

ABSTRACT

Muhammad Ryan, 2026. The title of this research is “Literacy Analysis: Functional Critical Reading Comprehension”. A thesis of English Education Department Faculty of Teacher Training and Education of Muhammadiyah Makassar University guided by Umami Khaerati Syam and Ika Sastrawati

Student engagement in reading extends beyond completing a reading task, particularly in digitally mediated environments where information can be readily obtained through artificial intelligence and other digital resources. This study investigates how university students demonstrate their understanding while engaging with academic texts through the lens of Functional Critical Reading Comprehension (FCRC), a framework that examines students' ability to construct meaning, interpret information, justify responses, and demonstrate personally processed understanding while using available resources. A qualitative descriptive design was employed involving six fourth-semester students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar. Data were collected through a reading comprehension test consisting of eight multiple-choice questions and two open-ended questions based on two academic texts, followed by semi-structured interviews exploring participants' reading processes and responses. The data were analyzed by identifying recurring patterns across written responses and interview accounts, with particular attention to the relationship between participants' answers and their ability to explain or substantiate those answers. The findings indicate that although all participants incorporated digital or external resources during the reading process, the extent of their demonstrated understanding varied. Participants who described reading, comparing, translating, or verifying information provided more observable evidence of personally constructed understanding, whereas greater reliance on summaries or generated responses was accompanied by more limited independent explanation of the texts. These findings suggest that student engagement cannot be inferred solely from correct answers or task completion. Instead, FCRC offers a way to interpret engagement by examining how students construct, explain, and verify their understanding within digitally mediated reading environments.

Keywords: functional critical reading comprehension, reading comprehension, student engagement, digital literacy, artificial intelligence