

E – Reading in Digital Age

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Abstract

This article explains the role that e-reading plays in the current digital world. Reading is the process of interpreting written symbols and letters by comprehending at them. The internet has taken the lead in this digital age, and advancements in modern technology have brought about changes in the book industry. Texts are changing drastically because of the advancements in digital technologies. The objective of this study is to outline on e-reading techniques and strategies. Additionally, it sought to increase e-reading retention. According to this study, e-reading has mastery as well as challenges.

Keywords: E-Reading, digital tools, strategies, pros and cons of digital content.

The process of reading is to construct meaning from texts using a variety of methods for finding, combining, and to transmit information (Lopatovska and Sessions). Word recognition, orthography (spelling), alphabetic, phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and motivation are all components of this varied process. The process of understanding the meaning or sense of symbols—often those of a written language—is known as reading. Although reading aloud to others or to oneself for improved comprehension is sometimes done, it is mostly a solitary practice that is done in silence.

Acquiring and practicing the abilities required to comprehend the meaning of written words is known as learning to read or reading skills acquisition. A proficient reader finds reading to be easy, natural, and instinctive. But learning to read is a complicated process that builds on social, linguistic, and cognitive abilities that are formed from a very young age. Reading is essential to master written language since it is one of the four fundamental language skills - speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Digital reading, as defined by Lim and Toh, is the process of learning from texts that are accessible on tablets or other devices. Reading a book or article on an electronic device, such as a tablet, smartphone, or eBook, is known as digital reading. Books can be accessed in PDF, HTML, or ePUB formats. Electronic reading has become the new standard in the era of the internet. The contemporary counterpart of turning pages is e-reading, in which we interact with words on electronic screens rather than paper and ink. It's the flawless transition from print to digital books. Numerous reading tools have been made possible by the digital environment, such as instant access to information through a range of e-resources and online interfaces. In the twenty-first century, technological developments have changed the way that English is taught and learned. This technological development has modified reading practices and competencies.

The essential practice and reflection on the quality and content of digital texts to acquire the knowledge, abilities, and techniques needed for digital reading (Macedo-Rouet et al.,) Digital reading, according to Ebrahimi, is a technology tool that may be used to read texts on computers, smartphones, or tablets both online and offline. It has proven to be effective and beneficial for teaching reading to EFL/ESL students in particular (112). According to Brun-Mercer, the issue should be approached strategically; if not, students should receive practice and instruction to help them get beyond the difficulties they face when reading online and advance toward digital literacy, which the author interpret as being “able to read with sufficient accuracy, fluency, and ease” (4).

By offering easily accessible and varied reading materials in several languages, E - reading is essential to multilingual education. It enables students to interact with texts in their mother tongue while also advancing their literacy in other languages, which fosters cross-linguistic language learning and cultural understanding. The global expansion in online

learning activities after the COVID-19 outbreak has made digital reading even more popular. Furthermore, new technologies like chatbots with artificial intelligence, like Chat GPT, are being developed on a daily basis. The phrase “digital inclusion” describes a variety of factors that may form understanding in digital reading, including motivation and attitude, physical access, and technical abilities and usage.

The concept that reading on screens can result in lower comprehension levels than reading printed text is frequently the focus of criticisms of digital reading. These criticisms include worries about distractions, shallower information processing from scrolling and hyperlinks, increased eye strain, and a propensity for skimming rather than deep reading, particularly when using devices like smartphones with multiple notifications.

Activating prior knowledge, using digital tools to highlight and annotate text, reducing distractions, establishing reading objectives, utilizing text-to-speech features, monitoring comprehension through self-questioning, skimming and scanning for important information, and utilizing multimedia elements like videos and images embedded within the text to improve understanding are some strategies used when reading digitally. Interactive technology can be used into digital content to make more dynamic digital media, such as videos. Other digital tools that aid in comprehension include interactive digital storytelling platforms like Story Jumper and Book Creator, multilingual online libraries like Librivox and Project Gutenberg, language learning apps like Duolingo, Memrise, and Babbel with reading comprehension exercises, and e-book platforms like Kindle, iBooks, and Google Play Books with multilingual options. Additionally, it enables automated, personalized feedback on readers’ assessments and practice. It gives pupils more options so they may individualize their education.

Global strategies, problem-solving strategies, and support strategies are the three categories into which Mokharti and Sheorey divided online reading tactics. The reader is prepared for digital reading through global reading practices. Gaining a general understanding of the book, drawing conclusions about its subjects of the text, and establishing a reading objective are examples of global reading strategies. When digital readers encounter comprehension challenges, their logical decisions serve as the foundation for their problem-solving techniques. These techniques, which include reading slowly to better comprehend and assess the digital text, guessing unknown words using context clues,

and rereading the material to increase comprehension, are meant to assist readers in overcoming reading problems. However, after using global and problem-solving techniques, support reading tactics help digital readers understand a book. A few strategies for offering support mechanisms include asking questions about the material to determine reader understanding, summarizing particular text passages, highlighting or underlining important points, and translating the text from the target language to the reader's mother tongue.

Although digital content has grown in popularity, is it always the best option? There are definite benefits and drawbacks to digital texts, but there isn't a definitive answer.

Pros of Digital Content

1. Accessibility

When it comes to accessibility, digital content has a significant advantage. Digital books are accessible on any device and from any location. A single phone or tablet may hold several textbooks. Even better, students can always find online textbooks when they need them.

2. Online Resources

Students who use an online textbook get instant access to additional content. With the use of electronic notes, highlighting, and annotating, note-taking can be done inside the book itself. Students can even collaborate quickly by sharing annotations.

3. Unique Homework Assignments

Teachers can expand their toolkit of instructional resources by include interactive learning components through digital content. Compared to a typical reading assignment, students can be given online exercises and tests that are much more interesting and inspiring.

4. No Damaged or Lost Books

It is possible for even the most attentive students to lose a textbook. This can occasionally occur at the most inconvenient moments. Digital content makes it impossible to misplace or destroy a book. Online textbooks are accessible from any computer or mobile device, even if an iPad is misplaced or dropped.

5. Easy-to-Find Information

Language in India www.languageinindia.com **ISSN 1930-2940 Vol. 25:3 March 2025**

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It can take a while to locate the information that need in a typical textbook. With digital books, information may be found quickly through a search. Readers can also easily seek up definitions that built-in dictionaries.

Cons of Digital Content

1. Expires/No Resale Value

For the length of the course, some digital publishers only grant access to a textbook. Readers are out of luck if they want to review the material for a subsequent class. Although different publishers have different policies, it is fairly unusual for readers to pay for materials that they are not allowed to keep. Additionally, digital textbooks have no resale value. Readers are left without the book after they finish the course or decide they no longer require it.

2. Heavily Relies on Access to Technology

Online textbooks flexibility is typically viewed as a huge benefit, but their reliance on costly technology and internet connectivity can be problematic. Not every kid can afford an iPad or a dependable computer. Those without one are stranded in the library or have to rely on their peers to share their devices. Although the majority of young individuals do own a computer or iPad, those who do not may find mandated online study to be financially burdensome.

3. No Wi-Fi? No Home Work?

For the most part, digital textbook technology functions flawlessly. Students are unable to study or finish their assignments on time when anything does go wrong. Unfortunately, students can exploit this with ease. It is often impossible for a teacher to confirm whether a pupil actually experienced difficulties accessing internet resources. Teachers may find this problematic.

4. Too Close to Online Distractions

All ages of students are accustomed to regularly accessing social media and internet entertainment. Study time can seem too alluring when Facebook and YouTube are only a draw off. Ignoring incoming messages and notifications is difficult! Frequent online

diversions can interfere with study time and impede academic success because there is no distinction between work and pleasure.

The limited capacity system known as working memory that mediates reading, which is a complicated activity involving multiple components, including low and high-level processes, schema activation, proposition encoding, interpretation, and inference formation. In digital reading, retention capacity is a measure of how effectively a person retains information from digital texts. It is the amount of information that a person can recall after reading a text on a digital device, such as a computer or phone.

Key Points about Digital Reading Retention

1. Active reading strategies can improve retention:

People can use techniques like underlining, taking notes, summarizing important ideas, and asking themselves questions while reading to improve their digital reading retention.

2. Device and format impact:

Information retention may be impacted by the layout of the text (font size, spacing) and the design of the digital reading device.

3. Individual differences:

The amount of information people recall from digital texts is also influenced by their cognitive capacities and natural reading tendencies.

Although many people still treasure traditional books, the unavoidable advancement of technology has made e-books the preferred literary companion of the present era. Accessibility and sustainability concerns have swung the balance in favor of digital reading. With its promise of financial savings and environmental responsibility, e-reading presents a welcome substitute for paperbound books. To elevate the reading experience, the interactive e-books are to be used. For people who would rather listen to reading, text-to-speech technology provides a smooth aural experience. As we welcome this digital revolution, it is

evident that e-books represent a doorway to a new era of reading rather than merely a substitute for conventional books.

In addition to improving learning opportunities, boosting literacy skills, encouraging critical thinking, and enabling interactive features that can deepen understanding, digital reading is significant because it offers easy and accessible access to a wealth of information. Additionally, it is environmentally friendly due to its reduced paper usage. In the digital age, reading can improve focus, increase vocabulary and language proficiency, and foster the growth of analytical abilities.

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