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**The Role of Digital Libraries in Developing Students' Reading  
Comprehension Skills: EFL Teachers' Perspectives.**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Letters and English Language in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Language and Culture**

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## **Dedication**

First and foremost, all praise is to Allah. Without his guidance, mercy, and strength. I would not have been able to complete this work.

I also want to thank myself for holding on when it has been easier to give up. For staying strong and continuing when I was tired, hurting, and discouraged.

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved parents and dear sisters for their constant support and help.

Finally, I dedicate it to the experience that changed everything, “my injury”, when I broke my foot and was unable to walk for more than a month. For some, it might be just a small physical setback, but for me, it was one of the most challenging moments I have ever gone through. The pain was not only physical but also deeply emotional. What hurts the most was not the injury itself, but the way some people treated me at that time. They belittled and doubted me. But I chose to keep going.

This dissertation is not just an academic requirement. It is testament to my resilience and evidence that I turned my pain into power.

**Bochra**

## Dedication

In the name of Allah, the most gracious and merciful, the most compassionate  
With deepest gratitude, I dedicate this humble work, first and foremost, to my extraordinary  
parents, whose presence have been my greatest source of strength.

To my father, **Abdelhamid**, for his generous financial support and sacrifices that made this  
achievement possible.

To my beloved mother, **Noura**, no words can fully express my love and gratitude for you.  
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### **Abstract**

The present study aims to determine whether English as foreign language (EFL) teachers are aware of the role of digital libraries in developing students' reading comprehension skills, and to explore their perspectives regarding the use of these resources in reading instruction. With the growing integration of digital technologies in education, digital libraries have become essential platforms offer diverse and accessible reading materials. However, many students still face difficulties in reading comprehension despite the availability of such tools. This underscores the necessity of examining the actual impact of need to assess their actual impact of digital libraries as perceived by teachers. Accordingly, two hypotheses were proposed: EFL teachers are aware of the role of digital libraries in developing students' reading comprehension skills, and EFL teachers have positive attitude towards the use of digital libraries in reading instruction. To test these hypotheses, data were collected through a teachers' questionnaire. The study was conducted with 36 teachers from the department of letters and English language at the University of 8 Mai 1945. Guelma, during the academic year 2024-2025. The findings revealed that most teachers are aware of the role of digital libraries and hold generally positive attitude towards their use in developing students' reading comprehension. They highlighted benefits such as flexibility, accessibility, and interactivity. However, some limitations such as poor internet access, lack of training, and resource costs were also noted. Based on the results, both hypotheses were confirmed. The study concludes by recommending better integration of digital libraries in reading programs, training for both teachers and students, and improved access to digital infrastructure.

**Keywords:** Reading comprehension Skills, Digital libraries, Teachers' perspectives, EFL teachers.

### **List of Abbreviations**

**EC:** Evaluative Comprehension

**EFL:** English as a Foreign Language

**ER:** Extensive Reading

**IC:** Inferential Comprehension

**IR:** Intensive Reading

**LC:** Literal Comprehension

**NRP:** National Reading Panel

**Q:** Question

**WDL:** The World Digital Library

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## **General Introduction**

Reading is one of the most important skills that English as Foreign Language (EFL) students need to master. It helps in the learning of new words, grammar, and reasoning. Students used to rely on physical books available in traditional libraries as their primary source of reading materials. These libraries served as valuable learning spaces, providing access to wide range of academic resources. However, they have major drawbacks including accessibility, not having enough copies of books, and lack of interactive features to support comprehension.

With the advancement of technology, the way students engage with reading for enhanced understanding has changed. Digital libraries have come up with solution to this problem by providing students with hundreds of books, research articles, and multimedia resources tailored to fit different learners' needs. Unlike traditional ones, digital libraries can be accessed from any corner of the world, breaking the barriers of time and place restrictions. In addition, they offer tools that aid reading, such as dictionaries, audio aids, and adaptive reading platforms. Using these technologies enable readers to interact with text that helps them understand better and improve reading comprehension for students.

The implementation of these digital libraries in language learning needs to be properly integrated into education to be effective. This is where EFL teachers play a crucial role. They are not just guides who help students find useful resources, but their job goes beyond simply providing access to materials. They teach students how to use these resources effectively, applying the right reading strategies to improve comprehension.

Ultimately, the success of digital libraries in education depends on how teachers integrated them into their lessons. Their teaching methods, ability to engage students, and understanding of digital tools all contribute in making these libraries a valuable part of learning.

### **1. Statement of the Problem**

Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill that is essential for academic success, particularly among university students who play a vital role in shaping the future of society. These students frequently engage with written texts to extract meaning, analyze information, and develop critical thinking skills. In the digital age, traditional print-based reading is increasingly being replaced by electronic alternatives, most notably, digital libraries. These collections offer a vast array of electronic resources, providing students with access to information and diverse formats of reading materials. However, while digital libraries present numerous opportunities, its effectiveness in developing student's reading comprehension is insufficiently explored, especially from teachers' perspectives. Moreover, many students encounter challenges in utilizing these platforms effectively.

## **2. Research Questions**

**Q1.** Are EFL teachers aware of the role of digital libraries in reading instruction?

**Q2.** What are EFL teachers' perspectives towards the role of digital libraries in developing students' reading comprehension skills?

## **3. Aims of the Study**

This study aims to examine EFL teachers' awareness of the role of digital libraries in fostering students' reading comprehension skills and to explore their perspectives on integrating these resources into reading instruction. By addressing these objectives, the study seeks to provide actionable insights into how digital libraries can be effectively utilized in EFL educational contexts.

## **4. Research Hypotheses**

The present study is based on the following hypotheses:

1. EFL teachers are aware of the role of digital libraries in reading instruction.
2. EFL teachers have positive attitudes towards the role of digital libraries in developing students' reading comprehension skills.

## **5. Research Methodology and Design**

### **5.1 Data Gathering Tool**

In this research, data were collected through a questionnaire distributed to teachers in the Department of English Language at the University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma. The purpose of the questionnaire was to explore teachers' attitudes and perceptions regarding the role of digital libraries in developing students' reading comprehension skills. The questions were designed to gather insights on the frequency and effectiveness of digital library use in academic contexts, the challenges faced, and the perceived impact on students. This tool was selected to answer the research questions and to test the hypotheses formulated in the

### **5.2 Population and sample of the Study**

The sample for this study consists of 36 teachers from various specializations who responded to the questionnaire. Although the total population in the Department of English Language at the University of 08 Mai 1945, Guelma, is approximately 60 teachers, not all of them were available at the time of data collection. Therefore, only 36 teachers completed and returned it, forming the study's sample. These respondents are considered a convenient sample, and their insights are valuable due to their relevant experience.

## **6. Structure of the Dissertation**

The present dissertation has been organized into three main chapters, preceded by a general introduction and followed by a general conclusion. The general introduction describes the context of the research, which contains a statement of the problem, research questions, aims of the study, research hypothesis, methodology including the population and the tools used for collecting data, and the structure of the study. The first chapter, entitled reading comprehension skills, covers definitions of reading and reading, types of reading, levels of reading comprehension models and components of reading process, stages and effective strategies, as well as the importance and the purpose of reading, especially in the EFL context. The second

chapter was under the title of digital libraries, analyzes some aspects of digital libraries which include their definitions, types, characteristics, important examples, advantages and disadvantages, and the differences between traditional and digital libraries. It also presents key usage strategies and investigates the impact of digital libraries on EFL students reading comprehension skills. The third chapter focusses on the field investigation, offering a description of research sample, the tools used, how data was collected, and analysis of the results obtained from teachers' questionnaire. This chapter also discusses the results in relation to research questions and hypothesis, and concludes with pedagogical implications, limitations of study, and suggestions for further research.



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## **Introduction**

Reading is one of the most important skills in both learning and teaching. However, it is a complex process that requires more than just recognizing words on page. To fully understand a text, the reader must grasp the meaning behind the words which can only be achieved through one crucial factor that is reading comprehension. The latter helps interpret the deeper meaning of the text, connects ideas, and analyzes each word presented. Without reading comprehension, reading becomes ineffective. A reader may recognize words but struggles to grasp the full meaning of the text.

Chapter one explores various aspects of reading comprehension skills, beginning with different definitions of this concept. It also examines the types, levels, and purposes of reading, in addition to introducing the principal models, key components, and developmental stages involved in the reading process. Finally, this chapter also tackles the effective strategies to improve reading skills and discusses why reading comprehension is essential for learners.

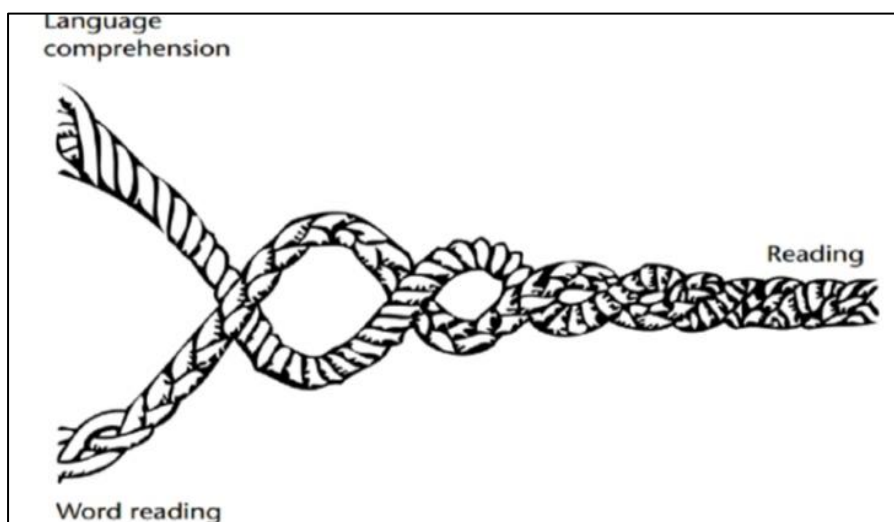
### **1.1 Definition of Reading Skill**

Widdowson (1979) provides a simplest definition of reading skills as “reading is a process of getting linguistic information via print” (p.168). That is to say, reading is the process of extracting linguistic information from printed text by recognizing words, understanding their meaning, and interpreting context to grasp the intended message.

Regardless of whether it is your native or a secondary language, reading is multifaceted skill that includes recognizing letters, connecting them with sounds, and making sense of what is written. It also depends on knowing rules of spelling, words, and grammar. At its core reading requires two fundamental cognitive processes, which are decoding written symbols and interpreting their meaning (Hoover & Cough, 1990).

The figure shows that reading well means putting two important skills together: word reading and understanding language. Word reading helps you recognize and say words

correctly. While, language comprehension helps you make sense of what those words mean. If you can read words but do not understand them, reading feels empty, and if you understand language but you struggle to read words, you cannot fully enjoy a book. When both skills work together, reading becomes smooth, meaningful, and enjoyable.



**Figure 1. 1** The Process of Reading Skills (From Arouel & Guerfi ,2023 ,p.29).

## 1.2 Definition of Reading Comprehension

Reading process undergoes various stages to achieve complete understanding referred to as “comprehension”. First, we need to understand the meaning of “comprehension”. According to Westwood (2001), comprehension is to understand, interpret, and make sense of a text by recognizing its meaning, context, and purpose.

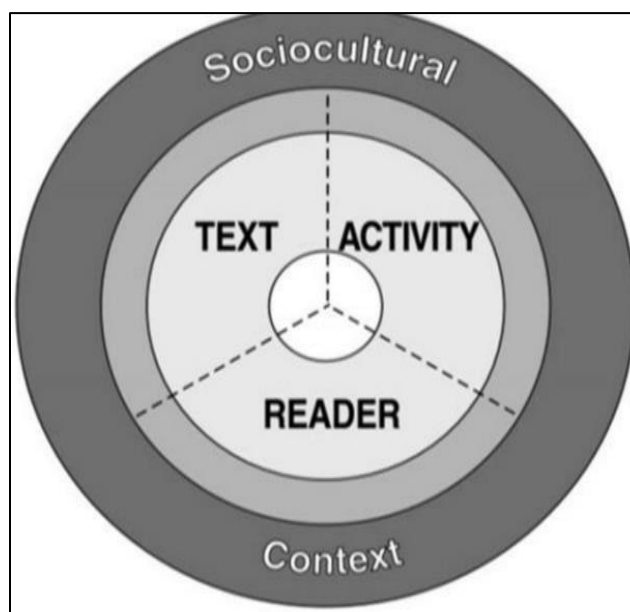
Reading comprehension is the ability to understand and make sense of written material, going beyond just recognizing words and sentences to truly grasp their meaning. It involves processing information, connecting ideas, and drawing conclusions based on what is read. Whether engaging with books, articles, or digital content, reading comprehension allows individuals to explore new ideas, learn from different perspectives, and gain knowledge. It also includes recognizing relationships between ideas, identifying key points, and making inferences about things that may not be directly stated. For example, in a story, it helps readers not only to follow the plot but also to understand characters' emotions and author's message. In academic

or professional settings, it enables critical thinking, analysis, and application of knowledge. To sum up, strong reading comprehension skills are essential for learning, problem-solving, and effective communication in everyday life (Burns et al., 1999).

Additionally, Grabe and Stoller (2002) explain that reading comprehension means understanding and interpreting a text correctly. However, it is a complex process and can vary depending on different factors such as the person's motivation, their goals and Language proficiency.

Briefly said, from the previous scholars' definitions, reading comprehension is not just the process of analyzing and interpreting a written text, but it also emphasizes the dynamic relationship between the reader and the text, while taking into account the elements that affect the reader's understanding of a particular text.

The figure below clarifies that reading comprehension is influenced by several interrelated factors. First, the sociocultural context plays a significant role, as individuals interpret texts based on their cultural background, beliefs, and values, which can vary from one culture to another. Second, the nature of the text itself affects comprehension, depending on its complexity, genre, and linguistic features. Third, the activity, which is the reader's purpose for engaging with the text, also shapes the comprehension process. Finally, the reader, an individual contributes to understanding based on their prior knowledge, motivation, and cognitive abilities.



**Figure 1. 2** Reading Comprehension Factors (From Arouel& Guerfi,2023,p.29)

### 1.3 Types of Reading

Reading can be divided into many different types. They are classified as the following:

#### 1.3.1 Intensive Reading

It is called Narrow Reading. It is a type of reading that requires precise understanding of language structure and focusing on details (Grellet, 1996). Since intensive reading is usually practiced in the classroom, students are already familiar with this learning environment, making it an ideal setting for this type of activity. Because it involves a detailed analysis of vocabulary, grammar, and discourse markers, having the teacher present is essential to provide guidance and clarification when needed. In this context, the teacher plays a crucial role in helping learners process the text by explaining challenging parts and breaking down complex structures. This structured approach ensures that students engage with key linguistic elements in a focused manner, reinforcing their comprehension skills Long &Richard, 1987).

Thus, according to Nuttall (1996), the goal of intensive reading is not just to understand the meaning of a text, but also to grasp how that meaning is constructed. In other words, this type of reading helps learners focus on details and specific information, such as names, dates, places, or numbers.

### **1.3.2 Extensive Reading**

There are numerous definitions of this type of reading. For instance, Belkharroubi (2020) believes that “reading a large amount of materials gives the opportunity for student's personal experience " (p. 14). In other words, reading extensively provides students with opportunities to enrich their intellectual development and expand their understanding of diverse concepts and perspectives. Typically, the main purpose of extensive reading is entertainment. Learners read whatever they enjoy without classroom pressure, for example, stories, comics, or blogs, just for fun (Harmer, 2001, p. 212).

### **1.3.3 Digital Reading**

Singer and Alexander (2017) define digital reading as” Reading involving hypermedia technology” (p. 1011). It means using a mix of text, images, videos, and links to create a more interactive and engaging reading experience. Instead of just reading words on a page, you can click on links to watch videos, view pictures, or explore related topics. This makes learning or reading more interesting and helps you to understand the material better by connecting different types of information in one place. It is like reading a book online that lets you jump to other resources to learn more, all in one go.

Moreover, Jonnes-Kaviler and Flannigan (2006) state that digital literacy is a person’s ability to use computers and digital tools effectively. Where ‘digital’ refers to information that computers process as numbers (p. 9).

### **1.3.4 Print Reading**

One of the most important characteristics of printed reading is a fixed structure that helps readers stay focused, allowing them to move through ideas step by step without distractions. It also gives them the chance to pause, go back, and reread sections to fully grasp the meaning. Since the text is stable and does not shift or disappear, readers can engage with it at their own pace, making sense of the author's message piece by piece. This kind of reading

requires patience and attention, but it also creates a deep connection between the reader and the text, encouraging thoughtful reflection along the way (Coiro, 2003, p. 460).

Another characteristic of printed reading, as notes by Coiro (2003, p. 460), is a clear, structured flow that guides the reader from beginning to end, the reader follows the author's intended path without much flexibility. Unlike digital content that can constantly change, printed text stays the same.

## **1.4 Levels of Reading Comprehension**

The process of reading comprehension cannot be achieved at once. It passes through different levels to be done. Scanlon et al. (2010) provide division for reading comprehension levels as literal, inferential, and critical level (p. 278).

### **1.4.1 Literal Comprehension**

Literal understanding means being able to grasp the ideas in a written text, recognize important details and sequences, and see how cause and effect are connected. While it is considered a basic reading skill, it plays a vital role in helping students build a strong foundation before moving on to more advanced reading skills. That is why teachers need to focus on developing students' literal comprehension as it is the first step toward becoming skilled readers (Burns et al., 1999).

Literal comprehension is the first and simplest step in understanding a text but it is very important. That is why students need to develop this skill. When they have good literal reading skills, they can also understand deeper and think more critically. However, if they struggle with it, they may find it hard to analyze and interpret texts properly (Nunjanah & Putri, 2022, p. 50).

Briefly said, literal comprehension is the foundation and the simplest level of reading. It focuses on shallow comprehension of text rather than the deepest one.



### **1.4.2 Inferential Comprehension**

Inferential comprehension involves analyzing, interpreting, and drawing conclusions to reach a depth of meaning that is significantly beyond the basics of comprehension. Readers go beyond mere fact recognition and actively think critically when responding to questions like “What happened?”, “What would happen if the situation changed?”, or “What is the connection of this idea to a wider framework?”. This level of comprehension promotes deeper understanding, prediction, and evaluation, all of which are important to the growth of higher-order thinking skills. In teaching and assessment, it is often evaluated as part of a holistic approach through open-ended questions which demand thoughtful justifications (Westwood, 2001, p. 30).

### **1.4.3 Evaluative comprehension (Critical Level )**

According to Westwood (2001,p. 31), evaluative comprehension is much more than just understanding the words on a page. It involves the reader’s ability to think carefully and critically about what they are reading. This means that the reader can judge whether the information is reliable, whether the arguments make sense, and whether the ideas match what they already know or believe. In other words, evaluative comprehension allows readers to go beyond simply accepting everything they read. It helps them decide what is worth remembering or questioning.

## **1.5 Models of Reading**

Reading is the most extensively researched and the most enigmatic of the four basic language skills. The availability of a theoretical framework to understand and master the mental processes involved in reading would greatly contribute to linguistics, psychology, education, and research.

The term “model” is widely used, both in everyday life and in science. We rely on certain patterns to guide us on what to do or what not to do in specific situations. In science, researchers

develop models to provide a structured approach for solving research problems. A model is a systematic and practical way of explaining particular aspects of language to reveal its structure or function. It simplifies complex ideas, such as how we read or comprehend language, by breaking them into manageable components, making them easier to study, teach, and apply in real-world contexts.

According to Browne (1998), there are three major models of reading which are the bottom-up, top-down, and interactive models. These are summarized below:

### **1.5.1 The Bottom-Up Model**

This model views reading as a decoding process in which the reader derives meaning by interpreting written symbols. As Alderson (2000) explains, this model operates sequentially: the reader starts with visual input (letters), processes them into sounds, identifies words, and ultimately extracts meaning. In essence, reading is a linear progression—from letter recognition to phonological conversion, word formation, and finally comprehension. This underscores the critical role of decoding as the foundation of reading. Additionally, Browne (1998) conceptualizes reading as a bottom-up process that begins with learning letters, sounds, and word formation, gradually building up to sentence-level understanding. This model is known as part-to-whole approach because it builds reading skills step by step, starting with small units like letters moving to full words and sentences. This approach is particularly effective in early childhood education due to its focus on letter forms and word recognition; however, it becomes limited at advanced levels, as it overlooks the reader's background knowledge expectations, and contextual understanding.

### **1.5.2 The Top-Down Model**

In contrast to the bottom-up model, the top-down model of reading emphasizes that readers rely on their prior experiences and language knowledge to anticipate what will be meaningful in the text. According to Goodman (1976, p. 498), readers are not limited to the

letters on the page but also use semantic cues (meaning) and syntactic cues (grammar or sentence structure). Thus, readers' prior knowledge of the topic and their understanding of language help them predict upcoming content in the text. Grabe (1988) expand this view by describing reading as an interactive process in which textual information combines with the reader's prior knowledge. He describes this connection as a dynamic dialogue between the reader and the texts, and views comprehension as more than information extraction.

Supporting this perspective, Richards (1990) claims that readers actively integrate their existing knowledge - including topic familiarity, contextual or situational knowledge, and information in the form of schemata and scripts, which are stored in long-term memory - in order to understand the meaning of a given text (pp. 50-51).

### **1.5.3 The Interactive Model**

Since the bottom-up as well as the top-down models fail in providing an adequate explanation for the reading process, the interactive model has been suggested to overcome the deficiency of those models. It comes into prominence in 1977 by Rumelhart, and is then developed by others, this model offers a more comprehensive approach.

Stanovich (1980) criticizes the two primary approaches to reading the "bottom-up" (focused on decoding text from small units like letters) and the "top-down" (relying on context and past knowledge) as being excessively one-sided. He contends that bottom-up models disregard the relevance of higher-level thinking, whereas top-down models neglect the significance of accurate word recognition. To address this, he proposes the "interactive-compensatory model", which integrates the two approaches. Additionally, Carrell (1998) claims that the interactive model suggests that the reader processes reading by starting with a linguistic surface representation encoded by a writer and ends with meaning which the reader construct" (pp. 240-254).

## **1.6 Components of Reading**

Reading involves multiple components and integrates different identification and interpretation abilities. It encompasses several cognitive processes that assist students in comprehending their reading. Clearly, to achieve a proper understanding of a specific text, they must decipher words, relate sentences, apply their background knowledge, and relate it to new information.

### **1.6.1 Phonemic Awareness**

Phonemic awareness is the understanding that spoken language words can be broken into individual phonemes. Phonemes are the smallest units which combine to form syllables and words. Therefore, it can be defined as the ability to focus on and manipulate these phonemes in spoken syllables and words. (Department of Education and Training in Western Australia, 2004, p. 73).

The National Reading Panel's research emphasizes the critical role of phonemic awareness in reading instruction. Teaching phonemic awareness not only enhances children's ability to decode and comprehend text but also provides them with the necessary tools to get over the complexities of written language. As such, phonemic awareness should be regarded as a crucial element of any comprehensive literacy program, particularly in the early stages of reading development. Furthermore, students need an awareness of phonemes themselves before they can make sense of words on a page. 0

### **1.6.2 Phonics**

Phonics involves linking sounds to individual letters or groups of letters. It can also be described as a set of rules that govern how written letters represent spoken sounds. In English, these letter-sound patterns are mostly predictable, though not entirely uniform. Nevertheless, they are consistent enough to provide meaningful support to young learners as they develop the ability to decode and read unfamiliar words. (Foorman et al., 1998)

### **1.6.3 Vocabulary**

Cambridge Dictionary defines vocabulary as all the words in a particular language, subject or used by a particular person. Thus, vocabulary is the range of words a student is able to understand and use in context.

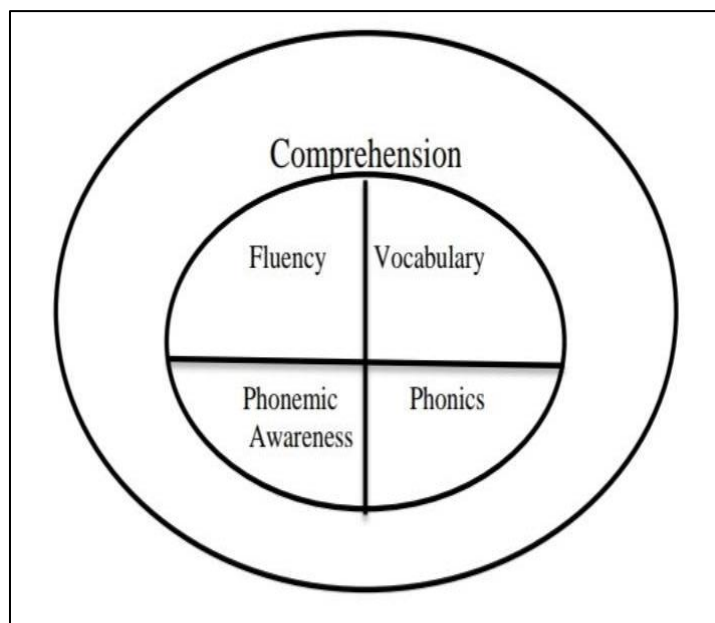
Vocabulary is a crucial component of language learning; without knowing words and their meanings, learners cannot be able to develop their receptive skills: reading and listening, and use language effectively when speaking and writing.

### **1.6.4 Fluency**

Fluency in reading is a key aspect of reading proficiency, encompassing the ability to read text accurately, quickly, and with proper expression. (National Reading Panel [NRP], 2000). It serves as a bridge between word recognition and comprehension, allowing readers to process text smoothly and focus on meaning rather than decoding (Rasinski, 2004).

### **1.6.5 Comprehension**

Comprehension is a complex cognitive process that involves interactions between the reader and the text, enabling the reader to construct meaning and understand what they have read. Thus, comprehension involves constructing meaning that is reasonable and accurate by connecting what has been read to what the reader already knows and thinking about all of this information until it is understood. It encompasses the ability to establish logical relationships among the sentences, concepts, and paragraphs within a text to derive its intended meaning. Additionally, comprehension entails metacognition, or self-regulated thought processes, which represent an internal dialogue between the reader and the text. This dialogue emphasizes the reader's thoughts and prior knowledge while engaging with the material (David et al., 2008). The following figure shows the five components of reading skill which are : phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.



**Figure 1. 3** Essential Components of Reading (National Reading Panel, 2000)

### **1.7 The Reading Stages**

Reading is a process that involves recognizing words and leads to the development of comprehension. Research indicates that reading is a negotiation of meaning between the text and its reader. It is a complex skill that requires critical and creative thinking to construct meaning from written texts by integrating multiple interrelated sources of information. Different scholars have divided the phases of teaching and learning reading comprehension into three main stages which are: the pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading phase (Hood et al, 2005; Gibbon, 2002; Brown, 2001; Wallace, 1992; and Barnet 1988, as cited in Rosalinda, 2016).

#### **1.7.1 Pre-Reading Phase**

In this phase students prepare themselves to read by activating their prior knowledge. D'arcangelo (2002) states that during this phase, teachers help students get ready for the text by providing language preparation and familiarizing them with its basic content. Students may decide or be told why they are reading the text and use their background knowledge to make predictions about what it is about. Thus, this stage not only prepares students for the text but

also sparks their interest in the topic and helps them develop relevant knowledge and vocabulary for understanding and interpreting the text.

### **1.7.2 While Reading phase**

This stage focuses mainly on the text. It enables students to integrate the knowledge they already have with new information from the text. The while-reading phase is essential for processing the text in depth. During this stage, students make an effort to comprehend the text thoroughly. This is also the stage where the actual reading takes place. there are various ways to engage students the text—they can read on their own, or the teacher can read aloud to them, or participate in group reading, where teachers might use big books or project the text so everyone can follow along together (Amir &Madani, 2023).

In the same vein, Roit (2015) explains that students discover new knowledge during these activities and learn to relate it to what they already know. They question themselves about ambiguous points, and reviewing the text again to solve ambiguity and find the information. (Atilia & Benyoub, 2024 pp 21-22).

### **1.7.3 Post-Reading Phase**

The post-reading phase is the final stage where readers reflect on the material they have read. In this stage, students evaluate the text's validity, relate it to their existing knowledge, and reconstruct and assess the information. Teachers can facilitate this process by asking general questions to assess comprehension. Additionally, this stage allows readers to retell the story, discuss its elements, answer questions, or compare it to other texts. For example, students can create summaries, condensing large selections into their main points for a more concise understanding (Sandhu, 2019).

## **1.8 Strategies of Reading**

In the field of reading strategy studies, Oxford and Crookall (1989) had defined reading comprehension strategies as a variety of methods that improve the effectiveness and efficiency

of language learning. These strategies enhance learning, boost comprehension, and help students overcome comprehension challenges. Readers use these strategies to better understand information from materials without needing to read in detail, as these techniques are often faster than normal reading. Among these reading strategies are skimming and scanning, which will be explained in the following section.

### **1.8.1 Skimming**

Skimming refers to the technique of quickly reading a text to grasp its main ideas without delving into details. As Harmer (1998, p. 69) suggested, it involves glancing over the text's surface to understand its general meaning. That is to say, it is going through a passage, chapter, or big amount of material to find the essential point rather than reading every word, which is good for getting a basic picture of the information.

Finally, Fairbairn and Winch (2011) emphasized the value of skimming, as it enables readers to skip complex or irrelevant information while helping them determine which sections worth closer reading and where to begin intensive reading (p. 30).

### **1.8.2 Scanning**

According to Nuttall (1989), scanning involves swiftly looking through a text to locate particular information or to determine if it meets a specific need (p.34). In other words, it refers to taking a quick look along a text to find out a given piece of information such as a name or a date or to check whether text is relevant for a particular purpose. Scanning is only effective when the reader knows exactly what they are looking for in a text. This strategy is ineffective for learning entire passages as it primarily focuses on certain topics. Readers who scan without knowing what they are looking for often overlook important information (Shan, 2009).

## **1.9 The Importance of Reading Comprehension**

According to Ciancio, 2023, true comprehension goes beyond memorizing words; it requires constructing a mental model of the text's message by synthesizing ideas into a coherent



understanding. This kind of deep understanding is what makes reading truly valuable. It's how we connect with ideas, learn new things, and actually enjoy what we're reading. Without it, reading would just be empty words on a page. Ultimately, reading comprehension serves as the foundational skill that transforms written information into meaningful knowledge, empowering individuals to learn, analyze, and apply ideas effectively in both academic and real-world contexts.

Byers, Jones, and Kervin (2012, pp. 18–27) emphasize that reading comprehension is foundational for all domains of learning because it enhances linguistic knowledge, promotes reading proficiency, and fosters the ability to modify one's reading approach in accordance with various reading objectives, which improve adaptability across text types. These skills are critical for academic success.

Moreover, reading comprehension is a key tool for improving communication and understanding. With the rise of information technology, the nature of reading has evolved. It now encompasses not just traditional books and articles, but also digital content like online documents, scientific papers, and other online resources. This shift requires readers to process large quantities of information and assess the reliability of sources. As a result, reading comprehension is continuously adapting to the needs of the digital age (Kendeou et al., 2014).

### **1.10 Purpose of Reading Skills**

There are two purposes of reading: reading for benefits and reading for entertainment. When reading for academic purpose for example in college, most students approach their textbooks with one main goal: to memorize enough information to pass their exams. Understanding the material is important, but often, it takes a backseat to simply retaining facts long enough to get the grade they need. Instead of deeply engaging with the content, many students focus on short-term learning, hoping to recall just enough to succeed on test day (van den Broek et al., 1995).

The purpose of reading for entertainment is to engage with the text in more personal and imaginative way. Readers make connections between the story and their own experiences, react emotionally, and evaluate how interesting or enjoyable the writing is. Unlike academic reading, where the focus is on memorization and comprehension for exams, entertainment reading is more about enjoyment, personal reflection, and emotional involvement (Van den Broek et al., 2001).

Generally, van den Broek et al, (1995) highlight that reading progresses in different ways depending on the reader's purposes. For example, when someone reads for entertainment, he focuses more on personal engagement with text, he immerses himself in every details in the text like when reads novel. While, if a person reads for academic purpose, he becomes more analytical and concentrates on understanding key concepts, identifying arguments and using critical thinking in solving problems such as in exam and research.

## **Conclusion**

Reading is a highly complex cognitive process that requires intentional interaction between the reader and the text to construct meaning. Effective comprehension depends on the reader's ability to actively engage with the text, derive meaning, and form accurate mental representations of its content. For EFL learners, mastering reading comprehension is essential, as it does not only facilitate language acquisition but also enhances academic and professional success. This chapter has explored key theoretical foundations related to reading and reading comprehension, emphasizing their significance in communication, learning, and global literacy. Ultimately, proficient reading comprehension is an essential skill for navigating an increasingly interconnected world.

## **Chapter Two: Digital Libraries**

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## **Introduction**

For centuries, libraries have served as foundational pillars of knowledge in educational and research institutions. However, in today's digital age, people increasingly rely on technological resources to meet their daily needs. Through the internet, users can now access and utilize library materials remotely. As a result, libraries have transformed to digital systems. This transformation has led traditional libraries to evolve into digital libraries, enabling users to retrieve and use resources virtually through electronic platforms. Digital libraries are renowned for their convenience and ability to serve numerous users simultaneously. Yet, as their adoption grows, challenges related to user interaction and e-resource accessibility have also emerged.

This chapter examines the concept of digital libraries through theoretical and practical perspectives. It begins with an exploration of various definitions and categorizations of digital libraries, followed by an analysis of their key characteristics and notable examples. The discussion then compares digital libraries with traditional libraries, highlighting both advantages and disadvantages. Subsequent sections investigate effective usage strategies and specifically analyze the impact on EFL students' reading comprehension.

### **2.1 Definitions of Digital Libraries**

Research presents numerous definitions of digital libraries, shaped by researchers' perspectives and their understanding of the concept. Borgman (1999) finds that these definitions fall under two categories:

- Researchers' definitions (computer scientists/engineering background) – who see digital libraries as collections of content built for specific user communities.
- Librarians' definitions who view them as institutions or services.

Moreover, Borgman (2000, p. 40) notes that the first research-focused definition of digital libraries emerged in 1992, under the term 'electronic libraries' which was used to describe

what we now call digital libraries. Over time, the concept has been labeled as digital, electronic, or virtual libraries. Below are key definitions of digital libraries.

Digital libraries are described by Borgman (1999) as integrated systems including information resources along with the technical infrastructure required to create, retrieve, and use data. These systems are designed for specific user groups, offering structured content and specialized features to meet their informational needs.

According to the Stanford digital library research team, a digital library is a system of integrated services centered on collections of resources. These materials may not always be managed by the same institution offering the service, yet they still contribute to its functionality (Reich and Winograd, 1995). According to the Digital Library Federation, digital libraries are organizations that supply the necessary resources and expert personnel to select, organize, provide intellectual access to interpret, distribute, and preserve digital collections. They also ensure these collections remain accessible for the long term, making them easily and affordably available to specific communities or user groups.

According to the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), a digital library is not a single entity but rather a network that uses technology to integrate resources from various providers. The linkages should be invisible to users, allowing broad accessibility. Moreover, digital libraries include not just metadata or document references but also the actual digital content.

Lesk (1997) describes a digital library as a digitized and organized collection of information that provides enhanced features compared to a traditional library. Essentially, digital libraries serve as the online version of conventional libraries, encompassing both digital content and physical items.

Arms (2000) describes a digital library as an organized set of information in digital form, supported by related services, and made available via a network. In contrast, Oppenheim

and Smithson (1999, p. 97) focus more on the role of digital technology, defining a digital library as an information system where all resources are in computer-readable formats, and processes such as acquisition, storage, preservation, retrieval, access, and display are facilitated by digital means.

Finally, the Online Dictionary of Library and Information defined a digital library as a library where a substantial portion of the resources are in machine-readable format, rather than traditional print or microform.

## **2.2 Types of Digital Libraries**

Digital libraries categorizes in various ways. According to Chowdhury & Chowdhury, 2003, p17, digital libraries can be classified in multiple ways, such as by content, origin, or purpose. Among the important categories are:

- Early digital libraries (such as ELINOR and Project Gutenberg).
- Institutional repositories or corporate which are created by private organizations, research centers, or corporations to organize and manage internal knowledge resources, such as the ACM Digital Library.
- National library initiatives, like the Library of Congress (USA) and British Library (UK), digitize historical and cultural materials to preserve heritage and provide free online access to the public.
- University-based systems which provide students, researchers, and the public with access to academic resources, rare manuscripts, and open-access publications. These platforms support education and research by digitizing scholarly materials and offering advanced search tools. (Such as Oxford's Bodleian initiatives and the California Digital Library).

- Research Project Libraries are specialized digital collections focused on specific academic or scientific domains (e.g., NCSTRL for technical reports, NDLTD for theses).
- Hybrid library models like HeadLine, which combines digital and physical resources.

### **2.3 Characteristics of Digital Libraries**

The previous definitions have exposed various characteristics of digital libraries, they had also to some extent defined their role and functions, and differentiate them from traditional libraries. From “Introduction to Digital Libraries” (Chowdhury & Chowdhury, 2003,p7), the major characteristics include :

- Digital libraries may contain a variety of digital information resources ranging from text to image, audio, and video.
- Digital libraries minimize the physical space required by traditional libraries.
- Digital library users may be distributed anywhere in the world, and in some cases several different levels of services have to be designed to meet the needs of local as well as remote users.
- Libraries have brought a fundamental change in the use of information (from print to digital), as well as in the concept of ownership. A lot of digital libraries give access to materials that they do not actually own.
- Digital libraries provide access to different types of information resources that may reside on different servers in the world.
- Unlike traditional libraries, digital libraries allow users to create their own personalized collections using built-in tools. This means users can construct and organize digital materials within their personal workspace for later access and use.
- Unlike traditional libraries, multiple users can access the same data or content simultaneously.

- In order to build global information infrastructure, digital libraries should be able to handle multilingual information resources.
- Digital content can be accessed and utilized by various users based on their specific needs.
- Digital libraries break time, space and language barriers. Ideally, users from anywhere in the world should be able to use a digital library at any time and possibly in any language.

## **2.4 Important Examples of Digital Libraries**

### **2.4.1 Project Gutenberg**

It is founded by Michael Hart in 1971 and is recognized as the oldest digital library. It began with the digitization of the U.S. Declaration of Independence and has grown to offer over 70,000 free e-books, primarily comprising public domain literature and historical texts. The project relies heavily on volunteer efforts for reviewing formatting content, maintaining a commitment to simple formats for maximum accessibility. Project Gutenberg established foundational principles for digital libraries including open access, volunteer collaboration, and long-term preservation (Lebert, 2008; Hart, 2004).

### **2.4.2 ELINOR Digital Library**

ELINOR (Electronic Library Information Online Retrieval) was one of the earliest digital library initiatives, developed at De Montfort University in the UK during the early 1990s. It served as a pioneering electronic textbook project that focused on creating a working model of an electronic library system. ELINOR represented an early experiment in providing digital access to educational materials, helping establish practical frameworks for digital rights management and electronic content delivery before larger digital library initiatives emerged (Zhao & Ramsden, 1996, pp. 243-244).

### **2.4.3 ACM Digital Library**

The Association for Computing Machinery Digital Library (ACM) is a premier repository of computing literature, launched in 1997 as a comprehensive, searchable database



designed to go beyond traditional e-journal collections. It provides access to a wide range of content, including peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings, magazines, newsletters, and specialized educational resources such as the Journal of Educational Resources in Computing (JERIC). The platform offers advanced features like sophisticated search tools, citation tracking, and cross-publication linking to enhance research efficiency. Serving the global computer science community, this digital library prioritizes streamlined scholarly discovery by integrating diverse resources into a unified, user-friendly system (Casel & Fox, 2001).

#### **2.4.4 World Digital Library**

The World Digital Library (WDL) is an international digital library operated by UNESCO and the Library of Congress with the mission of promoting global cultural understanding and education. By providing free, multilingual access to significant primary materials from around the world - including manuscripts, maps, rare books, films, photographs, and architectural drawings - the WDL aims to expand the diversity of cultural content available online, particularly non-Western and non-English resources. Since its launch with 1,236 items, the collection has grown substantially to include over 12,000 culturally important objects representing nearly 200 countries, with some materials dating as far back as 8,000 BCE. The WDL serves both general audiences and scholars while working to bridge the digital divide by strengthening the capabilities of its partner institutions worldwide (Abid, 2009).

#### **2.5 Advantages and Disadvantages of Digital Libraries**

Digital libraries are now widely used in education because they make it easier to find and use information. They offer many benefits that help both students and teachers. However, like any technological tool, they also have some drawbacks. This section will look at both the advantages and disadvantages of digital libraries.

### 2.5.1 Advantages of Digital Libraries

Transitioning to a digital library comes with many benefits not only for readers, but also for librarians. In this age when users prefer instant and effortless access to information, adopting digitized model boosts ease and efficiency. Here is why going paperless is a great option.

- Accessibility and Convenience

With digital resources, people can access reference materials anytime, anywhere, as long as they have an internet connection. This means they do not have to worry about the library's opening hours or being physically present. Whether they need to look up information, search through databases, or check reference materials, they can do it all from the comfort of their home, a café, or even while traveling. This makes learning and research much more flexible and convenient for everyone (Islam et al., 2015).

- Expanded Collection and Search Efficiency

Digital libraries give users access to huge variety of resources anytime and anywhere. Instead of being limited by library hours or printed books, they can easily find what they need in seconds using search tools like key words and indexing. This saves time, makes research faster, and allows learners to work more freely and independently (Islam et al., 2015).

- Low Maintenance Cost

Digital libraries are cheaper to run. Unlike traditional libraries that need to pay for staff, building, and book care, digital libraries do not have these extra costs. This makes it easier to share knowledge with more people for less money (Kumar, 2015).

- Storage Space

Unlike traditional libraries, which are limited by physical space, digital libraries provide virtually endless storage. This is because digital content takes up little physical space, and advancement in media storage have made it cheaper than ever to store large amounts of information (Islam et al., 2015).

- Global Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing

Digital libraries help people from all over the world connect and share knowledge easily. You may converse with others, collaborate on ideas, and find useful resources whether you are a teacher, student, or researcher. It is like international gathering spot where people share thoughts, learn from each other, and contribute to an interconnected society (Granesmoorthy et al., 2023, p. 472)

### **2.5.2 Disadvantages of Digital Libraries**

Although digital libraries have revolutionized access to information, there are some notable drawbacks to using them.

- Copyright

One of the biggest challenges of digital libraries is the issue of copyright. Many digitized resources are protected by copyright laws and licensing agreements which control how people can access, use, and share them. Not just for regular users but also for library administrators who manage the collections because of these legal restrictions, some materials may not be freely available, and others may come with strict usage limits. This can be frustrating for students, researcher, and anyone who relies on digital libraries for information, as they might not always find what they need or may be unable to use it as they wish (Granesmoorthy et al., 2023, p. 472).

- Slow Internet Speed

One of the beneficial aspects of digital libraries is their accessibility. However, certain factors can influence it. For example, if your internet connection is slow, you may take a long time just to upload materials. Also, if many people are using a library's server at the same time, it will become overloaded, causing delays. This issue is even worse during peak hours when a lot of users are online. This problem is faced by people with limited internet bandwidth or who live in regions with unreliable internet. This can be particularly frustrating, instead of quickly

getting information they need, they struggle with long waiting, difficulty in resources and interrupted downloads (Granesmoorthy et al., 2023, p. 472).

- Lack of Computer Literacy

Some users have trouble using digital libraries, especially those who are unfamiliar with basic computers operations. This lack of digital skills creates a barrier to benefiting from the available resources (Kumar, 2015).

- High Initial Cost

Creating digital library costs a lot of money especially in the beginning. Institutions need to buy computers and storage equipments to keep digital material safe. They also have to scan books and documents, organizing them properly, and design simple websites or applications so people can use the library easily. In the top of that employers require training in order to handle things efficiently. Smaller institutions with little finding may find these costs prohibitive, which makes it challenges for them to develop strong library (Granesmoorthy et al., 2023, p. 473).

## **2.6 Differences between Digital Libraries and Traditional Libraries**

Traditional libraries differ from digital libraries in many points. The following are key difference between them:

- Accessibility

Finding a book in a traditional library could take a lot of Time. The person had to go to the library, searching through card catalogs physically just to find the book they are looking for. OPAC or Online Public Access Catalogs have changed the landscape for modern day book searching. Most libraries now use OPACs. Users can look for books using a computer and, in some cases, even from the comforts of their home. This shift has made it much faster and more convenience to access information, without being limited by location or library hours (Hussain, 2022, p. 2).

- Cost and Budget

Unlike digital libraries, which require a considerable amount of hardware and software, traditional libraries do not depend on high-tech equipment. Although they are responsible for maintaining a physical collection, they do not encounter the same degree of financial constraints as digital libraries. This is particularly true in developing countries (Hussain, 2022, p. 2).

- User Engagement

Traditional libraries provide quiet and comfortable space where people can sit, read, and study without distractions. This creates opportunities for face-to-face interaction, where people can discuss ideas, work on group, or simply enjoy the atmosphere of being surrounded by books, articles, and other resources from anywhere. They also make learning more interactive by including multimedia content like videos and audio recording. Moreover, online collaboration tools allow users to work together, sharing ideas, making study and research more interactive and enjoyable (Adhikari, 2023, p. 29).

- Content Updates

On the one side, traditional libraries, books and printed materials contain valuable information, but overtime, some of this information becomes outdated because of new discoveries and updated research. To keep the library collection relevant, librarians have to check books regularly to explore which one of them need to be replaced or removed. For sure, this process takes a long time. On the other side, paperless libraries make it easier to keep information up to date. If there is new edition of books, they do not need to make replacement or removal, they can add instantly, ensuring that users always have to access to the latest and most accurate information (Adhikari, 2023, p. 29).

- Collection Size

Traditional libraries can only hold a limited number of books and resources because they need physical space to store them. However, digital libraries do not have this problem

since digital books and materials do not take up physical spaces. Namely, they keep growing their collection without worrying about space, making it easier to offer a wide range of materials to users (Adhikari, 2023, p.29).

## **2.7 Strategies of Using Digital Libraries**

While reflecting on ways to improve the use of digital libraries, we can learn from educators' efficient use of physical libraries. A practice that is often observed is that they foster a conducive reading environment, facilitate student access to library, and assist in navigating its book collection. Schools have developed established patterns for interaction with physical libraries in their areas, such as having individual class teachers conduct scheduled visits. Some educational institutions have elaborated collections of books within their premises and language learners benefit from the processes of book lending and filling (Kucirkova, 2018, p. 148).

A few schools have gone beyond the norm by developing a distinct space for libraries on or off the school site. A case in point is a school in the UK. This school has developed a unique project called the school library bus. This is a converted double-decker bus that has been transformed into a quiet reading zone for students. It is parked at the school, and local charitable organizations have helped to decorate it.(Kucirkova,2018, p. 148).

Even though not all the motivating methods can be used in digital libraries, other strategies could still assist in student orientation with them. The major difference is that the teachers' assistance ought to be accompanied by electronic presentation of the library activity. This can be done by using an interactive white board for the whole class or for individual student terminals or laptops. During English classes, teachers' can spend some time teaching learners how to check out and check in (Kucirova,2018, p. 148).

## **2.8 The Role of Digital Libraries in Developing EFL Students' Reading Comprehension Skills**

The digital revolution has totally transformed the way we read, write, and engage with information. However, not everyone agrees on the exact nature of this change. Some believe that reading has shifted towards a more visual experience, relying more on images, symbols, and icons. Others see the change in different ways. The common point, though is that the way we process and interact with written content today is very different from how it was in the past (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996).

In old schools, traditional teaching tools were applied in order to help students find reading easier and more enjoyable. By creating a supportive and engaging learning environment, the teacher can encourage EFL students to develop their reading comprehension skills, as it is a challenging process, especially for them, because they face difficulties when interacting with written text. Teachers work hard to eliminate students' anxiety during reading lessons by exploring new media that can support them. For example, the useful media used in old schools were considered ancient or traditional tools, which are rarely used now. Recently, many schools have started to use new media to develop their learners' skills in foreign language teaching, such as the use of multimedia rooms or libraries to support the teaching and learning process. One of the most recent and advanced tools in education is the digital libraries, which are considered a modern resource for facilitating learning and reading (Vincy & Bahrudin, 2014, p. 2).

Kucirkova and Cremin (2017, pp. 577-583) state that digital libraries provide useful features for students to develop their reading abilities and make the reading experience feel more personal for each user, which is known as "personalization". This is achieved by allowing users to choose the kinds of books they receive. For example, they can pick books based on their interests, and can match their reading level, from beginners to advanced, or select books from specific genres like fantasy or mystery. The digital library system logs their selections and uses them to suggest new books in the future. Furthermore, students, their

parents, or teachers can decide how often they want new book, they can also mark their favorites.

Another, feature of digital libraries that supports students' development in reading comprehension is the ability to create a personal reading profile. In this profile, users receive notifications when their favorite authors release new books or and system will send them notifications when these authors release new books or when books by similar author became available. Users can also create an avatar and a short biography. Through their activity on the platform, such as writing blogs or liking books, the system learns about the users' reading behavior and preferences. This information is used to optimize book recommendations and enhance the overall reading experience ( Kucirkova & Cremin, 2017, p. 578).

Teachers apply digital libraries in their teaching methods because they cannot remember thousands of books or track every student's reading habits on their own. Digital libraries help by offering a large collection of books with summaries. Teachers can search for books based on Learner's interests, age, or reading level and recommend them easily. And also check which books students have borrowed and returned. Also, they may play the role of curators through choosing new books for the school to buy and connect their classroom library with an external one, like city library. Also, can organize books into different categories and adjust filters to make searching easier. This helps them to create library that fits their student's needs (Kucirkova & Cremin, 2017, pp. 581- 583).

As noted by Kucirkova and Cermin (2017, p. 584), some digital libraries systems provide valuable information regarding students reading behavior, which is beneficial to teachers. Teachers are able to track the number of books students has checked out the duration of time spent on reading, and if any comments or blogs entries were made about the text. Additionally, digital libraries have the capability of making the students' reading engagement with their classmates or even their peers in the region. This enables teachers to analyze the



reading engagement levels of their students and to be able to assist and direct them appropriately, and this shows the role of teacher as monitor.

Also, digital libraries play a crucial role in enhancing students' reading comprehension by providing interactive tools that foster deeper engagement with text. One of the essential aspect is the annotation tools allow the teacher to put comments, explanations or even guiding questions directly to digital books. This feature helps students to build important reading skills because it encourages them to reflect, connect, and clarify various aspects of text (Kucirkova & Cremin, 2017, p. 585).

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, digital libraries are online collections of books, articles, and other resources, they change the way we access information. There are different types like conventional, digital, and hybrid. They are characterized by their variety of digital information, support of multilingual resources, and function without the need for human intermediaries. Noble examples such as Project Gutenberg, ELINOR digital library, and ACM digital library highlight their global significance. Digital libraries offer numerous advantages, including accessibility and convenience, efficient search capabilities, cost savings. However, they also have challenges such as copyright issues, slow internet speed, compared to traditional libraries. Digital libraries differ in terms of accessibility, collection size, and cost. To maximize their usage, effective strategies must be adopted because digital library is an essential tool in modern research and education.



### **Chapter Three: Field Investigation**

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## **Introduction**

This chapter presents the practical framework of this study, which aims to investigate EFL teachers' perspectives towards the role of digital libraries in developing students' reading comprehension. To explore this topic, the study adopts a quantitative method through the application of semi -structured questionnaire to EFL teachers at the department of English, university of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma. The goal is to answer the research questions and confirm or reject the research hypothesis. This chapter describes the method used, population and sample, also descriptions and analysis of the collected data. It ends with conclusion, pedagogical implications, and recommendations for future study.

### **3.1 Aims of Teachers' Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was used as a data collection tool in this study. It aims at gathering insights about the role of digital libraries in developing EFL students' reading comprehension skills. By surveying EFL teachers, the questionnaire seeks to understand the challenges that students face when using digital libraries during the reading process. Furthermore, it explores the advantages and disadvantages that they encounter with digital libraries, as perceived by teachers. In addition, the questionnaire captures the improvements teachers have observed in their students' reading comprehension skills since using digital libraries. Finally, the collected data used to identify teachers' recommendations for maximize the effectiveness of digital libraries for EFL reading instruction.

### **3.2 Research Methodology**

This study used a mixed method to explore the role of digital libraries in improving students' reading comprehension skills, based on teachers' views. We collected qualitative data through closed-ended questions (like multiple choice and likert scale) to get clear numbers and trends. It also included open-ended questions to collect qualitative data, giving teachers a

chance to explain their opinions in more details. Using both types of data helped provide a clear understanding of the topic.

### **3.3 Population and Sample**

The sample defined as a smaller group collected from a larger population, should reflect the key characteristics of the larger group to allow the researchers to draw reasonable conclusions about the whole population (Richards & Schmidt, 2010, p. 506). Therefore, the study focuses on teachers from the department of letters and English language at 08 Mai 1945 university, Guelma, during the academic year 2024-2025. To keep things fair and balanced, we did not set any strict rules for choosing the teachers, we simply selected a random sample. From 60 teachers working across different modules and levels. In the end, 36 teachers kindly agreed to take part and share their views by answering the questionnaire, helping us gather important insights for the research.

### **3.4 Description of Teachers' Questionnaire**

The teachers' semi-structured questionnaire is developed according to the theoretical framework of the research. It consists of 24 questions divided into four sections which each section focusses on a particular theme. Most questions are closed-ended questions like (dichotomous yes/no and agree/disagree, multiple choice, and likert scale questions ). In addition, open ended questions to invite participants to provide explanations, justifications and recommendations to freely share their thoughts in their own words.

#### **3.4.1 Section One: Teachers' Background Information (Q1-Q3)**

This section contains three questions (Q1-Q3). It is designed to gather information about teachers' highest level of education, how many years they have been teaching English at university, and their area of specialization in teaching English.

#### **3.4.2 Section Two: Reading Comprehension skills (Q4-Q10)**

The purpose of this section is to explore teachers' views on reading comprehension, including its definition, importance, challenges faced by their students, and the strategies to enhance their students' reading comprehension. To achieve this, teachers are asked to explain their understanding of reading comprehension (Q4) and indicate which types of reading they emphasize in teaching (Q5). Teachers are also asked to explain their choices (Q6), reflect on how important reading comprehension is for their EFL students' Language development (Q7), identify which level of reading comprehension they find most challenging for their students (Q8), highlight the most common challenges their students face in reading comprehension (Q9), and express to what extent they think reading strategies can facilitate students' reading comprehension.

### **3.4.3 Section Three: Teachers' Perspectives about Digital Libraries (Q11-Q19)**

This section aims to explore teachers' perspectives on the use and importance of digital libraries in EFL teaching. It focuses on understanding teachers' familiarity with digital libraries, their preferences between digital and traditional libraries, and the reasons behind these preferences. Specifically, Q11 and Q12 aim to find out if teachers have some knowledge about the term "digital libraries" and if yes, how to define it. In (Q13) teachers are asked which type of library they prefer for use in their teaching: digital or traditional, and provide the reasons for their answer in (Q14). Additionally, (Q15) looks at the frequency with which teachers use digital libraries in their teaching, ranging from always to never. In (Q16), teachers are requested to tell which advantages of digital libraries are useful for EFL teaching. Besides, (Q17) and (Q18) work towards finding out whether teachers think that digital libraries will take the place of traditional Libraries in the future, with reasons for their responses. Finally, (Q19) analyzes what students perceive as the challenges they encounter in using digital libraries for reading comprehension.

### **3.4.4 Section Four: Teachers' Perspectives about the Role of Digital Libraries in Developing Students' Reading Comprehension Skills (Q20-Q24)**

This section aims to explore teachers' perspectives about the correlation between digital Libraries and students' reading comprehension skills development. In (Q20), participants are asked to rate their agreement with the statement "digital libraries help to improve students' reading comprehension skills". Following this, (Q21) invites respondents to specify the particular improvements they have observed in their students' reading comprehension skills since utilizing digital libraries. (Q22) focuses on identifying the most significant advantages of digital libraries in terms of supporting students reading comprehension, while (Q23) asks how digital libraries specifically contribute to improving reading comprehension skills. Finally (Q24) is designed to gather recommendations for teachers on how to maximize the effectiveness of digital libraries for EFL reading instruction.

### **3.5 Administration of Teachers' Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was administered to EFL teachers at the department of letters and English language, 8 Mai 1945 Guelma University. From the 16 April to the 30, 2025, it was available both electronically and in person to maximize participation. A total of 36 teachers completed the questionnaire. Participants were assured that their answers would remain confidential and would be used solely for research purposes to ensure the reliability of the finding.

### **3.6 Data Analysis and Interpretation of Teachers' Questionnaire**

#### **Section One: Teachers' Background Information**

**Q01.** What is your highest level of education?

- a. Master's degree
- b. Magister
- c. Doctorate (PHD )

**Table 3. 1***Teachers' Academic Degree*

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>a</b>	2	5,56%
<b>b</b>	14	38,89%
<b>c</b>	20	55,56%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

As shown in Table 3.1, the majority of teachers (55.56%) hold a Doctoral degree (PhD), while a small proportion (38.89%) possesses a Magister degree. Additionally, 5.56% of the teachers report having Master's degree. These results suggest that teachers surveyed are highly qualified. Accordingly, it suggests that their judgments regarding teaching and learning reading comprehension are likely to be reliable and well-informed.

**Q02.** How many years have you been teaching English at university?

a. 1-5 years

b. 6-10 years

c. 11- 15 years

d. +16 years

**Table 3. 2***Teachers' Teaching Experience*

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>a</b>	7	19.44 %
<b>b</b>	3	8.34%
<b>c</b>	16	44.44%
<b>d</b>	10	27.78%



<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>
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As shown in Table 3.2, the majority of teachers (44.44%) asserted that they have from 11 to 15 years of experience in teaching English at the university level. The next majority represents those with more than 16 years of experience (27.78%). Meanwhile, (19.44%) of the participants have from 1 to 5 years of teaching experience, and a smaller portion (8.34%) has taught from 6 to 10 years. These results indicate that most of the sample consists of highly experienced teachers, capable of providing valuable insights on the topic.

**Q 03.** What is your area of specialization in teaching English?

- a. Linguistics
- b. Literature
- c. Civilization
- d. Translation

Others, please specify.....

**Table 3. 3**

*Teachers' Specialization*

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>a</b>	14	38.89%
<b>b</b>	10	27.78%
<b>c</b>	8	22.22%
<b>d</b>	3	8.33%
<b>Others</b>	1	2.78%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

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The Table 3.3 reveals that the majority of respondents (38.89%) specialize in linguistics, while 27.78% specialize in literature. Additionally, 22.22% (8 teachers) teach civilization, followed by 8.33% in translation. Only one teacher added didactics as their specialty. This diversity in specializations enables us to gather various data from different perspectives.

## **Section Two: Teachers' Perspectives about Reading Comprehension Skills**

**Q04.** Would you explain reading comprehension in your own words?

Question four asked respondents to define 'reading comprehension' in their own words. Out of 36 participants, 30 responses were collected, reflecting varying levels of understanding. Below are the definitions provided:

1. Simply reading comprehension is the process of understanding and interpreting the meaning of written text.
2. The ability to read a text and understand its meaning.
3. The ability to decode the text and understand its meaning
4. When the student is able to read and detect the meaning.
5. The ability to read text, process it, and understand its meaning.
6. The process of grasping and decoding text intellectually.
7. Reading comprehension is when you understand a text and author's purpose.
8. Readers' ability to grasp the full intended meaning of the written text.
9. The ability to read any piece of writing, process it, and understand its meaning.
10. The ability to decode a text and understand its meaning.
11. The ability to read, understand, analyze, and interpret written text.
12. The ability to understand the reading text and discuss the different issue around them.
13. It refers to the ability to understand what one reads to extract meaning from it through a series of complex mental processes.

14. The ability to understand, infer and interpret meaning of a written material where the reader can use different strategies in case, he faces comprehension difficulties.
15. The skill EFL needs to develop in order to be able to extract information from written text and critically analyze them.
16. Reading is a skill acquired when you can criticize and make meaning from written text.
17. It is deep reading of a piece of writing to maintain the direct and indirect meaning.
18. It refers to the way we process a particular text and reflects on its meaning.
19. Comprehension means integration/assimilation understanding of statement... Reading is decoding paragraphs, words, structures by using cognitive and social strategies.
20. Reading comprehension is the ability to understand, interpret, and engage with written text. It involves more than just recognizing words...
21. The ability to read written texts in a way that would allow the reader to understand and analyze the text.
22. Reading comprehension skills refer to the ability to understand, interpret, and respond to written texts. They involve grasping main ideas, details, inferences.
23. It is when you are able to understand a text with its meaning in certain context, and be able to answer questions related to it based on previous knowledge.
24. Reading comprehension is the first skill in the language process.
25. It is the process in which students are given a text to read and understand it using skimming and scanning as prominent techniques.
26. It is to let students read then explain to them.
27. Reading comprehension is crucial for students in the aim of enhancing their linguistic and cultural background.

28. R.C.S are the different abilities that permit the students to understand a text... they allow students to go beyond the surface meaning of words by helping them to decode, recognize vocabulary, interpret, infer, question, etc.
29. Reading comprehension skills refer to the ability to understand, interpret, and engage with written text effectively.
30. It is to read and understand not just the words but the social, cultural, and political background of what you are reading.

Most definitions emphasize core aspects such as decoding text, extracting meaning, and processing information, aligning with traditional models of reading comprehension as an interactive process between reader and text. However, some responses expand this view by incorporating higher-order cognitive skills such as inference, critical analysis, and contextual interpretation, suggesting an awareness of reading as a sociocultural practice. Some teachers also talk about using strategies to help the readers when encountering difficult or unfamiliar texts. A few responses explained that true comprehension goes beyond just understanding the words, but it also involves recognizing the author's purpose and analyzing the cultural, social, and political context behind the written text.

Overall, the answers show that teachers share the same understanding of what reading comprehension is, though some explain it in more details than others. This suggests that teachers have different perspectives, possibly based on their teaching experience or training.

**05.** Which type of reading do you emphasize in your teaching?

- a. Intensive reading
- b. Extensive reading
- c. Digital reading
- d. Print reading

**Table 3. 4**

*Types of Reading Emphasized in Teaching*

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>a</b>	1	2.78%
<b>b</b>	6	16.67%
<b>c</b>	10	27.78%
<b>d</b>	10	27.78%
<b>a+b+c+d</b>	3	8.33%
<b>c+d</b>	6	16.67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

The data in provided in Table 3.4 reveals distinct preferences among respondents regarding reading types. Digital reading (28.6%) and print reading (28.6%) emerge as the most emphasized, each selected by 10 respondents. This indicates balanced preference between traditional and modern reading methods. Thus, teachers use hybrid approach to teach reading. Extensive reading, chosen by 6 participants (17.6%), holds considerable significance particularly in improving vocabulary, comprehension, and language fluency by exposing readers to varied contexts.

In contrast, intensive reading receives less priority (2.9%), possibly due to its time-consuming nature and its focus on deep textual analysis. The mixed responses (a+b+c+d and c+d totaling 25%) suggest that some teachers emphasize all types of reading and focus more on digital and print reading, highlighting a shift toward flexible, multimodal literacy instruction rather than rigid, singular approaches. This suggests that the integration of screen-based and physical texts is becoming dominant, possibly driven by accessibility and convenience.

**Q06.** Whatever your choice is, please explain.....

In Question 6, teachers were asked to justify their selected reading approach from question five. Out of 36 teachers, 29 provided explanations. The answers were analyzed thematically and grouped by their corresponding choices.

1. Intensive reading involves close and detailed analysis of short texts as handouts, focusing on understanding their deeper meaning, structure, and language. It also enhances students' reading comprehension and their critical thinking.
2. The more you read, the more you gain words, information, and ideas.
3. Extensive reading helps learners/ students to develop reading skills and read for enjoyment.
4. Extensive means the learner is for sure going to acquire skills.
5. Students are encouraged to read extensively, meaning to read as much as they can, because reading broadens their horizons, enhances their critical thinking and improves their language skills.
6. In my teaching, I emphasize extensive reading because it fosters language acquisition through enjoyable and meaningful exposure to the language.
7. I emphasize digital reading in my teaching because it aligns with the demands of modern education and the digital age, equipping students with skills to navigate and critically engage with the vast array of online texts they encounter daily.
8. I usually send courses or files via email to students to read and prepare, or I ask them to search for information about a given topic by themselves. Therefore, it is more accessible, flexible, and free from time and place.
9. Because we're no longer allowed to use printed papers.
10. Because of accessibility since students can access materials anytime and anywhere, which encourages self-paced learning and flexibility.
11. Reading digitally is easily accessible and can take place anywhere and anytime.
12. Since the course I teach includes materials like books which cannot be printed.

13. Because we are living in a digital world,
14. Because digital materials can be easily accessible.
15. Reading from the data show while delivering the lesson.
16. Reading paper is better for your eyes and brain.
17. Just because I prefer printed book over digital ones.
18. It is better to develop student comprehension and proficiency in EFL.
19. Reading a book is a unique experience in which the learner can always go back and re-read the passage for further information.
20. It is the only one to make student reader the needed material.
21. To be more interactive in the classroom.
22. The amount differs according to the student's reader's level.
23. It gives students various options to process and remember information.
24. All reading depends on the learner's needs.
25. I emphasize all.
26. Both reading are so important.
27. Both types help preparing students to be virtual and effective readers in a world where information is presented in multiple formats.
28. Printed reading is more valuable because they need to see what to read. Digital reading is also necessary as they perceive reading from a direct screen.
29. They complete each other.

Teachers who chose intensive reading emphasize an analytical approach, highlighting its benefits for developing comprehension skills, critical thinking, and language proficiency. Meanwhile, explanation of extensive reading asserts its role in language acquisition and fostering reading for enjoyment.

In the responses, the most prominent theme is digital reading, with many teachers mentioning its convenience, accessibility, and relevance in modern education. However, a smaller group still valued printed materials for health benefits (e.g., eye, brain), personal preference, and their effectiveness for comprehension, especially in EFL contexts.

Finally, respondents who favored a mixed approach recognized the value of using multiple methods to meet the learners' needs and proficiency levels.

**Q07.** How important is reading comprehension for your EFL students' language development?

a. Extremely important

b. Important

c. Somewhat important

e. Not important

**Table 3. 5**

*Teachers' Attitudes Towards the Importance of reading Comprehension*

Option	Number	Percentage
<b>a</b>	28	77.78%
<b>b</b>	8	22.22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

Question seven aims at figuring out teachers' attitudes towards the importance of reading comprehension. As shown in Table3.5, the majority of teachers (77.78%) assert that reading comprehension is extremely important for their EFL students' language development. This suggests that they view reading comprehension as a critical component for EFL learners, likely due to its role in enhancing vocabulary, grammar, and overall linguistic proficiency.

Additionally, 8 respondents (22.22%) consider it as "important", further supporting the view that reading comprehension plays a key role in effective language learning. Notably, there



are no responses under “somewhat important” or “not important”, indicating a strong consensus among participants about the foundational value of reading comprehension in EFL contexts. This suggests that all respondents share the same perspectives.

**Q08.** Which level of reading comprehension do you find most challenging for your students?

- a. Literal comprehension
- b. Inferential comprehension
- c. Evaluative comprehension

**Table 3. 6**

*Teachers' Perceptions of the Most Challenging Level of Reading Comprehension for Students*

Option	Number	Percentage
<b>a</b>	5	13.89%
<b>b</b>	8	22.22%
<b>c</b>	14	38.89%
<b>b+c</b>	6	16.67%
<b>a+b</b>	3	8.33%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

Teachers were allowed to opt for more than one option and the results are shown on Table 3.6. Consequently, the overwhelming majority (38.89%) stated that the most challenging level of reading comprehension for their students is evaluative comprehension. This indicates that students struggle most with making judgments, forming opinions, and evaluating the validity and effectiveness of a text. Inferential comprehension was also a significant concern, which was chosen by 8 teachers (22.22%). It suggests that students find it difficult to read between the lines, interpret context clues or draw conclusions.

Moreover, six teachers selected to combine inferential and evaluative comprehension (b+c) supporting the idea that these levels are the most challenging for students.

Furthermore, literal comprehension had the lowest response rate (13.89%), likely because it represents the most basic level of text understanding, focusing on surface-level meaning rather than deeper analysis. Some respondents likely combined literal and inferential comprehension (a+b 8.33%) in their answers. This suggests that while literal comprehension is simple, it often serves as a stepping stone to inferential comprehension. That is to say, inferential comprehension is built on literal understanding.

**Q09.** What are the most common challenges do your students face in reading comprehension?

- a. Limited vocabulary
- b. Difficulty in understanding complex sentences/texts
- c. Lack of interest in reading
- d. Poor use of reading strategies

**Table 3. 7**

*Common Challenges Students Face in Reading Comprehension*

<b>Option</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>c</b>	3	8.33%
<b>b+c</b>	5	13.89%
<b>a+b+c</b>	5	13.89%
<b>a+c+d</b>	5	13.89%
<b>b+c+d</b>	6	16.67%
<b>a+b+c+d</b>	12	33.33%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

As shown in Table 3.7, a large portion of teachers (33.33%) believed that students face multiple challenges in reading comprehension, including limited vocabulary, complex texts, disinterest in reading, and poor strategies. This indicates that teachers perceive reading comprehension as a complex and interconnected issue. Another significant portion (16.67%) selected the combination of complex texts, disinterest in reading, and poor strategies (b+c+d). This suggests that teachers possibly observe a chain of difficulty, i.e., a student who struggles with complex texts (b) may lose interest (c) and never learn strategies (d).

Other combinations received equal percentages (13.89% for each), such as b+c (text difficulty and disinterest), a+b+c (vocabulary, text difficulty, and disinterest), and a+c+d (vocabulary, disinterest, and poor strategies), highlighting how limited vocabulary and difficulty in understanding complex texts lead to low motivation or interest in reading and hinder strategy use.

Only (8.33%) of the participants cited lack of interest in reading (c) alone, indicating that students may face emotional or behavioral issues or that they are capable but unmotivated.

**Q10.** To what extent do you think that reading strategies may facilitate your students reading comprehension?

- a. To a great extent
- b. To certain extent
- c. To a very small extent

**Table 3. 8**

*Teachers' Views on the Role of Reading Strategies*

Option	Number	Percentage
<b>a</b>	27	75%
<b>b</b>	9	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3.8 presents that majority of teachers (75%) believe to a great extent that reading strategies facilitate their students reading comprehension. This suggests strong confidence among teachers in its effectiveness. A smaller portion (25%) think it helps to a certain extent, possibly depending on factors like student ability and text complexity. None of the respondents (0%) believe it helps only to a very small extent, reinforcing the idea that no teachers neglect their importance. Overall, the results highlight a strong positive perception of reading strategies among educators.

### Section Three: Teachers' Perspectives about Digital Libraries

**Q11.** Are you familiar with the term “digital libraries”?

Yes

No

**Table 3. 9**

*Teachers' Familiarity with the term “Digital Libraries “*

Option	Number	Percentage
Yes	34	94.44%
No	2	5.56%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

The results in Table 3.9 demonstrate widespread familiarity with the term "digital libraries" among the participants. An overwhelming majority, 34 respondents (94.44%) answered “Yes”, indicating that the concept is widely recognized, likely due to the increasing integration of technology in education and the growing accessibility of online resources. This high level of awareness suggests that digital libraries are either already being utilized in EFL contexts or that teachers are familiar with their importance as learning and research tools. Only

two respondents selected “No” which may reflect limited exposure to digital resources or generational or technological gaps among older educators’ preferences to use traditional tools and have less experience with digital ones. This highlights the prominence of digital libraries in modern educational systems and the reliance on them for academic purposes.

**Q12.** If yes, could you please define it?

All teachers (34) answered with 'yes' and defined the term 'digital libraries' as follows:

1. A collection of digital books, articles, or audio files that is accessible electronically.
2. A collection of digital (books, magazines, videos, and other documents) accessible electronically.
3. Online collection of digital content.
4. Online libraries.
5. It's an organized online collection of digital resources that provide structured access to information.
6. A digital library is an online collection of books, articles, and other resources that you can access anytime, anywhere.
7. A digital library is an organized collection of digital content such as books, articles, images, audio, and video that is stored electronically and accessible via computers or the internet.
8. Digital libraries are online collections of digital content such as books, articles, and media accessible via the internet.
9. It stands in opposition to traditional libraries.
10. Are e-libraries
11. A set of digital e-books, magazines, audio recordings.
12. There are a wide of them as e-book, article, audio, files, videos, etc.
13. There are a wide of them as e-book, articles, videos, audio files, etc.

14. Videos, books, magazines, journals, etc. (all that we can find in a physical library).

These sources are digitally available to students via online access.

15. Reading passages/books online.

16. Digital libraries are a database from which we can download books and articles.

17. Reading books on electronic version.

18. Online sources that provide digital versions of books.

19. Materials (books, articles...etc.) that are stored in digital format.

20. Online database.

21. Are e-learning

22. It's an online library containing books, articles, stories, etc.

23. It's an online library including videos, images, texts.

24. They are the digital databases where millions of sources are available online.

25. Digital libraries are online libraries where we can find and download books.

26. Consulting books online.

27. Digital libraries are online platforms that provide access to a vast collection of resources, including books, articles, chapters, journals, and more.

28. Digital libraries are online collections of digital resources, such as e-books, academic journals, articles, multimedia files, and archival materials, accessible via the internet or specialized platforms.

29. Paid or free libraries that sell/display books online.

30. Online websites which have online search-related scholarly databases.

31. Revised or digitalized source material.

32. Libraries that provide books online and on different technological devices.

33. Sites or platforms where electronic versions of materials are available, including books, magazines, articles, and so on.

34. Including different electronic books or articles or any other sort of written materials at a specific website on the internet like DSpace. It can be considered as a digital library since it includes different master dissertations from almost all Algerian universities.

The responses to Q12 reveal that while most teachers are familiar with the term “digital libraries” their understanding varies in depth and accuracy. On the one hand, the majority define them simply as online collections of digital resources such as books, articles, journals...etc., which is accessible electronically through internet. Whereas, others provide more nuanced descriptions, emphasizing structured databases, multimedia content, or institutional repositories like DSpace.

On the other hand, many mentioned key features like easy access, available materials, and variety of content, with phrases like “accessible anytime, anywhere” and “downloadable materials”. However, a few definitions were unclear or incomplete, such as oversimplifying them as just “reading books online” or “stands in opposition to traditional libraries”.

Overall, the definitions reflect a general awareness of digital libraries as electronically accessible resources. Although, it focuses more on the core purpose of digital libraries rather than the basic infrastructure, services, and institutional frameworks founded in scholarly literature.

**Q13.** Which type of library do you prefer in your teaching?

- a. Digital library
- b. Traditional library

**Table 3. 10**

*Teachers' Preferred Types of Libraries for Teaching*

Option	Number	Percentage
<b>a</b>	21	58.33%
<b>b</b>	9	25%

<b>a+b</b>	6	16.66%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

The table 3.10 shows that most of teachers (58.33%) prefer to use digital libraries because they are easier to access and offer more resources online, which save time and effort. However, quarter of them (25%) prefer traditional ones, possibly because they enjoy reading physical books and studying in quiet places. Finally, (16.67%) of participants who chose both might believe that using both types together give them more benefits.

**Q14.** Whatever your choice is, please justify

#### **Teachers ‘justifications**

➤ Only 21 teachers out of 36 teachers justified their choice of digital libraries as follows:

1. More practical and easy to use.
2. Because I can access materials anytime and anywhere, also wide range of materials.
3. Unfortunately, traditional are limited in comparison with digital ones.
4. It is more practical for students using mobiles and tablets.
5. I prefer using digital libraries in my teaching because they offer unparalleled accessibility, flexibility, and resources that align with the needs of modern learners, particularly with my hybrid approach to teaching English language and literature students.
6. I prefer the digital ones because they are easily accessed and used. I can look for any book at any time with no much effort.
7. Fast accessibility and easiness.
8. Because of its extensive collections of e books and articles, besides multimedia.
9. It contains all the types of books.
10. Because of its accessibility.



11. Since we are living in a digital age and most of educational tasks are performed via implementing new technologies, digital libraries are one phase of developing students' digital literacy, and hence we need to promote their digital reading skills.
12. Because of their accessibility at any time and any place.
13. Digital libraries provide access to an extensive range of resources, including e books, academic journals, multimedia content, and more, this diversity allows readers to explore a wide array of subjects, catering to different interests and learning needs.
14. Students to day do not prefer traditional libraries. They enjoy reading from a PC or cell phones because they are easier and better.
15. Because of accessibility, space, and cost efficiency, wide range of resources.
16. Cheaper and easier for use.
17. Wide access to a variety of scholarly sources.
18. It is less costly and more available.
19. To easy and quick.
20. Quick access.
21. Digital libraries contain variety of resources that we cannot find in the physical libraries.
  - Out of 36 teachers, only 4 of them who chose traditional libraries answer as follows:
    1. It offers focus study environment and many libraries provide free Wi-Fi and computers.
    2. Using a pen and highlighting, circling, and underlying are very good strategies for note taking and for effective reading.
    3. Traditional libraries are reliable.
    4. Traditional libraries are limited. It helps you focus.
  - 6 teachers out of 36, who chose both digital and traditional libraries, gave the following answers:
    1. It is all about where the needed materials could be found not preferences.

2. I encourage students to check both to find whatever they need to improve their English skills.
  3. A mixture of both for more convenience.
  4. Both are good.
  5. It is time efficient and has more variety of materials, however physical books very important because nothing can replace the feeling that touching a book bring to readers.
  6. Old books in traditional libraries are a treasure, while digital sources they are save of time and energy when searching.
- Out of 36 teachers, 5 of them left this question unanswered.

Generally speaking, the majority of teachers (21 out of 36) indicated that they prefer digital libraries due the ease and practicality of their design, as well as the immense resources that can be accessed anytime and anywhere. On the one hand, they especially noted their utility for students who own phones and tablets, and also remarked that digital libraries save time and money. Some of teachers remarked that digital libraries also promote the development of digital skills among students. Which is crucial in today's world. On the other hand, 4 teachers chose traditional libraries stating that these help students concentrate more, they are more reliable, and allow for better note taking. At the same time, 6 teachers expressed preference for two types equally stating that while digital libraries offer speed and convenience, traditional libraries gave a special feeling and contain old valuable books. Finally, 5 teachers remained silent on this question.

**Q15.** How often do you use digital libraries in your teaching?

- a. Always
- a. Sometimes
- c. Rarely
- d. Never

**Table 3. 11***Teachers' Frequency of the Use of Digital Libraries in their Teaching*

<b>Options</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Always</b>	19	52.78%
<b>Sometimes</b>	13	36.11%
<b>Rarely</b>	3	8.33%
<b>Never</b>	1	2.72%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

As shown in table 3.11, more than half of teachers (52.78%) said they always use digital libraries in their teaching. This means that they rely on them regularly to help their students. Also, 36.11% of them said they sometimes use them, meaning they use digital libraries only when they need extra resources or for special lessons. A smaller percentage (8.33%) reported they rarely use them, maybe they prefer traditional methods or they do not have easy access. Finally, only (2.72%) never use digital libraries in their teaching.

**Q16.** What benefits do digital libraries offer for EFL teaching? (Select all options that apply)

- a. Access to diverse texts (graded readers, articles, etc.)
- b. Multimedia support (audiobooks, videos, interactive texts)
- c. Built -in tools (dictionaries, annotations, translations
- d. Cost -effective (free/low-cost resources)
- e. Encourages independent/extensive reading

**Table 3. 12***Teachers' Perceptions of Benefits of Digital Libraries for EFL Teachers*

<b>Options</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>a+b</b>	9	25%

<b>a+b+d</b>	6	16.67%
<b>a+b+e</b>	17	47.22%
<b>a+b+c+d+e</b>	4	11.11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

As it is indicated in the table 3.12, the teachers found digital libraries helpful mainly because they offer different kinds of reading materials, including multimedia like videos and audiobooks, and encourage students to read more on their own. This combination was chosen the most (47.22%), which means that variety, engaging content, and independent learning are highly valued. The second most chosen combination (25%) focused on having access to various texts and multimedia, showing that these features are especially important. Some participants (16.67%) also appreciated that digital libraries can be with low cost or even free. Only a few of participants (11.11%) selected all options, meaning that while tools like dictionaries or translations are beneficial, they are not seen as the most important features by most users.

**Q17.** Do you think that digital libraries can replace traditional libraries in the future?

Yes

No

**Table 3. 13**

*Teachers' views on the Potential of Digital Libraries Replacing Traditional Libraries in the Future*

<b>Options</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Yes</b>	23	63.89%
<b>No</b>	13	36.11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

According to the table 3.13, most teachers (63.89%) think that digital libraries could replace traditional ones. This shows that many teachers believe that technology can play a big role in education by making learning materials easier to access. However, (36.11%) of them think that traditional libraries are still important, possibly because they value the experience of using physical books or have concerns about the limitations of digital resources.

**Q18.** Whatever your answer is, please justify

### **Teachers' justifications**

- 17 teachers out of 36 who said “yes” to the possibility that digital libraries can replace it as waste of time and effort.
- 1. Because more people are attached to their phones and laptops, I think digital libraries are more suitable.
- 2. Maybe I think we are teachers and one day we will be replaced by AI how about digital libraries.
- 3. Because people can get access from homes without needing to move and less expensive.
- 4. People have already given up with paper libraries.
- 5. We are generation addicted to its mobiles.
- 6. Because of its easy access, facility to read and download, do not need to be in library to read. Also, all the topics are available with touch.
- 7. I think there will be no necessity to print out work in the future.
- 8. Nowadays, generation are looking for fast, easy ways.
- 9. Books need to be accessed through today's new means. In the future, hard version of books will disappear.
- 10. Because they are easy to be accessed and offer different features.
- 11. Because in response to our digital age everything has become electronic.
- 12. Because of the current and future orientation towards online learning.

13. We are going very fast to purely tech-world. Do not think there will be traditional libraries or hard copies of books in the near future.
  14. Because of availability and accessibility.
  15. Digital reading proves to take place nowadays and will be more widespread in the future because it lets student read and learn at their own pace, and save their time and effort.
  16. Digital libraries are accessing online from anywhere and anytime. While, traditional libraries are limited by the areas of location so there are a smaller number of reading materials.
- Only 10 teachers out of 36 believed that traditional libraries cannot be replaced, and justified their opinions as follows:
1. I believe digital libraries will not fully replace traditional libraries in the future, as both serve distinct yet complementary roles in education and knowledge preservation each offering unique benefits that cater to different needs and contexts.
  2. Because we cannot find all the books in the digital libraries, and if found it costs a lot.
  3. Digital libraries are convenient, but they cannot fully replace traditional ones because traditional libraries often offer more reliable, curated, and verified sources.
  4. Printed copy will always be better.
  5. We cannot deny the importance of traditional libraries that support community engagement and equitable access.
  6. Because of the physical experience of touching, feeling the book's page, covers, and the increased level of concentration that we experience when we read an actual book.
  7. Digital libraries can serve as supplement to, but not a replacement for traditional libraries.
  8. Digital libraries are convenient but printed texts are irreplaceable.
  9. Traditional sources of digital libraries are more credible than digital ones.

10. Traditional libraries provide focused environment.

➤ However, 9 teachers did not provide an answer to the question.

The justifications provided indicate that out of 36 teachers, 17 expressed why they believe that digital libraries could replace traditional ones. On the one hand, most of them explained that students today prefer information on their fingertips through phones and laptops, with plenty of students stating that physically going to libraries is a complete waste of time for most. They also added that digital libraries are practical, less expensive, and suit the pace of tech-centered society. On the other hand, 10 teachers believed that traditional libraries should not be replaced. These teachers value reading printed books, the serene surrounding of a library, and traditional reference materials. They also thought that libraries foster social relations and promote equitable access to information. The remaining 9 teachers did not provide any answers.

**Q19.** What challenges do students face when using digital libraries for reading comprehension?

- a. Copyright issues (e.g., limit access to some materials)
- b. Poor internet access
- c. High initial cost for digital subscription
- d. Environmental issues (e.g., energy consumption)

**Table 3. 14**

*Teachers' Views on the Challenges Students Face when Using Digital Libraries for Reading Comprehension*

Options	Number	Percentage
<b>a</b>	7	19.44%
<b>a+c</b>	9	25%
<b>a+b+c</b>	15	41.67%
<b>a+b+c+d</b>	5	13.89%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

According to the teachers' responses in table 14, students face several challenges when using digital libraries for reading comprehension. The majority of them (41.67%) thought that the main challenges include poor internet access alongside copyright restrictions and expensive subscriptions. In their opinions, these challenges hinder a multitude of students from fully utilizing digital resources.

A quarter of the teachers (25%) noted that copyright and digital cost together is serious obstacles, mainly for learners with restricted financial resources. About (19.44%) focused mainly on copyright issues, arguing that even when someone has the internet and money, legal restrictions still prevent access to useful content. Only (13.89%) mentioned all of these challenges along with environmental concerns like energy use, which shows that most teachers do not see environmental factors as a major concern in this context. In any case, the teachers underscored how practical challenges, particularly those concerning cost and availability, greatly impede the students' abilities to use digital libraries to enhance Comprehension skills.

#### **Section Four: Teachers' Perspectives about the Role of Digital Libraries in Developing Students' Reading Comprehension Skills**

**Q20.** To what extent do you agree with the following statement “digital libraries help to improve students reading comprehension skills?”

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Strongly disagree
- d. Disagree

**Table 3. 15**

*Teachers' Agreement on the Role of Digital Libraries in Improving Students' Reading Comprehension skills*



Options	Number	Percentage
Strongly agree	11	30.56%
Agree	23	63.89%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Disagree	2	5.55%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

The findings in the table 15 suggested that the majority of teachers think that digital libraries assist students in enhancing their reading comprehension skills. (63.89%) of them chose “Agree” which indicates that they think digital libraries offer resources such as books, articles, and other reading materials that aid learning. Also, (30.56%) of teachers “strongly agree” indicating that digital libraries make a difference, perhaps because they witnessed significant progress in their students. Conversely, only (5.55%) chose “Disagree”, which suggested that these few teachers might think that digital libraries without teacher supervision might not be valuable. No one selected “strongly disagree” suggesting that nearly all teachers consider digital libraries as beneficial in some capacities.

**Q21.**What specific improvements have you observed in your students’ reading comprehension skills since using digital libraries? (Select all that apply)

- a. Increased engagement
- b. Better understanding of texts
- c. Enhanced critical thinking skills
- d. Facilitated collaboration among students

**Table 3. 16**

*Teachers' Observation of Students' Reading Comprehension Skills' Improvements Following the Use of Digital Libraries*

Options	Number	Percentage
<b>a</b>	3	8.33%
<b>b</b>	2	5.56%
<b>d</b>	10	27.18
<b>a+b</b>	5	16.89%
<b>a+c+d</b>	8	22.22%
<b>a+b+ c+d</b>	8	22.22%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

The results in table 3.16 show that students have digitally improved their reading skills as a result of using the libraries. Roughly (27.78%) of instructors noted that students worked better together, likely because digital platforms allow easy sharing of ideas, group tasks, and online discussions. Around (8.33%) of them reported an increase in students' engagement, which could be linked to the presence of multimedia elements. Such as images and videos that enhance the reading experience. Smaller group (5.56%) reported better understanding of texts which may be attributed to the presence of supportive tools like dictionaries, and translation options, highlighting, and easy re-reading of content. Some teachers (13.89%) noticed an increased engagement with texts alongside better comprehension, which suggests that motivation is a strong driving factor in enhancing understanding. Another (22.22%) saw improvements in engagement, critical thinking and collaboration at the same time. Showing that digital libraries also help students think more deeply, ask questions, and learn together. Finally, (22.22%) of the respondents noted improvements in all four areas simultaneously. This indicates that with effective use, digital libraries can offer holistic learning experience by supporting students' motivation, understanding, collaboration, and critical thinking all at once.

**Q22.** Which of the following advantages of digital libraries do you believe is the most significant in improving students' reading comprehension skills? (You can chose more than one option)

- a. Accessibility and convenience
- b. Expanded collection of reading materials
- c. Search efficiency in finding relevant content
- d. Lower cost
- e. User engagement (e.g., interactive tools, personalized recommendations)
- f. Up to date content
- g. Collaboration and sharing opportunities

**Table 3. 17**

*Teachers' Perceptions of the Most Impactful Advantages of Digital Libraries on Students' Reading Comprehension Skills*

<b>Options</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>a</b>	6	16.67%
<b>a+ c+d</b>	3	8.33%
<b>a +b+c+d</b>	6	16.67%
<b>b+ c+f+g</b>	8	22.22%
<b>a+b+c+d+e+f+g</b>	13	36.11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>

As it is displayed in the table 3.17, the largest group of teachers (36.11%) chose all the features: accessibility, wide variety of materials, search tools, lower cost, interactive and personalized tools, updated content, and collaboration opportunities. This shows they believe students benefit most when digital libraries offer a complete set of tools that make reading

easier, richer, and more engaging. A different group (22.22%) emphasized variety, new content, and search speed and collaboration, indicating they believe that reading to be more effective when students can access new content and share and learn together. Another group (16.67%) selected a combination of accessibility, a large number of resources, search tools and up to date information, indicating they care about ease and access as well as having a large number of high quality, up to date materials to support understanding. The same percentage (16.67%) chose only accessibility and convenience, meaning they believe that simply making reading materials easily accessible can already make a big difference. Finally, the smallest group (8.33%) selected accessibility, search efficiency, and lower cost, which shows they appreciate the basic and practical benefits that help students read and learn without extra difficulties or expenses.

**Q23.** How do digital libraries specifically support reading comprehension?

- a. Providing leveled texts for different instruction and offering authentic materials (news, literature, etc.)
- b. Enhancing engagement through interactive features
- c. Facilitating vocabulary acquisition (e.g., click to define)
- d. Enabling self-paced, autonomous learning

**Table 3. 18**

*The Role of Digital Libraries in Supporting Reading Comprehension*

Options	Number	Percentage
<b>a</b>	12	33.33%
<b>b</b>	6	16.67%
<b>c</b>	11	30.56%
<b>d</b>	7	19.44%

<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100%</b>
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According to the findings presented in table 3.18, the majority of teachers (33.33%) believe that digital libraries help students better understand what they read by providing texts that are appropriate for their level, along with engaging content such as news and literature. They emphasized that when students read materials that are easy to comprehend, it enhances their enjoyment and motivation to read. Another group of teachers (30.56%) highlighted to usefulness of digital libraries in helping students learn new vocabulary easily, especially through features such as “click-to-define” tools. Such support allows students to stay focused and prevented them from getting lost when encountering unfamiliar words. For (19.44%) of the teachers, the main advantages of digital libraries lie in allowing students to learn at their own pace. This flexibility, in turn, gives student more control over their learning process and confidence. A smaller percentage (16.67%) pointed that interactive feature as key elements in keeping students engaged. However, this is also indicating that while engagement is important, most teachers tend to place greater emphasis on content appropriateness and vocabulary development when considering the impact of digital libraries on reading comprehension.

**Q24.** What recommendations would you give to maximize the effectiveness of digital libraries for EFL reading instruction?

#### **Teachers’ Recommendations for Maximizing the Effectiveness of Digital Libraries in EFL Reading Instruction.**

- 20 teachers out of 36 provide varied responses
- 1. Institutions should provide both teachers and students with access to high quality digital reading materials.
- 2. A lesson for introducing digital libraries and its types should be part of the curriculum of first year.

3. By offering tools for learners inside the classroom and good internet connection. Also, students must be taught how to use such libraries.
4. Teachers should select reading materials that match students' language levels, using trusted sources like Jstor or Doaj. It is important to choose texts that relate to course objectives, such as cultural topics or environmental issues. Teachers can also support vocabulary learning by adding glossaries or annotations through platforms like model. Using videos, images, and interactive tools from digital libraries can make reading tasks more engaging. Activities should include steps before, during, and after reading such as making predictions, taking notes, and writing reflections. Students should be also taught how to check if the sources are reliable and free from bias. Comparing articles can help learners develop critical thinking skills. Finally, group projects using shared digital resources can encourage collaboration and deeper learning.
5. To maximize digital libraries for EFL reading, select appropriate materials, use interactive tools, assign focused tasks, incorporate multimedia, encourage critical thinking, track progress, and blend with traditional methods.
6. Raising students' and teachers' awareness about the usefulness and effectiveness of digital libraries, and how they can benefit from their potential advantages in the teaching and learning process in general, and in reading skills in particular.
7. I suggest that universities should pay for having access and facilitate students' subscription in these libraries and make access to their content available for students.
8. Universities should create digital libraries for both students and teachers, offering access to diverse types of books and educational resources.
9. To maximize the effectiveness of digital libraries in EFL reading instruction, we should teach students on how to navigate digital texts effectively; exposure to varied content can increase motivation and help students connect with the material.

10. The teacher can integrate audiobooks, texts, and videos to help students in vocabulary learning for better comprehension.
11. The learners need to select the more reliable digital libraries in terms of text and information quality.
12. Students should select reading materials that will help them achieve different learning goals.
13. Good part of the universities budget should be directed to these digital libraries.
14. Promote awareness and training in using digital libraries and improve accessibility and inclusivity.
15. We just need to motivate them to read real content instead of scrolling all day on social media.
16. I think universities and institutions should devote more efforts, time, and money in enabling students to access different databases of their specialties, in this way students can have up to date content and can offer contribution to the research.
17. Providing teachers and students with ultimate free access to such libraries.
18. Those in authority have to help learners to get access wide range of digital libraries to benefit more from such digital devices.
19. Training teachers and students on how to use them.
20. Enhance awareness of the techniques of avoiding plagiarism and the importance of digital libraries since we live in digital world.

➤ 16 teachers out of left this question unanswered

According to the recommendations of 20 teachers who answered this question, there are multiple approaches to enhance the usability of digital libraries for EFL reading instruction. They suggested improving access during the first year of study to curriculum instructional courses digital libraries, teaching English as foreign language classes, and providing library

materials of appropriate reading levels. They also pointed out the need for ensuring adequate internet connection as well as the provision of classroom equipment. Proper training for teachers and students on the effective use of these digital libraries was also emphasized. They pointed out that the training instructional designers have to design reading material which involves multimedia at various degrees according to the students' needs and that integrating technological formats can enhance students' motivation towards reading and therefore improve reading performance. Higher education institutions should undertake the responsibility to educate students on how to use the tools to explore beyond the provided material in order to assess the credibility of information resources in relation to plagiarism. In addition, supporting students' subscriptions needs to subsidize these expenses because the students need to be aware of the use of such resources. Be observed that 16 teachers out of 36 teachers did not provide responses to this question.

### **3.7 Summary of the Results and Findings from Teachers' Questionnaire**

According to the gathered and analyzed data from teachers' questionnaire, a considerable number of perspectives have been explored concerning the role of digital libraries in developing EFL learners' reading comprehension.

Section one, which is about teachers' background information, shows that the majority of respondents hold a doctoral degree (PhD), and most of them have worked as university teachers for 11-15 years. This means that they have enough experience in teaching English. Additionally, their specialties are diverse linguistics, the most widely chosen field, alongside literature, civilization studies, and translation.



Concerning the second section, which is about teachers' perspectives about reading comprehension skills. It indicates that all the informants are knowledgeable enough. They provide accurate definitions of reading comprehension and show a deep appreciation for reading. The majority of teachers claimed that they prefer both digital and print reading because of accessibility and flexibility to use, reflecting a shift toward digital tools while valuing traditional ones. Teachers all agreed on the importance of reading comprehension for EFL learners and stated that inferential and evaluative comprehension are the most challenging levels for them, whether alone or both together. In this respect, they admitted among challenges of reading comprehension, limited vocabulary, lack of interest in reading, difficulty in understanding complex sentences/texts, and poor use of reading strategies. Moreover, most of the teachers believe to a great extent that reading strategies facilitate their students' reading comprehension.

In section three, this is about teachers' perspectives about digital libraries. Over half of the participants chose "yes" as an answer for the question "Are you familiar with the term "digital libraries?". This indicates a high level of awareness, likely influenced by the increasing integration of technology in education. Thus, it suggests that digital libraries are either already being used in EFL classrooms, or are seen as valuable learning resources. Furthermore, the participants' definitions of the term support their claimed familiarity and reinforce their responses. Most teachers expressed a preference for using digital libraries in their teaching. They justified that they are the most convenient technological tools that save time and effort because they provide access to numerous resources online. A number of them noted how useful these libraries are to learners with phones or tablets, as they aid in the acquisition of knowledge and enhance important skills that students need in the digital era. Most teachers also said that they always use digital libraries and find them helpful in accessing materials of different types. As well as engaging and motivating students to read on their own. These were the most common

benefits mentioned by the participants. Interestingly, many teachers believe that digital libraries might replace traditional ones in the future. They stated that students nowadays like to receive a quick book or information from their devices rather than go to the actual library. Moreover, they added that digital libraries are more practical, cheaper, and more appropriate due to rapid changes in technology. Nonetheless, other obstacles still exist, such as poor internet quality, copyright issues, and some digital resources that cost too much. These are the most frequent issues that teachers highlighted which would complicate matters.

In section four, which is about teachers' perspectives about the role of digital libraries in developing students' reading comprehension skills. Most teachers agree that digital libraries have really helped their students get better at understanding what they read. They have noticed real improvements and believe that is due to wide range of easily accessible and well-organized resources like books, articles, and other reading materials that digital libraries offer. Teachers also noticed that these platforms allow students to work together more effectively through sharing ideas, group work, and online discussions, which helped them, become more engaged. Many of the teachers confirm that what make digital libraries most valuable is the full advantages: they offer a wide variety of materials, search tools, up -to-date content, interactive features, and the ability to personalize learning these tools make reading easier and more enjoyable. For example, learners can access texts that suit their level, and with features like "click to define", they can understand new words without losing concentration. This type of support keeps them motivated and confident, even when facing difficult vocabulary. To Improve the use of digital libraries further, teachers suggested introducing them early in the academic journey and making sure students and teachers are well trained in how to use them. They also highlighted the need for strong internet access, proper classroom equipment, and the creation of multimedia rich reading materials tailored to students' needs. In addition,

universities should teach students how to evaluate online information and avoid plagiarism, which also help cover subscription costs so more students can benefit from these digital tools.

### **3.8 Pedagogical Implications**

Based on the findings of the study, the following pedagogical implications are suggested:

- Encouraging the use of digital libraries: because of their preference and frequent use by teachers, it is vital for educational institutions to implement them as the primary resources in teaching reading and paying growing attention to their role in comparison to traditional libraries.
- Providing training: an adequate training program should be designed for both teachers and students, focusing on interaction with digital libraries, especially on searching, selecting, and using digital libraries.
- Supporting collaboration: teachers should create collaborative reading projects for students to achieve using the digital libraries, which promote interaction and group work.
- Fostering autonomy: digital libraries support independent learning through resources and helpful tools that enhance motivation and confidence.
- Improving access: institutions should work on improving their internet connections and lowering the costs of learning materials to provide equal access to all students.
- Curriculum integration: reading program should formally include digital libraries as primary materials for aiding the comprehension and vocabulary development.

### **3.9 Limitations of the Study**

Despite the efforts to ensure the reliability and validity of this research, several limitations must be acknowledged:

The first limitation was related to data collection. The questionnaire was shared online, but only a few teachers responded. After waiting for some time, the researchers decided to distribute it in person. Unfortunately, this was towards the end of the academic program, when most teachers were overwhelmed with quizzes and grading. Many of them were unable to respond at that time and asked the researchers to return later. They kept postponing, and some of them forgot about the questionnaire, they took copies but never returned them. Another issue was that not all teachers were available in the classroom, and sometimes the teachers listed in the program were replaced by others. As a result, it was difficult to reach all the target teachers. These challenges caused delayed and made it difficult to collect a large and representative amount of data.

The second limitation was during the research period, one of the researchers suffered a foot fracture, which made it challenging to work on the dissertation consistently. The pain caused by injury made it difficult to concentrate and lead to significant loss of time. This situation delayed the completion of the study and created emotional stress that slightly reduced motivation to continue the work.

### **3.10 Suggestions for Future Research**

Through this study, valuable insights have been gained regarding the role of digital libraries in developing EFL students' reading comprehension. While the perspectives and attitudes of teachers were examined, there is room for future research to expand and enhance these insights. Future studies could employ quantitative experimental designs to measure the impact of digital libraries on learners' academic achievement, comparing outcomes with traditional learning resources. Additionally, further investigation is needed into the specific strategies teachers use to integrate digital libraries into EFL curricula and how these approaches influence comprehension outcomes.

Beyond pedagogical considerations, research should also explore practical ways to increase institutional adoption of digital libraries, including addressing accessibility barriers and raising awareness of their benefits for teachers, students, and administrators. A comparative study could examine the use and effectiveness of digital libraries across different educational levels and institutions.

Finally, studies could identify the best practices for maximizing the effectiveness of digital libraries in EFL reading instruction. This includes enhancing content curation, improving interface design, and incorporating personalized learning features to better support diverse learners. Together, these research directions would offer a more comprehensive understanding of digital libraries' potential in EFL education, helping to maximize their impact.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter focuses entirely on the practical framework of the study, which aimed to explore EFL teachers' different perspectives and attitudes of EFL teachers toward the role of digital libraries in enhancing reading comprehension. The findings are based on an analysis of questionnaire distributed to all English department teachers, serving as the primary data collection tool.

Depending on the obtained results, EFL teachers believe that digital libraries improve students' reading comprehension. Interestingly, the most teachers noted how digital libraries make it easier to access a wide variety of engaging texts, support self-paced learning, and provide helpful tools for enhancing vocabulary and understanding, all of which led to better reading comprehension.

### **General Conclusion**

The current research was conducted to explore EFL teachers' perspectives about the role of digital libraries in enhancing students' reading comprehension. The results from the teachers' questionnaire demonstrate that EFL teachers are not only aware of digital libraries but also hold positive attitudes toward their contribution to reading comprehension development. Therefore, it can be concluded that the main research hypotheses are confirmed. Additionally, the key findings of this study are as follows:

1. EFL teachers demonstrated familiarity with digital libraries, describing them as accessible online repositories offering diverse resources such as e-books, articles, and multimedia. They showed a clear preference for digital over traditional libraries, due to their convenience, accessibility, cost-effectiveness, and alignment with modern educational needs.
2. EFL Teachers confirmed that digital libraries improve reading comprehension. They highlighted key advantages that support both teaching and learning, such as leveled and engaging texts, interactive tools, and self-paced learning opportunities which support vocabulary acquisition and fostering autonomy and motivation specifically for students.
3. Barriers such as poor internet access, copyright restrictions, and high subscription costs were identified as hindrances to optimal use. These challenges significantly limit access to digital resources and their potential benefits for EFL learners.
4. To maximize the effectiveness of digital libraries, teachers proposed several key recommendations. First, they emphasized the need for stronger institutional support, suggesting universities invest in reliable digital infrastructure, including stable internet connectivity and subsidized subscription plans. Second, they highlighted the importance of comprehensive training programs for both educators and students, focusing on how to effectively navigate digital platforms and utilize them. Finally, teachers proposed that

digital libraries be formally incorporated into reading programs through carefully text selections aligned with specific learning objectives.

5. While this study confirms the perceived value of digital libraries, it also underscores the need to address technological and pedagogical challenges. Future research could investigate the long-term impact of digital libraries on reading proficiency through experimental designs. Second, explore comparative studies across institutions, or educational levels to identify best practices. Finally, examine teacher training models to optimize the integration of digital tools in EFL instruction.

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## **Appendix : Teachers' Questionnaire**

Dear teachers,

You are kindly invited to participate in a questionnaire as part of a Master's dissertation research conducted at the Department of English, University of 8 May 1945, Guelma.

The aim of this research is to investigate EFL teachers' perspectives about the role of digital libraries in developing students' reading comprehension skills. We would appreciate your efforts if you could answer the questions by selecting the appropriate responses, providing detailed answers, or justifications where necessary. Your answers are completely anonymous and will only be used for this research .We appreciate your time and help.

Ms. BOUCHMEL Bochra

Ms. FARDJALLAH Sarra

Department of English

Faculty of Letters and Languages

University of 8 Mai 1945, Guelma

2024\_2025

### **Section One: Teachers' Background Information**

**Q01.** What is your highest level of education?

a. Master's degree ☐

b. Magister ☐

c. Doctorate (PHD) ☐

**Q02.** How many years have you been teaching English at university ?

A.1-5 years ☐

b. 6-10years ☐

c. 11- 15 years ☐

d. +16 years ☐

**Q03.** What is your area of specialization in teaching English ?

a. Linguistics ☐

b. Literature ☐

c. Civilization ☐

d. Translation ☐

Others, please specify .....

.....

## **Section Two: Teachers' Perspectives about Reading Comprehension Skills**

**Q04.** Wouldyou explain reading comprehension in your own words?

.....

...

**Q05.** Which types of reading do you emphasize in your teaching ?

a. Intensive reading ☐

b. Extensive reading ☐

c. Digital reading ☐

d. Print reading ☐

**Q06.** Whatever your choice, please explain your answer.

.....

**Q07.** How important is reading comprehension for your EFL students' language development?

a. Extremely important

- b. Important
- c. Somewhat important
- e. Not important

**Q08.** Which levels of reading comprehension do you find most challenging for your students ?

- a. Literal comprehension ☐
- b. Inferential comprehension ☐
- c. Evaluative comprehension ☐

**Q09.** What are the most common challenges your students face in reading comprehension?  
(Select all options that apply )

- a. Limited vocabulary ☐
- b. Difficulty in understanding complex sentences/texts ☐
- c. Lack of interest in reading ☐
- d. Poor use of reading strategies ☐

**Q10.** To what extent do you think reading strategies facilitate your students' reading comprehension?

- a. To a great extent ☐
- b. To certain extent ☐
- c. To a very small extent ☐

### **Section Three: Teachers' Perspectives about Digital Libraries**

**Q.11.** Are you familiar with the term “digital libraries “ ?



Yes ☐

No ☐

**Q.12.** If yes, could you define it, please.

.....

...

**Q.13.** Which types of library do you prefer in your teaching?

a. Digital library ☐

b. Traditional library ☐

**Q.14.** Whatever your choice is, please justify

.....

**Q.15.** How often do you use digital libraries in your teaching ?

a. Always ☐

b. Sometimes ☐

c. Rarely ☐

d. Never ☐

**Q.16.** What benefits do digital libraries offer for EFL teaching? (Select all that apply )

a. Access to diverse texts (graded readers, articles, etc.) ☐

b. Multimedia support (audiobooks, videos, interactive texts) ☐

c. Built-in tools (dictionaries, annotations, translations) ☐

d. Cost-effective (free/low-cost resources) ☐

e. Encourages independent/extensive reading ☐

**Q.17.** Do you think that digital libraries can replace traditional libraries in the future?

Yes ☐

No ☐

**Q.18.** Whatever your answer is, please justify.

.....

**Q.19.** What challenges do students face when using digital libraries for reading comprehension?

a. Copyright issues (e.g. limit access to some materials) ☐

b. Poor internet access ☐

c. High initial cost for digital library subscription ☐

d. Environmental issues (e.g. energy consumption) ☐

#### **Section Four: Teachers' Perspectives about the Role of Digital Libraries in Developing Students' Reading Comprehension skills**

**Q.20.** To what extent do you agree with the following statement “digital libraries help to improve students reading comprehension skills”

a. Strongly agree ☐

b. Agree ☐

c. Strongly disagree ☐

d. Disagree ☐

**Q.21.** What specific improvements have you observed in your students' reading comprehension skills since using digital libraries? (Select all that apply)

- a. Increased engagement ☐
- b. Better understanding of texts ☐
- c. Enhanced critical thinking skills ☐
- d. Facilitated collaboration among students ☐

**Q.22.** Which of the following advantages of digital libraries do you believe is the most significant in improving students' reading comprehension skills ? (Select all that apply)

- a. Accessibility and convenience. ☐
- b. Expanded collection of reading materials ☐
- c. Search efficiency in finding relevant content ☐
- d. Lower cost ☐
- e. User engagement (e.g. interactive tools ,personalized recommendations) ☐
- f. Up to date content ☐
- g. Collaboration and sharing opportunities ☐

**Q.23.** How do digital libraries specifically support reading comprehension? (Multiple answers are allowed)

- a. Providing leveled texts and authentic materials (e.g., news, literature) ☐
- b. Enhancing engagement through interactive features ☐
- c. Facilitating vocabulary acquisition (e.g., click-to-define). ☐
- d. Enabling self-paced, autonomous learning ☐

**Q.24.** What recommendations would you give to maximize the effectiveness of digital libraries for EFL reading instruction?

.....

.....

***THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION.***

## الملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحديد مدى وعي معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية بدور المكتبات الرقمية في تطوير مهارات فهم القراءة لدى الطلاب، واستكشاف وجهات نظرهم بشأن استخدام هذه الموارد في تدريس مهارة القراءة. ومع التزايد المستمر في دمج التكنولوجيا الرقمية في التعليم، أصبحت المكتبات الرقمية تعد منصات أساسية توفر مواد قراءة متنوعة وسهلة الوصول.

ورغم توفر هذه الأدوات، لا يزال العديد من الطلاب يواجهون صعوبات في فهم النصوص المقروءة، مما يبرز الحاجة إلى تقييم الأثر الفعلي للمكتبات الرقمية من وجهة نظر المعلمين، بصفتهم العنصر الأساسي في توجيه عملية التعلم.

وانطلاقاً من ذلك، تم اقتراح فرضيتين رئيسيتين: الأولى تفترض أن معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية على دراية بدور المكتبات الرقمية في تطوير مهارات فهم القراءة، والثانية تفترض أن لديهم موقفاً إيجابياً تجاه استخدامها في تعليم القراءة.

وللتحقق من هاتين الفرضيتين، تم اعتماد الاستبيان كأداة لجمع المعلومات والذي ضم أسئلة مغلقة وأخرى مفتوحة، وقد تم توزيعه على عينة مكونة من 36 معلماً من قسم الآداب واللغة الإنجليزية بجامعة 8 ماي 1945، قالمة، خلال السنة الجامعية 2024-2025.

أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن غالبية المعلمين على دراية بدور المكتبات الرقمية، ولديهم موقف إيجابي تجاه استخدام المكتبات الرقمية في تحسين فهم القراءة لدى الطلاب. سلطوا الضوء على فوائد مثل المرونة، وسهولة الوصول، والطابع التفاعلي للمحتوى. في المقابل، ومع ذلك، لوحظت أيضاً بعض القيود بعض التي تعيق الاستخدام الفعّال، منها ضعف الاتصال بالإنترنت، وقلة التدريب، وارتفاع تكلفة بعض الموارد.

وبناءً على النتائج المتوصل إليها، تم تأكيد صحة الفرضيتين. وتوصي الدراسة بضرورة دمج المكتبات الرقمية بشكل أفضل في برامج تدريس القراءة، وتوفير برامج تدريبية للمعلمين والطلاب، إلى جانب تحسين البنية التحتية الرقمية لضمان الاستفادة القصوى من هذه الموارد.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** مهارات فهم القراءة، المكتبات الرقمية، وجهات نظر المعلمين، معلمو اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية.

## Résumé

La présente étude se propose d'identifier si les enseignants d'anglais langue étrangère (ALE) sont conscients du rôle des bibliothèques numériques pour le développement des compétences de compréhension écrite et du rôle de ces ressources dans l'enseignement de la lecture. Les technologies numériques sont devenues une partie intégrante du domaine éducatif et les bibliothèques numériques sont devenues une source puissante et efficace de lecture diversifiée et plus pratique à utiliser en raison de l'accessibilité. Cependant, de nombreux étudiants font face à des difficultés liées à professions Comprendre l'écriture.

Même si ces outils sont aujourd'hui largement disponibles, il reste important de se demander ce que les enseignants observent réellement lorsqu'ils réfléchissent à l'impact des bibliothèques numériques sur l'apprentissage. Deux hypothèses ont été avancées : la première suppose que les enseignants d'anglais langue étrangère (ALE) sont conscients que ces ressources peuvent aider leurs étudiants à mieux comprendre les textes écrits ; la seconde propose qu'ils sont globalement favorables à leur intégration dans l'enseignement de la lecture.

Pour vérifier ces hypothèses, un questionnaire combinant des questions fermées et des réponses ouvertes a été adressé à un échantillon de 36 enseignants du département de langue et littérature anglaises de l'Université du 8 Mai 1945 à Guelma, durant l'année universitaire 2024-2025.

Les résultats révèlent qu'une grande majorité reconnaît l'importance des bibliothèques numériques et adopte une attitude positive à leur égard pour améliorer la compréhension écrite des étudiants. Les enseignants soulignent notamment la flexibilité, l'accessibilité et les possibilités d'interaction qu'elles offrent. Toutefois, certains obstacles persistent, tels que la faiblesse de la connexion Internet, le manque de formations spécifiques, et l'absence de ressources adaptées au contexte local, ce qui limite encore une utilisation systématique de ces outils.

L'étude conclut en recommandant une meilleure intégration des bibliothèques numériques dans les programmes de lecture, une formation pour les enseignants et les étudiants, ainsi qu'un meilleur accès à l'infrastructure numérique.

**Mots-clés :** Compétences en compréhension de lecture, Bibliothèques numériques, Perspectives des enseignants, Enseignants d'ALE.