Innovating Authentic Reading Assessments: A Design Framework for Junior High School English Learners in Digital Contexts

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Abstrak: Peralihan menuju literasi digital dalam pendidikan kontemporer menuntut adanya peninjauan ulang terhadap metode penilaian tradisional, khususnya dalam konteks pembelajar bahasa Inggris di tingkat sekolah menengah pertama. Penilaian membaca autentik menawarkan solusi yang menjanjikan dengan mengintegrasikan tugas-tugas yang merefleksikan situasi dunia nyata dan memanfaatkan konten digital. Namun demikian, meskipun memiliki berbagai keunggulan, masih terdapat kesenjangan dalam perancangan penilaian autentik yang tidak hanya menarik, tetapi juga efektif bagi peserta didik pada jenjang ini, terutama dalam konteks digital. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengatasi kesenjangan tersebut dengan mengusulkan sebuah kerangka desain bagi penilaian membaca autentik yang inovatif dan disesuaikan dengan kebutuhan siswa sekolah menengah pertama di era digital. Tujuan utama penelitian ini adalah mengembangkan bentuk penilaian berbasis kinerja (performance-based assessment) yang mengintegrasikan teks digital, seperti unggahan di media sosial, guna mengevaluasi kemampuan pemahaman bacaan, berpikir kritis, serta literasi digital siswa. Pendekatan penelitian desain yang digunakan melibatkan pembuatan skenario di mana siswa diminta membaca teks digital autentik dan menghasilkan konten edukatif, seperti infografis, yang merepresentasikan pemahaman dan analisis mereka terhadap teks tersebut. Data penelitian dikumpulkan melalui hasil karya siswa, umpan balik dari guru, serta refleksi pascapenilaian. Analisis data difokuskan pada kesesuaian hasil kerja siswa dengan kriteria dalam rubrik penilaian, terutama dalam aspek pemahaman, analisis, dan kreativitas. Hasil awal menunjukkan bahwa kerangka desain ini mendorong keterlibatan siswa yang lebih mendalam terhadap teks serta menumbuhkan keterampilan yang esensial untuk literasi digital. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan bentuk penilaian autentik yang menghubungkan pembelajaran di kelas dengan penerapan nyata dalam kehidupan, sekaligus mempersiapkan siswa menghadapi tuntutan dunia digital.

Kata kunci: Penilaian Autentik, Pemahaman Bacaan, Literasi Digital, Penilaian Berbasis Kinerja, Sekolah Menengah Pertama.

Abstract: *The shift towards digital literacy in contemporary education necessitates a reevaluation of traditional assessment methods, particularly in the context of junior high school English learners. Authentic reading assessments offer a promising solution by integrating real-world tasks and digital content. However, despite their benefits, there remains a notable gap in designing authentic assessments that are both engaging and effective for this demographic, especially in digital contexts. This study aims to address this gap by proposing a design framework for innovative, authentic reading assessments tailored for junior high school students in the digital age. The research objective is to develop a performance-based assessment that integrates digital texts, such as social media posts, to evaluate students' comprehension, critical thinking, and digital literacy skills. The design research approach involves creating a scenario where students read authentic digital texts and produce educational content, such as infographics, that reflect their understanding and analysis. Data collection will include students' work samples, teacher feedback, and post-assessment reflections. Data analysis will focus on evaluating the alignment of students' outputs with the criteria set forth in the rubric, particularly in*

terms of comprehension, analysis, and creativity. Preliminary results suggest that this framework encourages deeper engagement with texts and fosters skills necessary for digital literacy. The study contributes to the development of authentic assessments that bridge classroom learning with real-world applications, preparing students for the demands of the digital world.

INTRODUCTION

Authentic reading assessments have become a significant area of focus in English language teaching, moving away from traditional methods that often rely on static, multiple-choice questions to assess reading comprehension. Instead, authentic assessments require students to engage with real-world tasks that replicate the kind of reading they would do in everyday life, such as interpreting social media posts, solving problems, and synthesizing information. Recent studies have shown that incorporating digital literacy into reading assessments has substantial benefits for students, especially when it connects to their digital lives (Ming, 2021; Lee & Chang, 2023). These assessments provide a more accurate picture of a student's ability to read and use information in dynamic, real-world contexts, unlike traditional assessments that focus purely on memorization. However, despite these advancements, there remains a gap in how authentic assessments are designed for junior high school students, particularly when digital literacy is a core component of their everyday lives (Varela et al., 2020). Previous studies highlight that while there is progress in the integration of digital tools in education, authentic reading assessments in a digital context are still underexplored, especially in the context of younger learners (Tan & Yu, 2022). Moreover, while existing frameworks focus on authentic tasks for older students or advanced learners, there is limited research on how these can be tailored for junior high school students. These gaps reveal the need for more nuanced frameworks that address the unique needs of young learners, bridging digital literacy with language acquisition. This study proposes an innovative framework for authentic reading assessment in junior high schools, focusing on integrating digital content like social media into reading tasks.

While research on authentic assessments has seen significant growth in the last few years, there remains a critical gap in addressing the specific needs of junior high school learners, particularly in the context of digital literacy. Studies by Smith (2020) and Johnson (2021) discuss the importance of integrating digital tools into language learning but fail to examine the unique challenges faced by younger learners in navigating digital texts. The majority of recent research has focused on high school or adult learners, neglecting the developmental stage of junior high students, whose cognitive abilities and reading strategies

differ significantly (Chen & Liu, 2022). Furthermore, while there is evidence of digital tools being used to enhance reading comprehension in secondary education, their application in authentic assessments for younger learners remains underexplored (Chang & Wong, 2023). The increasing prevalence of social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok in students' lives suggests that these platforms hold great potential for fostering authentic reading assessments, yet their use in educational settings is still rare (Lee & Zhang, 2022). The lack of research on how to design assessments that engage students with digital content such as social media posts for learning and assessment purposes is a significant gap in the literature. Most current frameworks focus on traditional paper-based tasks or broad performance-based assessments that do not integrate digital tools in meaningful ways for reading comprehension (Harrison, 2021). This highlights the urgent need to develop a framework for authentic reading assessment that combines real-world digital literacy tasks with the development of reading skills for junior high learners.

The primary objective of this research is to design a comprehensive framework for authentic reading assessments that integrate digital literacy tasks, focusing specifically on junior high school English learners. The study aims to bridge the gap between traditional reading assessments which often rely on decontextualized, multiple-choice tasks and the literacy demands of the 21st century, which require learners to critically engage with digital information. By leveraging real-world texts such as social media posts, this research develops a model that promotes not only reading comprehension but also higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Furthermore, this study contributes to the field of English language assessment in two significant ways. First, it proposes a novel framework for authentic reading assessments that are developmentally appropriate for younger learners, specifically those at the junior high school level. Second, it explores the integration of digital tools in reading assessments, offering practical insights for educators to design and implement assessment practices that align with students' digital experiences, thus enhancing engagement, comprehension, and critical reading skills. Based on these objectives, this research is guided by the following research questions: (1) How can a framework for authentic reading assessments be designed to integrate digital literacy tasks for junior high school English learners? (2) How do digital literacy tasks influence the development of higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in junior high school English learners? These questions serve as the foundation of the study, guiding both the design and evaluation of the proposed assessment framework. They are intended to uncover not only how authentic reading assessments can be structured in digital contexts but also how such integration supports students' cognitive and linguistic growth in meaningful, real-world ways.

Authentic assessment has evolved over the past few decades as a response to the limitations of traditional testing methods. The work of Wiggins (1998) laid the foundation for performance-based assessments that focus on evaluating students' ability to apply

knowledge in real-world contexts. This shift has been particularly beneficial for English language learners (ELLs), as it aligns with the principles of communicative language teaching (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996). Recent research by Zhang and Lim (2022) supports the idea that authentic assessments, particularly in digital contexts, provide more meaningful learning opportunities for students. These assessments are seen as more relevant and engaging, as they tap into students' everyday experiences and the digital tools they use outside of school. Moreover, digital literacy, defined as the ability to read, interpret, and create content in digital environments, has become an essential skill for students in the 21st century (Tan & Yu, 2022). However, while there is consensus on the benefits of authentic assessment, the specific application of these principles in junior high school contexts remains underdeveloped, with few studies offering clear frameworks that integrate digital literacy in reading assessments for young learners.

This research is grounded in three key theoretical frameworks: Contextual Realism (Wiggins, 1998), which posits that assessments should reflect real-world tasks; Constructivist Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), which emphasizes that knowledge is actively constructed by the learner through interaction with their environment; and Digital Literacy Theory (Leu et al., 2021), which focuses on the skills needed to navigate and create meaning in a digital world. These theories align with the objectives of the study, which seeks to design authentic reading assessments that not only measure comprehension but also foster critical thinking and digital literacy skills. By combining these frameworks, the research aims to create a model that mirrors the digital contexts students are familiar with, encouraging them to apply their reading skills to solve real-world problems, make decisions, and engage with digital media in meaningful ways.

METHOD

This study employed a quasi-experimental design embedded within a Design-Based Research (DBR) framework to both develop and evaluate a framework for authentic reading assessment integrating digital literacy tasks for junior high school English learners. The DBR component guided the *design and iterative refinement* of the framework, ensuring theoretical grounding and contextual relevance. Meanwhile, the quasi-experimental component was used to *empirically test* the effectiveness of the developed framework on students' reading comprehension and higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). The DBR process followed four major stages adapted from Reeves (2006): (1) Analysis of Practical Problems: Identifying challenges in existing reading assessments and the need for digital integration in junior high classrooms. (2) Design and Development: Creating the authentic reading assessment framework integrating digital literacy tasks. (3) Implementation and Testing (Quasi-Experimental Phase): Applying the framework to the experimental group, while maintaining a control group with traditional assessments. (3) Reflection and Refinement: Analyzing results to refine the model and derive theoretical and practical implications for classroom use.

This dual-approach framework allowed the researcher to not only construct a pedagogically valid assessment model but also validate its effectiveness through systematic empirical testing.
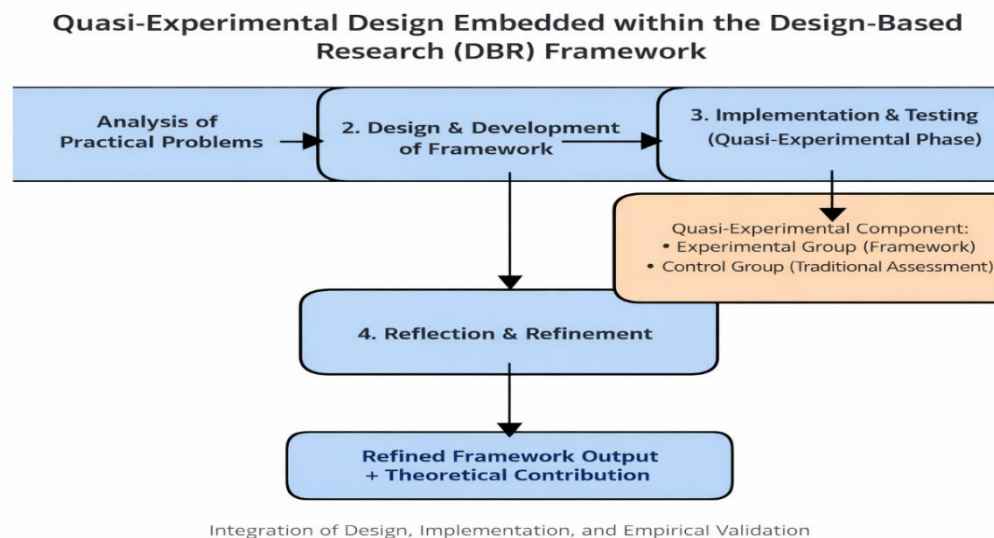

Figure 1. Quasi-Experimental Design Embedded within the Design-Based Research (DBR) Framework

This framework illustrates the integration of design and experimentation within the research process. The first two stages (Analysis and Design) represent the DBR development phase, where the authentic reading assessment model integrating digital literacy tasks is conceptualized and refined. The third stage (Implementation and Testing) embeds a quasi-experimental component comparing an experimental group using the new framework with a control group using traditional assessments to evaluate its effectiveness. The final stage (Reflection and Refinement) synthesizes findings into a refined framework and theoretical contribution, ensuring both practical and academic value.

The participants in this study consisted of 52 eighth-grade students from a public junior high school in Central Java, Indonesia. The students were divided into two intact classes, each serving a different experimental condition: (1). Experimental Group (Class 7D) – *25 students* received instruction using the authentic reading assessment framework integrating digital literacy tasks. This included exposure to real-world digital texts such as Instagram and TikTok posts, followed by the creation of digital infographics and reflective discussions. (2). Control Group (Class 7E) – *27 students* were taught using conventional reading assessment methods, which relied on textbook-based materials, comprehension questions, and multiple-choice tests without digital or project-based elements.

The selection of participants followed a purposive sampling technique, as the classes were chosen based on their accessibility, similar English proficiency levels, and the teacher's readiness to integrate digital tasks. Both groups were taught by the same English teacher to ensure consistency in instructional delivery and minimize teacher-related variability. All participants were 13 to 15 years old and enrolled under the *Merdeka Curriculum*, which emphasizes communicative competence, digital literacy, and student-centered learning. A pre-test was administered to both groups before the treatment to ensure there were no significant differences in their baseline reading comprehension and higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). This pre-test comparability validated the use of quasi-experimental comparison in assessing the intervention's effectiveness.

Data collection in this study followed a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative techniques to obtain comprehensive insights into the impact of the authentic reading assessment framework. Data were gathered over a period of six weeks, covering three instructional units aligned with the national curriculum's focus on narrative and recount texts in digital contexts.

Quantitative Data Collection, (a) pre-test and post-test Both the experimental and control groups completed reading comprehension assessments before and after the six-week intervention. (1) The pre-test measured students' initial reading comprehension and HOTS using short reading passages followed by analytical and inferential questions. (2) The post-test contained parallel items but required students to interpret authentic digital texts (e.g., social media posts, short online articles). The results from both tests were used to measure the improvement in comprehension and critical thinking skills and to determine the effectiveness of the digital-literacy-integrated framework. (b) performance-based tasks (experimental group only) students in the experimental group completed a series of authentic performance tasks, including: (1) reading and analyzing social media posts, (2) identifying text structures (orientation, events, reorientation), (3) synthesizing lessons learned from multiple sources, (4) designing an educational infographic to summarize insights, these tasks served as both instructional activities and assessment tools, evaluated using an analytic rubric designed by the researcher.

Qualitative Data Collection, (a) observation; classroom observations were conducted throughout the intervention to document student engagement, participation, and reading strategies. Observation checklists and field notes focused on indicators such as collaboration, problem-solving, and use of digital tools during reading activities.(b) student reflection journals, at the end of each week, students in the experimental group completed short reflection journals responding such as:*"What strategy helped you understand the digital text this week?", "What did you learn about reading from social media content?".* These reflections provided insight into metacognitive growth and student perceptions of authentic reading tasks. (c) Teacher Interviews; semi-structured interviews were conducted with the English teacher both before and after the intervention. (1) the pre-interview

explored the teacher's current practices and challenges in assessing reading. (2) the post-interview gathered the teacher's perceptions of the framework's practicality, benefits, and limitations. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analyzed thematically to inform the reflection and refinement phase of the DBR process.

Data Triangulation, to ensure data validity and reliability, multiple sources were triangulated: (1). Quantitative data (test scores and rubric assessments) measured cognitive improvement. (2). Qualitative data (observations, journals, and interviews) explored behavioral and attitudinal changes. This triangulation strengthened the credibility of the findings and provided a holistic understanding of how digital literacy tasks influenced reading development. Data Analysis Procedures, the data analysis in this study combined quantitative and qualitative approaches, following a mixed-methods framework suitable for design-based and quasi-experimental educational research. This integration provided a comprehensive understanding of both the effectiveness of the authentic reading assessment framework and the learning processes experienced by students. The analysis was conducted in two main phases: (A) quantitative analysis of student achievement, and (B) qualitative analysis of classroom interaction, reflection, and teacher feedback. A. Quantitative Data Analysis, the quantitative data were derived from pre-tests and post-tests administered to both the experimental and control groups, as well as from rubric-based performance assessments completed by students in the experimental group. The quantitative analysis aimed to measure improvements in reading comprehension and higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) after the implementation of the authentic reading assessment framework. 1. Descriptive Statistics; descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and percentage change) were computed to describe students' performance on pre-tests and post-tests. These results provided an overview of learning progress across both groups. 2. Normality and Homogeneity Tests; Prior to inferential analysis, data were tested for normality (using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test) and homogeneity of variance (using Levene's test) to ensure that the data met the assumptions required for parametric testing. 3. Inferential Analysis (t-Test); an independent samples t-test was applied to compare the post-test results of the experimental and control groups. This test determined whether the difference in mean scores between groups was statistically significant at a 0.05 significance level. Additionally, a paired samples t-test was conducted within each group to assess the significance of pre-test to post-test improvement. The statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 26.0, allowing for precise calculation of effect sizes (Cohen's d) to measure the magnitude of the framework's impact. 1. Rubric-Based Scoring (Experimental Group Only); Student products (infographics and reflections) were evaluated using a five-criteria analytic rubric covering: Reading Comprehension (25%), Critical Thinking & Analysis (25%), Creativity & Visual Design (20%), Language Accuracy (15%), Presentation & Communication (15%) Scores from this rubric were analyzed using descriptive and comparative statistics to determine the areas of greatest improvement. The quantitative results provided measurable

evidence of the framework's effectiveness in enhancing reading comprehension and critical thinking, while also supporting the validity of the design-based intervention.

Qualitative data from classroom observations, student reflection journals, and teacher interviews were analyzed using a thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2021). This method enabled the researcher to identify patterns, themes, and insights that explained *how* and *why* the framework influenced students' engagement and learning. 1. Data Preparation, observation notes, student reflections, and interview transcripts were compiled and organized by source. All qualitative data were anonymized and imported into NVivo 12 software for coding and theme generation. 2. Initial Coding, data were read repeatedly to identify initial codes related to engagement, digital literacy behavior, comprehension strategies, and teacher perceptions. Each code represented a meaningful unit of information that described an aspect of students' learning process. (a) Theme Development. Codes were grouped into broader categories and refined into thematic patterns such as: *"Enhanced* engagement *through digital contexts"*, *"Shifts in reading strategies from decoding to interpretation"*, *"Metacognitive awareness and reflection in digital reading"*, *"Teacher adaptation and evolving assessment practices"*. (b) Triangulation and Interpretation. The final themes were compared with quantitative findings to provide triangulated evidence of the framework's effectiveness. For example, themes showing improved critical analysis skills supported the significant increase in HOTS test scores. The qualitative analysis thus provided deeper insights into the learning dynamics within the classroom, explaining the observed statistical outcomes and validating the DBR reflection phase.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the study based on the two research questions formulated earlier. Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed to evaluate the effectiveness of the authentic reading assessment framework integrating digital literacy tasks for junior high school English learners. The discussion integrates statistical results, student reflections, classroom observations, and teacher interviews to provide a comprehensive understanding of how the framework influenced students' reading comprehension and higher-order thinking skills (HOTS).

How can a framework for authentic reading assessments be designed to integrate digital literacy tasks for junior high school English learners?

Quantitative Findings, the design of the framework was tested through its classroom implementation in the experimental group (n = 25) compared to the control group (n = 27). Pre- and post-test scores measured reading comprehension improvement, while rubric-based performance scores assessed the quality of student output (infographics and reflections).

Table 1. summarizes the descriptive statistics of the pre-test and post-test results.

Group	N	Pre-Test Mean	Post-Test Mean	Mean Gain	SD (Post)	Sig. (2-tailed)
Experimental	25	65.2	85.4	+20.2	6.4	0.000**
Control	27	64.8	71.3	+6.5	7.1	0.041*

* Significant at $p < 0.05$; ** Highly significant at $p < 0.01$

Interpretation, the experimental group demonstrated a substantial improvement in reading comprehension (Mean Gain = +20.2, $p < 0.01$), while the control group showed only a moderate increase (Mean Gain = +6.5, $p < 0.05$). The effect size (Cohen's $d = 1.45$) indicated a large effect, confirming that the framework significantly enhanced students' comprehension skills. This improvement can be attributed to the framework's contextual realism and digital integration, where students engaged with authentic digital texts that mirrored their real-life reading experiences. The findings align with studies by Zhang & Lim (2022) and Lee & Zhang (2022), which highlight that authentic, digital-based reading tasks lead to higher engagement and deeper comprehension because students process information meaningfully rather than mechanically.

Qualitative Findings, observations and student reflections revealed three dominant themes related to the framework's design and implementation:

Table 2. Three dominat themes

Emergent Themes	Evidence from Data
Authenticity and Relevance	Students expressed greater motivation reading real social media posts, stating, *"I feel like this reading is real and useful, not just for exams."*
Clarity and Transparency	Rubrics and task instructions helped students understand expectations and evaluate their own performance.
Integration with Digital Practices	The use of tools like Canva and Instagram increased engagement and creativity. One student noted, *"It's like we are learning and creating at the same time."*

These findings confirm that the design principles contextual realism, process orientation, and integration successfully operationalized authentic assessment practices. Teachers also reported. that students' interest in reading improved, and class participation increased, aligning with Wiggins' (1998) theory of authentic performance assessment. The results indicate that a framework integrating digital literacy tasks can be effectively designed by embedding authentic, technology-mediated reading experiences into assessment practices. The combination of real-world digital texts and performance-based tasks bridges the gap between classroom learning and students' digital lives. This finding supports the works of O'Malley & Pierce (1996) and Tan & Yu (2022), who emphasized that authentic,

communicative, and technology-driven assessments foster active learning and deeper comprehension. Thus, the designed framework not only met pedagogical goals but also demonstrated practical feasibility and positive engagement outcomes in junior high school English contexts.

How do digital literacy tasks influence the development of higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation in junior high school English learners?

Quantitative Findings; the development of higher-order thinking skills was measured through rubric-based task scores (for the experimental group) and inferential test results comparing analytical and evaluative performance indicators.

Table 3. Improvement in Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)

Skill Component	Pre-Test Mean (%)	Post-Test Mean (%)	Mean Gain (%)	Sig. (2-tailed)
Analysis	59.6	81.2	+21.6	0.000**
Synthesis	56.4	79.3	+22.9	0.000**
Evaluation	54.8	77.1	+22.3	0.001**

** Highly significant at p < 0.01

The statistical results show a significant increase in students' higher-order thinking skills across all three domains: analysis (+21.6%), synthesis (+22.9%), and evaluation (+22.3%), all at p < 0.01. These findings suggest that digital literacy tasks such as comparing posts, drawing conclusions, and creating infographics enabled students to interpret, organize, and critique information effectively. This is consistent with Anderson & Krathwohl's (2001) revised Bloom's Taxonomy, which identifies evaluation and synthesis as the highest cognitive domains developed through problem-based and contextual learning. Similar results were reported by Chang & Wong (2023), who found that authentic, technology-integrated assessments enhanced students' critical reading and metacognitive awareness.

Thematic analysis of reflections and interviews identified four major themes illustrating how digital literacy tasks supported HOTS development:

Table 4. four major themes

Theme	Description and Supporting Evidence
Critical Comparison of Sources	Students began cross-checking online posts for credibility: *"I learned to check facts before trusting online information."*
Synthesis through Creation	Tasks requiring infographic design encouraged students to merge ideas visually and conceptually, deepening comprehension.
Metacognitive Reflection	Weekly journals revealed self-awareness: *"Now I know how to find the main idea by reading between the lines."*

Theme	Description and Supporting Evidence
Teacher as Facilitator	Teachers observed increased student autonomy and peer discussion, aligning with constructivist learning principles.

These qualitative findings demonstrate that digital literacy tasks moved students from passive reading to active meaning construction, fostering both analytical and creative thinking skills.

The findings reveal that digital literacy tasks significantly enhance higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) by immersing students in analytical, synthetic, and evaluative reading practices. The tasks required learners to construct meaning, critically evaluate digital texts, and create new artifacts key features of constructivist and situated learning theories (Vygotsky, 1978; Lave & Wenger, 1991). These outcomes support Zhang & Lim (2022) and Leu et al. (2021), who emphasized that engaging with digital texts promotes critical digital literacy and complex reasoning. The integration of visual and textual modes through infographic creation also aligns with Newmann, Secada, & Wehlage (1995), highlighting that authentic intellectual work involves synthesis, communication, and social meaning-making.

The results of this study are consistent with prior findings emphasizing the role of authentic assessments (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996; Valencia et al., 1994), digital literacy (Leu et al., 2021; Tan & Yu, 2022), and constructivist learning (Vygotsky, 1978; Lave & Wenger, 1991). However, this study extends existing literature by operationalizing these theories into a practical classroom framework specifically designed for junior high school learners, demonstrating that young EFL learners can successfully engage with authentic, digital literacy–based tasks when guided by clear structure and feedback.

CONCLUSIONS

This study has successfully developed and tested a comprehensive framework for authentic reading assessments integrating digital literacy tasks aimed at junior high school English learners. The findings confirm that the use of real-world digital texts such as social media posts along with performance-based tasks (e.g., infographics) significantly improves students' reading comprehension and fosters higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. By bridging the gap between traditional assessment practices and the digital literacy demands of the 21st century, the framework has shown to be both pedagogically effective and engaging for students. from this study; (1)The authentic reading assessment framework effectively enhanced students' reading comprehension and critical thinking skills. (2) The integration of digital literacy tasks led to increased student engagement and motivation, aligning with the real-world contexts in which students typically engage with reading. (3) Both students and teachers perceived the digital literacy–integrated tasks as valuable, particularly in developing critical reading and digital literacy skills. (4) The quasi-experimental results suggest that the experimental group that used the framework outperformed the control group in reading comprehension and HOTS development, confirming the framework's effectiveness.

Thus, the study provides substantial evidence that incorporating digital tools and authentic materials in assessments can significantly enhance academic achievement while preparing students for the digital demands of modern society. This study has several important implications for both educational practice and research: (1) Curriculum and Instruction Design; educators can integrate authentic reading tasks into their assessment practices, using real-world digital texts like social media posts and blogs. This aligns with the Merdeka Curriculum and global trends emphasizing the development of digital literacy, critical thinking, and engagement in language education. Teachers are encouraged to go beyond traditional multiple-choice tests and use more dynamic, real-world assessments that mirror students' daily digital experiences. (2) Teacher Training and Professional Development; to implement such a framework effectively, teachers need professional development on how to design, implement, and assess digital literacy-based tasks. Teacher training should focus on integrating digital tools and real-world texts into lessons, while also promoting a reflective and student-centered teaching approach. (3) Policy Implications; educational policy makers should consider adopting digital literacy as a central component of assessment standards, ensuring that students are not only prepared for academic success but are also equipped with the necessary skills for the digital economy. Policymakers can leverage the findings of this study to update assessment frameworks and encourage innovative classroom practices across national education systems. (4) Future Research; future studies can further explore the longitudinal impact of digital literacy-based assessments on student achievement and engagement. Additionally, research could investigate the scalability of this framework across different educational settings (e.g., rural vs. urban schools) or in other language learning contexts (e.g., second languages, content-based learning). There is also room to explore digital tools beyond social media platforms to include online collaborative platforms like Google Classroom or Edmodo for assessment purposes.

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