International Journal of Arabic-English Studies*, 21(2), 183–198.
- [2] Castellani, J., & Jeffs, T. (2001). Emerging Reading and Writing Strategies Using Technology. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 33, 60 - 67.
- [3] Dwyer, B. (2016). Engaging All Students in Internet Research and Inquiry. *The Reading Teacher*, 69, 383-389.
- [4] Holtzheuser, S., & McNamara, J. (2014). Bridging Literacy Acquisition and Self-regulated Learning: Using a SRL Framework to Support Struggling Readers. *Exceptionality Education International*, 24, 2-17.
- [5] Kanth, R., Skon, J., Toppinen, A., Lehtomäki, K., Laakso, M., & Heikkonen, J. (2019). Innovative and Efficient Teaching Methodology for Digital Communication Systems Using an e-Learning Platform. *Journal of Communications*, 14, 689-695.
- [6] Li, X. (2013). Language, Discourse and Identity: A Case Study of a Chinese University Student Learning English Through the Internet. *Chinese Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 36, 125 - 140.
- [7] Meurant, R.C. (2009). Developing Critical L2 Digital Literacy through the Use of Computer-Based Internet-Hosted Learning Management Systems such as Moodle. In: Ślęzak, D., Grosky, W.I., Pissinou, N., Shih, T.K., Kim, Th., Kang, BH. (eds) *Multimedia, Computer Graphics and Broadcasting. MulGraB 2009. Communications in Computer and Information Science*, vol 60. Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg.
- [8] Neumann, M., Finger, G., & Neumann, D. (2017). A Conceptual Framework for Emergent Digital Literacy. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 45, 471-479.
- [9] Paladino, A. (2008). Creating an Interactive and Responsive Teaching Environment to Inspire Learning. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 30, 185-188.